

# Waukegan Port District HARBOR ECHOES

May 2007



## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Waukegan Port District is pleased to announce the selection of Brion O'Dell as Marina Manager. Mr. O'Dell's experience in marina operations and management was gained in part at:

- Waukegan Port District as Security Chief from April 1985 to May 1994.
- Radisson Hotel in Asheville, NC as Security Chief from May 1994 to June 1998
- Waukegan Port District as Maintenance Supervisor from Oct. 2000 to May 1, 2007

Mr. O'Dell will assume his duties May 2, 2007

Mr. Dan Oestreich will be replacing Mr. O'Dell as Maintenance Supervisor.

### **WE WISH TO WELCOME OUR 2007 SUMMER STAFF:**

**Maintenance** has Sinteria and Willie returning for another season along with new employees Kecey and Rashawn.

**Security** has Billie returning and welcomes Archie and Gene.

**Gas dock** has Rich, Matt and Woody returning for another season and welcomes Kyle M. and Kyle W.

**HCB Office and Courtesy Cart** : Lynn and Chris are returning to assist you and we welcome Lindy and Ashley.

\*\* We were lucky enough to have Lionel with us thru the fall & winter, splitting his time between maintenance and security, and YES he's back with maintenance for the summer.

## **A NEW SERVICE FOR YOU**

A **West Marine catalog** and order forms will be located at the gift shop for your shopping convenience. You may place a written order with anyone at the front desk. A 50% deposit will be required when placing the order. Be sure to include your phone number in case we need to contact you regarding availability, etc. Susan will place the order and the item(s) will be delivered directly to our office.

We will then contact you so you may pay for and pick up your purchase.

Any questions call Susan.

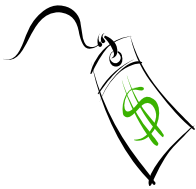
## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW !!!

1. We monitor - **CHANNEL 16**—24 hours a day, just hail Waukegan Port District or Waukegan Harbor.
2. **Washrooms/Showers** in the HCB are cleaned every morning at 7 am. and continuously maintained throughout day.
3. Waukegan Port District **office hours change** on **May 14th**, we will be open 7 days from 8 am to 8 pm.
4. **Gas dock hours will change May 14th** to 7 days from 7 am to 8 pm.
5. **Dog walk** area is located on west side of the HCB parking lot, Mutt Mitts are available at gates and at walk area for your convenience in cleaning up after your pet.
6. **Courtesy cart** rides are available, call the HCB or stop in and one of us will be glad to help you.
7. **Parking lot gate hours are as follows:**
  - Monday thru Thursday—open 4 am, **closed 8 pm**
  - Friday—open 4 am, **closed 4 pm**
  - Saturday & Sunday—open 4 am, **closed 7 am**

### **HOLIDAYS/SPECIAL EVENTS—GATES ARE CLOSED ALL DAY**

8. **NON CARD HOLDERS** (friends, family, guests and crew) are always welcome to park in the overflow lot. Courtesy cart rides are available for the elderly and handicapped, call the office 847-244-3133

## Waukegan Power & Sail Squadron says -



**Need extra cash** for the upcoming boating season? We will sell your used equipment on May 19th, 10 am—4 pm at Siver Park (next to Dock Side Dogs). Drop off between 8 am -10am on the day of sale. Sponsored by the Waukegan Sail and Power Squadron. See posted signs for more details or phone Julie @ 847-612-1259.

### WAUKEGAN PORT DISTRICT

(please note: dates and events are subject to change)

#### MAY

SATURDAY, MAY 19<sup>TH</sup> – SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON USED EQUIPMENT SALE IN SIVER PARK

#### JUNE

SUNDAY, JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup> – BLESSING OF THE FLEET @ WAUKEGAN YACHT CLUB

FRIDAY, JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> TO SATURDAY, JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> – GEOFFREY MORRIS FISHING TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, JUNE 23<sup>RD</sup> – CHICAGO TO WAUKEGAN SAILBOAT RACE-WAUKEGAN YACHT CLUB

# Harbor Renovations

The Waukegan Port District Board has approved a ten million dollar financing package that will allow us to begin Phase One of renovations of the Marina. Phase One will involve the replacement of the existing fixed docks on the south spine in the South Marina with concrete decked floating docks. The project has a very aggressive schedule starting in October of 2007 with anticipated slip occupancy of mid April 2008. We believe that all south pier boaters will be accommodated, with special effort given to keeping existing social groups together. The design of the docks is 95% complete. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers has issued the permit for the renovations and we anticipate the Environmental Protection Agency approval of the upland disposal of the dredged material shortly. As the dredged material is not significantly contaminated, we plan on disposing of the material in low areas of our Waukegan Airport. New regulations require that all dredged material, including routine maintenance dredging, require upland disposal.

## TWELVE GIFT IDEAS FOR ANY BOATER FROM U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

\* One of the best gift ideas for boaters is to sign them up for a boating safety course. Knowledge is power, and it has been statistically shown that boaters who have taken a safety class are far less likely to be involved in a boating mishap or fatality. To learn more, call 1-877-875-6296

- Another valuable gift that doesn't cost anything but time is scheduling a vessel safety check. They will examine your vessel to ensure compliance with federal, state and local safety requirements. For information call 1-800-368-5647.
- Sleek, light weight, and comfortable inflatable life jackets. (PFD—personal floatation device)
- A carbon monoxide detector
- Emergency signaling kits—flares, signal mirror, whistle, etc.
- Kill switch leash—kills the engine if the boater falls overboard.
- Up-to-date navigational charts and/or a handheld GPS unit
- Navigation tools and calculators
- Hand-held VHF marine radio with extra batteries
- Personal emergency position indication radio beacons (PERIRBs)
- Tool kit and spare parts for boats
- First Aid kit, sun screen, sunglasses, food and water.

The price range for these items runs from under \$10, up to several hundred dollars, but giving the gift of safety to a friend or loved one is priceless.

*The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is composed of uniformed, non-military volunteer's who assist the Coast Guard in all of its varied missions, except for military and direct law enforcement. These men and women can be found on the nation's waterways, in the air, in the classrooms and on public education.*

*The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary was founded in 1939 by an Act of Congress as the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and re-designated as the Auxiliary in 1941. Its 30,000 members donate millions of hours annually in support of Coast Guard Missions.*

For more information on the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, visit us at [www.cgaux.org](http://www.cgaux.org) or [www.axupa.org](http://www.axupa.org)

# AN ARTICLE FROM VISITORS THIS WINTER

## Purple Sandpiper Road Trip Clay Christensen, photos by Alan Stankevitz February 13, 2007

What compels three Minnesotans to drive 400 miles to Waukegan, Illinois, in sub-freezing January temperatures? That was the question my two birding buddies and I were being asked just after sunrise on a frigid Monday in January. The answer, of course, was a chance to see a rare bird.

Staff of the Waukegan Port District found us, Bill, Jeff and me, standing at the foot of dock T which juts into the cold, dark waters of Lake Michigan. Each of us had a spotting scope aimed toward the rocky shoreline, just outside the harbor area.

"What are you looking at?" an employee asked.

"There's a purple sandpiper working along the shoreline. It's a very rare bird."

In fact, in our collective 60 years of bird watching, none of us had ever seen one. It was feeding among a flotilla of mallards, carefully avoiding the nips of a few of the female ducks.

The purple sandpiper spends its summers on the shores of Greenland and Baffin Island, straddling the Arctic Circle. In the winter, it appears along the east coast of the United States, and sporadically along the shorelines of the eastern Great Lakes.

The purple sandpiper is described in most bird guidebooks as a dumpy, dark bird. The purple shows in the brief breeding season, and only then in good light. The bird is about nine inches long with short yellow legs. It's smaller than a robin, but just as pudgy. The bill is long and sharp and the tail is very short.

This sandpiper forages for food right along the waterline, around rocks, jetties and breakwaters, dodging the lapping waves. It picks off crustaceans and other tidbits clinging to the rocks.

And, because it's such a dark, non-descript bird, if it doesn't move, it is very difficult to spot among the rocks and waves.

My two birding buddies and I monitor several rare bird hotlines on the Internet, which is how we knew of several sandpiper sightings this winter along the shores of Lake Michigan. There were four reported north of Milwaukee in Sheboygan and one or two in Racine, south of Milwaukee.

But the most recent sighting had been in Waukegan's port area, just north of Chicago.

So, late on Saturday night, January 6, the three of us held a conference call. Jeff was pretty excited about finding the bird and suggested we try Sheboygan, Racine and Waukegan, in sequence, and, if we missed it there, one had been reported in Indiana and also in Ohio.

"Heck," I said, "we could keep going all the way to the East Coast, where the sandpiper is more likely to show up!" I hoped Jeff was just kidding.

We decided to head for Waukegan, the most recent sighting. We departed the Twin Cities about 5:30 a.m. on Sunday and arrived at the Waukegan Port just after noon.

We spent several hours Sunday afternoon scouring the shoreline, the riprap, the docksides, looking for any sign of movement or even just a gray-brown lump sitting there. No luck.

We decided to head up to Racine to try Wind Point, where a purple sandpiper had been reported earlier.

We met another birder there who said the sandpiper hadn't been seen for a few days. But he did know where we could find a laughing gull in the Racine harbor. That would be a life bird for Jeff, so we followed the fellow through Racine and to the harbor.

The gulls that had been there were gone. And darkness was descending.

Jeff was despondent. "It's over!" he said. "No sandpiper, no laughing gull! What a bummer!"

Bill asked how long we'd have to put up with Jeff's whining (Jeff was **my** buddy; Bill hadn't traveled with him before). It was good-natured teasing and Jeff joined in, giving as good as he got.

After supper, Bill called home and asked his wife to check the Internet for any reports of the purple sandpiper in Wisconsin or Illinois. She found a notice that the sandpiper had been seen at the Waukegan Port ten minutes after we had left. It had flown in (from location unknown) and stayed working the shoreline for quite some time.

Argh! Then and there we had our plan for the next day. We reasoned that if the bird had come in late in the day, it would spend the night nearby and be up early ready to feed some more.

So, we resolved to be at the port at sunrise on Monday. And so we were. And so was the purple sandpiper.

We watched the bird for several hours, and then helped ourselves to the hospitality of the Port District offices to warm up and refill our coffee mugs.

Susan Petty, the receptionist, asked Bill how we had found out about the bird. Bill described how we monitor the birding hot-lines and learned that there was one sighted here in Waukegan. "We decided to head out to see it," he said.

"Ah," she said, "Road trip!" Exactly!

As we headed back toward Minnesota, we went back to the Racine harbor, and there, as advertised, was the laughing gull. This was very likely the first winter sighting of a laughing gull in Wisconsin. This is also a coastal bird, frequenting the Atlantic from North Carolina to Florida and all around the Gulf coast.

So, Jeff got his second life bird for the trip. The whining declined dramatically.

And we didn't have to go all the way to the East Coast to find these birds. They were right there on the Middle Coast, much closer to us Minnesotans.

