



Volume 39, Number 4
Winter 2025

Grand Lodge
International Ship Masters' Association

ISMALetter

The 136th Annual Grand Lodge Convention Duluth, MN



The 136th Grand Lodge Convention was hosted by Twin Ports Lodge 12 in Duluth, MN from Wednesday January 28 to Sunday February 1, 2026. There is a summary of the convention later in this newsletter under the **Grand President Report**.



2026 ISMA Grand Lodge Officers (L to R) Grand Sentinel Matt Zaleski, Grand Warden Peggy O'Connell, Grand Marshal Ray Sheldon, Grand Chaplain Mary Ann Schallip, Grand President Chris Edyvean, Grand 1st Vice President Paul LaMarre III, Grand 2nd Vice President Tom Blakely (Nels Lund standing in), Grand Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Foster



Group shot at the Duluth Convention. The bridge and lighthouse models were built by Twin Ports Lodge #12 member Dann Edholm



Congressional Leaders were Speakers at the Grand Ball (L to R) Congressman Pete Stauber (Minnesota 8th District), Capt. Chris Edyvean (2026 ISMA Grand President), Ed Lulko (Masters, Mates, & Pilots rep), and Congressman Tom Tiffany (Wisconsin 7th District)



Convention attendee Rock Stars on 80's night, Ted & Taylor Johnson (Mr. & Mrs. Pac Man) of Twin Sault Lodge #22 won the \$537 prize for best costume and donated it to the scholarship fund



ISMA Lodge #12 would like to thank our ISMA 136th Annual Convention sponsors.

Platinum Sponsor:

Key Lakes/Great Lakes Fleet

Gold Sponsors:

Port of Monroe

Duluth Seaway Port Authority

Silver Sponsors:

Enbridge

Western Great Lakes Pilots Association

Bronze Sponsors:

International Organization of Masters, Mates, & Pilots

Marine Pollution Control

Port City Marine Services, Inc.

J.W. Westcott Company

Fraser Shipyards

Final Bells

Ed Montgomery 10990 Sentinel
Twin Ports Lodge 12

Thomas McMullen 10266 Past Grand President
Past President
Detroit Lodge7

From the Lodges

Chicago Lodge No. 3

26th Anniversary of the Christmas Ship

On Saturday Dec. 6, Lodge No. 3 was the Honor Guard at the Christmas Tree Dedication Ceremony celebration at Navy Pier Chicago. The ceremony centers on honoring the legacy of the original Christmas Tree Ship (the schooner Rouse Simmons) and distributing trees to families in need.



Members of Lodge 3 and Lodge 6 at the "Captain at the Helm" statue on Navy Pier with the stern of Chicago Christmas Ship (USCGC Mackinaw) in the background



Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem gave heartfelt remarks

Maritime Industry Day

On Thursday, February 26, 2026, Lodge 3 will be hosting Maritime Industry Day at the DoubleTree in Alsip, Illinois. Registration and Sponsorship opportunities are available at:

www.chicagoshipmasters.org

Milwaukee Lodge No. 6

29 Bells: A 50th Commemoration of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald and her Crew

On November 10, 2025, Milwaukee Lodge 6, in partnership with the Wisconsin Marine Historical Society hosted "29 Bells: A 50th Commemoration of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald and Her Crew."



**29 BELLS: A 50TH COMMEMORATION OF THE
SS EDMUND FITZGERALD AND HER CREW**

FLEET CAPTAIN SPONSORS:

**David & Julia
Uihlein**

MICHEL'S[®]
CONSTRUCTION, INC.

**JERRY'S SILO
MARINA**

**Northwestern
Mutual**

CAPTAIN SPONSORS:



**Todd & Kathie
Gordon**

LAKE EXPRESS

The evening's program commenced with a deeply moving Bell Ringing Ceremony, a poignant tribute performed in honor of the 29 crew members who perished in the sinking. This respectful observance was followed by insightful presentations from distinguished speakers, who captivated the audience by sharing detailed accounts of the American Merchant Marine's rich history, alongside their personal reflections and unique connections to the SS Edmund Fitzgerald.

The event garnered exceptional public interest, evidenced by all 250 available tickets selling out quickly, highlighting the enduring impact of this historical tragedy. Its widespread appeal was further amplified by significant media engagement, with multiple news stations conducting interviews both prior to and during the commemoration, substantially broadening its reach. Lodge 6 has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, many of whom expressed their profound appreciation for the respectful and educational nature of the evening. Furthermore, we are pleased to note that the event stimulated considerable interest in Lodge 6, resulting in new membership applications.



Photos of all 29 crew were on display on a ship's wheel



Speaker Capt. Chris Edyvean, Twin Ports Lodge 12



Speaker Capt. John Mallard



Speaker Capt. Shawn McKenzie, Twin Ports Lodge 12



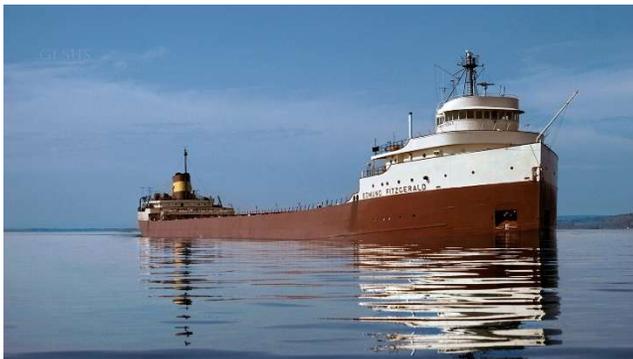
Speaker-Capt. Dave Blomberg, Milwaukee Lodge 6



Ship Masters (including the current and past Grand Presidents) from Lodge 3, Lodge 6, Lodge 12 and Lodge 19 gathered around the recovered bell of the Schooner SUMATRA which was used for the bell ringing ceremony



"29 Bells" Committee members (left to right) from Lodge 6 Capt. Greg Stamatelakys, Capt. Beth Fernandez and Capt. Mike Loescher; from WMHS Kathie Gordon and Todd Gordon (also a Lodge 6 member)



Fleet Captain level sponsor Northwestern Mutual representatives (left to right) Jennifer, Krista, Aileen and Audra with Capt. Mike Loescher

"Big Huzzah" at All Hands Boatworks

Milwaukee Lodge 6 proudly helped sponsor and attended Milwaukee based All Hands Boat Works' "The Big Huzzah" fundraiser.

All Hands Boat Works teaches Milwaukee youth and adults wooden boat building through hands-on projects and connects them to our Great Lakes waterways; fostering craftsmanship, career development and potential future maritime careers.



In attendance were Lodge 6 members PGP Todd Taylor, Lodge President Beth Fernandez, Lodge 6 Secretary/Treasurer Greg Stamatelakys, Pat Davis, Pat McBriarty and Ken Thompson

Lodge No. 6 LinkedIn Page



Please follow Milwaukee Lodge 6 on LinkedIn and "Like", comment on, or repost our posts with your LinkedIn account. It will help with public awareness of ISMA and Milwaukee Lodge 6.

<https://linkedin.com/company/ismalodge6>

Detroit Lodge No. 7

Mariners' Church of Detroit

The annual Great Lakes Memorial Service, designated this year as "The 50th Anniversary Memorial Service", was held at Mariners' Church in downtown Detroit on Sunday, November 9, 2025. The service was conducted by Rev. Todd Meyer, Rector of Mariners' Church, assisted by Rev. Deacon Francis Bateman. The Octorara Bell was rung as the name of each crewmember lost on the Edmund Fitzgerald was read, with a final toll for all sailors who have perished on the Great Lakes. Bell ringers included family members and numerous ISMA members from around the Great Lakes. The Bell Ringers were organized by Ray Oset (Lodge #7). Shipmaster members (Lodge number indicated) who participated in the bell ringing ceremony included: Frank Bateman (#7), Kathy McGraw (#7), PGP Joseph Ruch (#2), Patrick Beard (#7), PGP Luke Clyburn (#7), Bill Griffore ((#7), Ken Suddick (#7), Mike Nall (#7), Roger Hewlett (#2), Paul Jagenow (#7), Chris Stevens (#7), Brian Eickel (#5), Thomas Foster (#15), Jeff Haeseker (#7), Joseph Mastripolito (#7), Greg Rudnick (#4), PGP Mark Mather (#23) and John Mantyk (#7). There were as many as 6 lodges represented including 3 Past Grand Presidents. After the bell ringing, Taps was played and Amazing Grace was performed by Gary Marchetti of the Detroit Metro Police and Fire Pipes and Drums. He appeared in a photograph printed in the Detroit Free Press edition of November 10, 2025.

A second service at Mariners' Church took place on Monday, November 10, 2025, exactly 50 years to the day after the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald, reenacting the original bell ringing at Mariners' Church by the late Rector Bishop Richard Ingalls back in 1975. Detroit Lodge members Scott Reynolds and Sam Buchanan were among those in attendance at the service, and a photograph of Capt. Buchanan ringing the Octorara Bell was printed in the Wall Street Journal of November 11, 2025.

Both services attracted overflow crowds of worshipers. At each service, the church was filled to capacity as was the

entry hall and the entire Julia Anderson Room under the church sanctuary.

134th Annual Dinner Dance

Detroit Lodge No. 7 will hold its 134th Annual Dinner Dance on Saturday, March 7, 2026 at the:

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Detroit-Dearborn
5801 Southfield Expressway
Detroit, MI 48228
313-336-3340

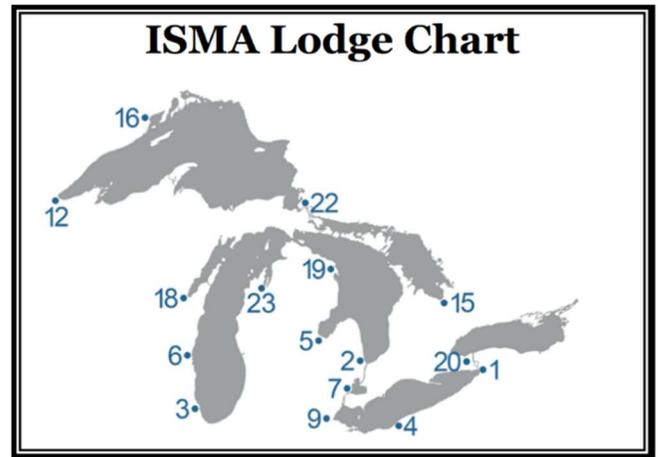
Tickets are \$75 per person.

Entertainment will be provided by Ray Oset's Big Band, RARE FORM. Overnight Rooms are available at the discounted rate of \$129

Dinner tickets and room reservations may be made online at www.DetroitLodge7.org (click on Calendar of Events)

The annual **Blessing of the Fleet** will be held the following day, Sunday March 8 at Mariners' Church of Detroit.

For more information, contact Capt. Ray Oset at rsoteso@aol.com and see the flyer later in this ISMALetter.



Toledo Lodge No. 9

137th Annual Grand Lodge Convention

SAVE THE DATE! Lodge 9 is hosting the ISMA Grand Lodge Convention in 2027. The 137th International Ship Masters' Association Grand Lodge Convention will be held January 28 – 31, 2027 in Toledo, Ohio. Toledo Lodge 9 will host the Convention the **Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel** – This is the same location used for the 2018 Toledo Convention. Pricing for the convention will be released soon on www.shipmaster.org



Meanwhile, Toledo Lodge 9 has secured a **Freighter Cruise Raffle** from **Interlake Steamship** for the 2027 season. The grand prize is a trip for 4 – 6 adults aboard the M/V Honorable James L. Oberstar. Guests must be at least 18 years of age, adhere to company policies and procedures, and be flexible concerning ports of departure / return. The drawing will be Saturday, January 30, 2027, at 10 p.m. at the hotel. There are additional prizes as well. The second-place prize is a round trip for two aboard the historic car ferry, S.S. Badger. The third-place prize is a pilot boat ride to touch a freighter. This prize is good for four people and was donated by the Lake Pilots' Association. The fourth-place prize is a trip on the legendary mailboat J.W. Westcott.

Tickets are now available. They are \$10 each or six for \$50. To purchase tickets, mail a check made payable to ISMA Toledo Lodge 9 / P.O. Box 5218 / Toledo, OH 43611. You can also email: ISMAToledo9@gmail.com. If you have any questions, please call Matt Zaleski at 419-345-5206, or email: matt@hubbubmarketing.com

Twin Ports Lodge No. 12

The 136th Annual Grand Lodge Convention is in the Books!

Lodge 12 is recovering from hosting the ISMA Annual Convention this year and asks not to be disturbed!

Georgian Bay-Huronina Lodge No. 15

33RD Annual Mariners' Service and Blessing of the Great Lakes Fleet

This years' Service and Blessing of the Great Lakes Fleet will take place at St. George's Anglican Church in Owen Sound, Ontario on Feb. 22, 2026, at 10: a.m. A flyer is attached to this newsletter.

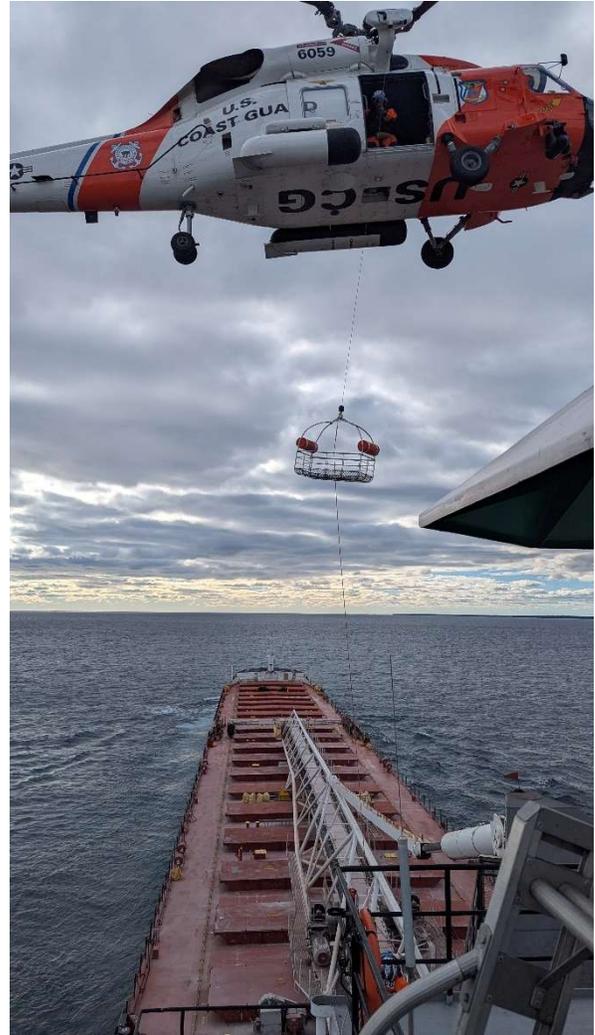
Grand Traverse Bay Lodge No. 23

Lodge #23 Luncheon

On Wednesday, July 22, 2025, Grand Traverse Lodge #23 President Dan Towner and his wife Tessa hosted a BBQ luncheon for Lodge Members at the Boardman River Nature Center picnic pavilion in Traverse City, MI. Following lunch, a meeting was held to discuss Lodge Business and most of the discussion centered around the ISMA Change of Course Committee initiative and ways to increase ISMA presence in the community and around the Lakes. Members felt the 50th anniversary of the Edmund Fitzgerald sinking would be a great opportunity to increase our visibility.

USCG Air Station Helicopter Operations Training with the MV GREAT REPUBLIC

Captain Dan Towner and the crew of the MV Great Republic conducted rescue hoist operations training with a helicopter air crew from Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City in Lake Michigan on November 16th.



During this training exercise, the helicopter and ship established constant communications. The helicopter pilot specified a course and speed for the vessel to follow, maintaining favorable winds for the helicopter drop crew. The helicopter crew then lowered a rescue swimmer to the deck, followed by a rescue basket, and performed three or four practice drops and recoveries before safely retrieving their crew member and rescue basket.



Air Station Traverse City (Photo: United States Coast Guard)

2026 ISMA Scholarship Award Winners

United States Cadet

Cadet **Ed Lefebre**

STATE OF MICHIGAN
Great Lakes Maritime Academy
Traverse City, Michigan
Member of Traverse City Lodge 23

Canadian Cadet

Cadet **Brooke Herrington**

ALGOMA CENTRAL CORP.
Georgian Centre for Marine Training
Owen Sound, Ontario
Member Georgian Bay Huronia Lodge 15

Hawsepiper Scholarship

Seaman **Marc Sells**

HOLIDAY CHARTERS
Mantua, Ohio
Member Cleveland Lodge 4

2026 ISMA Scholarship Donors

PORT HURON LODGE 2

Cary Ketelhut \$200
Roger Hewlett \$100

CHICAGO LODGE 3

Robert Lund \$200

MILWAUKEE LODGE 6

Milwaukee Lodge #6 \$450
Todd Taylor \$100
Greg Stamatelakys \$20
Mike & Linda Loescher \$200

DETROIT LODGE 7

Scott Reynolds \$200
Rick Scott \$200

TOLEDO LODGE 9

Harry Dusseau \$100
Paul LaMarre III \$200

TWIN PORTS LODGE 12

Twin Ports Lodge #12 \$3,000
Shawn Mackenzie \$200
Joe Walters \$200
Dave Robb \$200
Chris Edyvean \$200

GEORGIAN BAY-HURONIA LODGE 15

Tom Foster \$400
Seann O'Donoghue \$200

NORTH EAST MICHIGAN LODGE 19

NE Michigan Lodge #19 \$200
Pat Hart \$300
Lee Barnhill \$100

TWIN SAULT LODGE 22

Mary Ann & Bob Schallip \$100
Ted Johnson \$537
Andrea G./DRE Designs \$1,116

GRAND TRAVERSE LODGE 23

Dan Towner \$200

New Members for Q4 2025

Port Huron Lodge 2

Associate:	Norman Dinkins	A-13480
Active Professional:	Kevin Lees	13481
Active Professional:	Kristin (Danni) Russel	13482

Chicago Lodge 3

Active Professional:	Amber Koronkiewicz	13461
Active Professional:	Courtney Smith	13462
Cadet:	Denise Brower	OC-13463
Active Professional:	Gavin Emig	13464
Associate:	John McDermott	A-13465
Active Professional:	John Mickey	13466
Cadet:	Luka Zuschlag	OC-13467
Active Professional:	Michael Sheets	13468
Active Professional:	Nicholas Moreno	13469
Active Professional:	Thomas Mullally	13470
Active Professional:	Mark Hutchinson	13471
Cadet:	Randy Morales	OC-13472
Cadet:	Steve Weber	OC-13473
Cadet:	Eric Lopez-Godinez	OC-13474
Cadet:	Kaila Simmons	OC-13475
Active Professional:	Tom Waiter	13477
Associate:	Norman Dinkins	A-13480

Milwaukee Lodge 6

Associate:	Jerome Vernon	A-13459
Associate:	Hunter Black	A-13460

Detroit Lodge 7

Active Professional:	Walter A. Cochenour	13484
Associate:	James Calvin Sharp	A-13484

**Welcome one and all to the
Voice of the Great Lakes!**



Great Lakes & Maritime News

New Commandant of U.S. Coast Guard Sworn In

On Thursday January 15, 2026 Adm. Kevin Lunday was sworn in as the 28th commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.



Admiral Kevin Lunday (Photo: U.S. Coast Guard)

“I am honored to assume command of the United States Coast Guard,” Lunday said during the ceremony at Coast Guard headquarters. “Every day, Coast Guard men and women carry out missions that protect our homeland, secure our maritime borders, save lives and protect national security. I am humbled to serve alongside them while ensuring they have what they need to succeed – today and in the future.”

As commandant, Lunday will steer the Coast Guard’s ongoing modernization under Force Design 2028, while sharpening operational readiness and reinforcing support for the service’s personnel and their families.

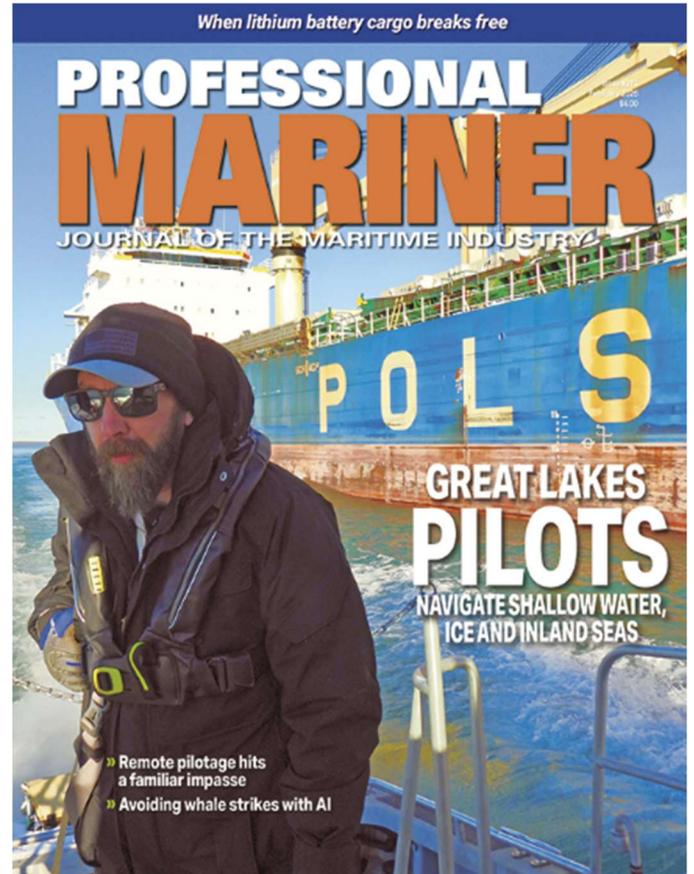
US Coast Guard Now Accepting Credential Submissions via Download

As of January 26, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) National Maritime Center (NMC) began accepting Merchant Mariner Credential applications via download from their recently redesigned website. The USCG calls this function “ASAP” for “Application Submission & Additional Information Portal”, describing it as “a faster, secure way to submit new application and upload requested documents in one place.” The website is: https://www.dco.uscg.mil/national_maritime_center. Meanwhile, the USCG NMC continues to develop NAVITA, a web-based mariner credentialing portal, “which will allow merchant mariner applicants and others to apply for, track status of, and otherwise manage their merchant mariner credentials and medical certificates.” NAVITA is Latin for ‘mariner’.

Great Lakes Pilots in the News!

Congratulations to Western Great Lakes Pilots Association (District # 3) who are featured in the

February 2026 issue of Professional Mariner magazine, with Captain Jonathan Hoort on the cover.



Capt. Jonathan Hoort on the Cover of Professional Mariner

One of Manitowoc’s “Big Blue” Cranes Departs on 4-Month Voyage

One of the two heavy-lift “Big Blue” 200-foot-tall portal cranes constructed in Manitowoc, Wisconsin has begun its delivery voyage, marking a notable logistics and engineering milestone for U.S. shipyard infrastructure.



“Big Blue” Crane 70 loaded on a barge on the Manitowoc River on Monday Nov. 17, 2025

The first unit, “Crane 70” departed by barge in mid-November, transiting the Manitowoc River to Lake Michigan before beginning a Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway leg en route to the Atlantic. The crane will continue south for a scheduled Panama Canal passage before entering the Pacific, with final delivery to a naval facility in Washington State. Estimated transit time is approximately 120 days, driven by barge speeds, lock scheduling, weather windows, and canal queuing.



“Crane 70” transiting through the 8th Street bridge in Manitowoc, Wisconsin (Photo: Fox11Online)

A second crane “Crane P-82” will follow on a similar route in the coming months with delivery planned for Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Both cranes — built by Wisconsin Heavy Fabrication — are designed to support complex naval maintenance operations and represent one of the largest recent U.S. domestic crane fabrication and transport projects.

For carriers, tug operators, and port partners along the route, the shipments highlight growing coordination needs around oversized project cargo — particularly as maritime infrastructure modernization accelerates.

Soo Locks New Lock Project Progresses Toward 2030 Completion

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continues construction of the **New Lock at the Soo**, a critical addition to Great Lakes shipping infrastructure. Phase 3 contracts, covering downstream work, chamber foundations, and hands-free mooring systems, have been awarded, keeping the project on track for **completion by 2030**. Excavation, concrete monoliths, and pump wells are actively under construction, while demolition of the old Sabin Lock proceeds.



Soo Locks in May 2025 (Photo: Jim Lehocsky/SooLeader)

Operational updates include a **permanent safety closure** 150 feet downstream of the hydroelectric tail race to protect mariners and contractors. The 2025 navigation season opened early, with the Poe Lock fully operational after winter maintenance.

The new lock will improve efficiency, safety, and redundancy for iron ore, steel, and bulk commodity flows, mitigating the risk of severe disruptions if the Poe Lock is unavailable. Once completed, the project will provide critical resilience for U.S. and Canadian Great Lakes shipping.

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Lake Michigan Has a New Commander

Capt. Rhianna Macon, the new commander of U.S. Coast Guard Sector Lake Michigan, arrived in Milwaukee last summer after nearly retiring in Hawaii. Drawn by the region’s maritime history and the Coast Guard’s lighthouse legacy, she now oversees operations across four states in one of the nation’s busiest search-and-rescue sectors.



Capt. Rhianna Macon (Photo: Mike De Sisti / Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)

Macon brings a background in environmental science and extensive search-and-rescue experience. Adjusting from ocean to freshwater has meant learning new challenges; ice, pollution concerns, and the Great Lakes' unique maritime culture. She highlights illegal charters as a growing safety issue and stresses the importance of life jackets, reliable communication, and watching fast-changing weather.

Despite the cold, Macon sees strong parallels between Hawaii and the Great Lakes: deep ties to the water, rich maritime history, and freindly communities.

Ship Master Spotlight

Ken Gerasimos (#10332)

At age 5, **Ken Gerasimos** got his first taste of life as a Great Lakes mariner by visiting his father who was an officer aboard Ford Motor Company-owner Lake freighters. At age 17 in 1973, he was appointed to the EPA to work on small craft for water sampling on the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers. He also participated in the collection of water samples in Lake Superior in October of 1973 for the Reserve Mining case. The case is notable for being one of the first to address the discharge of hazardous materials into a water body and its potential public health implications.

At age 18, in March 1974, Ken fit out for the *SS William Clay Ford* bulk freighter (one of the two ships that initially searched for the *SS Edmund Fitzgerald* on November 10, 1975) as a deckhand. Following his father's wake, he sailed with the Ford Motor Company fleet for nearly 14 years.



Ken Gerasimos (#10332)

In 1998 Ken joined Great Lakes Fleet and sailed in various officer capacities. In 2005, he served as First Mate on the *Arthur M. Anderson*. Then in 2006 he took the position of Port Captain with Key Lakes, Inc. Ken spent the last six years of his maritime career as General Manager at Key Lakes.

Ken retired from Key Lakes in October 2023. After nearly 50 years in the Great Lakes Maritime Industry, he is enjoying Life in another mode in Duluth, Minnesota while awaiting the "Next Adventure."

Ken has been actively involved in maritime education, hosting tours for students and participating in career events to inspire young people to pursue careers in the maritime industry. Throughout his career, Gerasimos has been a key figure in promoting safety and operational excellence within the Great Lakes shipping industry. He has represented Key Lakes in various industry forums and has been involved in efforts to enhance vessel safety and environmental protection. His leadership and commitment to the maritime community have left a lasting impact on the industry.

Ken joined ISMA in 1982 and was the President of the Detroit Lodge #7 in 2000. He became a member of Twin Ports Lodge #12 in 2006 after moving to Superior, WI.

Ken is responsible for coordinating donations to the ISMA that included trips to raffle off as fundraisers for the organization.

Grand President's Report

The 2026 Grand Lodge Convention is in the books. I'd like to thank our sponsors, convention book advertisers, contributors, donors, volunteers, vendors, guest speakers, and especially, our attendees who braved the elements to make it to Duluth in January. Thank you!

Our convention enjoyed several guest speakers (local, regional, and national) covering a variety of maritime topics. The ISMA Newsletter team will try to keep up with coverage of their efforts.

The fact that we had two Congressmen join us for the Grand Ball, as well as a staffer from a Senator's office speaking to us earlier that day, is a step in the right direction of putting ISMA back on the map. Also, two Duluth TV news stations carried coverage of the event.

One takeaway from this year's Grand Lodge business meetings is that while some of our members disagree on minor points, everyone clearly shares in the goal of sustaining and improving ISMA – and that is a great thing! I feel we came out of the meetings with positive results.

The scholarship program has been expanded to include separate U.S. and Canadian "Hawsepipes" awards (rather than just a single Hawsepipes award), and the overall

enthusiasm in contributing to the fund may have experienced an all-time high.

Additionally, we have budgeted for media and PR assistance from Matt Zaleski at Hubbub Marketing. Matt has proved his worth in promoting Milwaukee Lodge #6's "29 Bells" event as well as the 2026 ISMA Convention. However, to benefit from Matt's services, we must utilize him at any time one of our Lodges or members is involved in a significant event. This is a shared responsibility for the Lodges to reach out to Matt with the information he needs to carry out this important work for ISMA.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to our members, especially the Past Grand Presidents, who have offered their support and encouragement to me for the upcoming year. Thank you!

Fraternally,

Capt. Chris Edyvean
2026 ISMA Grand President



Grand Lodge Financial Report

The Lodge has finished 2025 in one of the best financial positions for some time. Our general account has a slight reserve, and our scholarship account is at its highest level in many years.

There have been several substantial donations to the scholarship fund this year. I wish to thank all the participants in this year's extra dollar challenge. Dre Design added a great deal to this year, and special nod goes to Lodge 19 which paid the entire year's scholarships thanks to a great response to their ships raffle held under the appropriate licenses. Lodge 23 added a donation due to Brother Mark Mather riding his Motorcycle in aid of the Iron Man event in Northern Michigan. Lodge 4 as well as several other Lodges all contributed strongly.

Budget-wise, the main Grand Lodge was under budget again this year.

Finally, all our investment accounts provided a gain. Some of those funds were used to purchase further bonds maturing in the next several years and providing an excellent return on investment.

Thank you all for helping make this a great year for the Grand Lodge and add to the sustainability of our programs.

NELC Report

Report will follow. Check for updates in the member section of: www.shipmaster.org

MOW Chairman Report

At the 2026 ISMA Duluth Grand Lodge Convention, delegates approved the Change of Course Committee's decision to hire **Matt Zaleski** as the Director of Communications. Additionally, he was appointed **Chairman of the ISMA Membership, Outreach, and Web Site Committee**. Mr. Zaleski has been an associate member of the ISMA Toledo Lodge 9 since 2018, when he worked to help plan the 128th Annual Grand Lodge Convention in Toledo for Past President Harry Dusseau. In addition to assisting with ISMA's social media platforms and web site, Mr. Zaleski will work with all ISMA lodges to help promote local events. He will work to develop news releases including creating a media distribution network for each lodge. He will also work to help plan the ISMA Grand Lodge Conventions. All this is being done with the support of the delegates to help showcase ISMA's relevance in the maritime community, and to hopefully increase ISMA membership.

Over the past four months, Matt worked with the Toledo and Milwaukee lodges to help promote events surrounding the 50th Anniversary of the Edmund Fitzgerald tragedy. He arranged for State of Ohio and City of Toledo Resolutions honoring the crew. Additionally, he worked with the Twin Ports lodge helping to promote this year's convention.

Matt has over 30 years' experience working in public relations, marketing, and event planning. As the Vice President of Marketing for Hubbub Marketing, LLC, he has worked to help raise money for non-profits. Since 2009 he has worked at event planning and media relations for numerous political candidates in Northwest Ohio. Prior to Hubbub Marketing, Matt worked in broadcasting in radio and TV newsrooms. He has experience working with variety of clients in sports marketing, retail, and business-to-business. He has served on several boards including Family House which worked to help homeless families.

If you have any questions, have a story idea, or need help with promoting your event, please feel free to contact Matt Zaleski directly:

Matt Zaleski
matt@hubbubmarketing.com
419-345-5206 (text or voice)

Change of Course Committee

At the request of Grand Lodge President Pat Hart, and under the direction of past President Luke Clyburn a new committee was formed in March 2025 and has been holding zoom calls to guide the Grand lodge into the



future. The Change of Course (CoC) committee has 8 active members, and the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents have been on the calls. There are the numerous Goals and Ideas that the committee has discussed and strongly recommends to the leadership.

Mission Statement

The Change of Course Committee is tasked with creating policies and strategies in accordance with the ISMA Constitution that moves the Grand Lodge forward.

Director of Communications

Create a position for Director of Communications. That person would plan, develop and keep all media functions updated including expansion into Face Book, Instagram and TikTok. Furthermore, the Director will assist the Lodges with PR and marketing for both local and national events and would create a media distribution list for every Lodge market and a national one for the Grand Lodge.

The CoC met, interviewed and has hired Matt Zaleski as Director of Communications. Matt is a member of Lodge 9. See mor info about him int the MOW Report.

To create momentum, four Lodges have stepped up to pay Matt from October to the convention so he can immediately assist various lodges with PR and fundraising. Matt’s involvement in promoting Milwaukee Lodge 6 “29 Bells” event and the Duluth Convention, has already proven his value to ISMA.

Additional CoC Committee Goals

- Addition of new members and retention of existing members
- To assist with furthering maritime awareness and maritime education on all age levels
- Become a more complete professional maritime organization recognized by other maritime concerns and agencies as well as the public as subject matter experts

CoC Ideas

- Use the brochure that Lodge 9 redesigned and sent out in PDF format
- The ISMA Newsletter needs to be published on a regular basis, and editions should be sent out to local, state and federal maritime agencies and Port Authorities
- Create and send out Position Papers that support other agencies.
- Promote networking and outreach amongst all Lodges

- Create a position for a sales and fund raising professional
- All committees should create a report for the newsletter
- Anyone paid by ISMA should create a report for the newsletter
- The Scholarship fund should be expanded to include maritime focused high schools and needed equipment, by the creation of a 501(c)(3) that would allow endowments as well as donations
- Create recognition for National Maritime Day (US Lodges) and Day of the Seafarer (Canada) on the local level to promote the industry, both past, present and future as well as the benefits of ISMA membership

Leadership

- The incoming Grand Lodge President needs to create a formal ONE-Year plan to follow for his term.
- Grand Lodge leadership needs to create a formal FIVE-Year plan to create consistency in leadership for the annual change of command. The FIVE-Year plan should be updated annually.
- The immediate past, present, and future Grand Lodge Presidents as well as the 1st and 2nd vice presidents should meet before the Grand Lodge caucus to plan the formal 5-YEAR plan. The 1 year and 5-YEAR plan should be introduced to the caucus delegates.

ISMA NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION
ISMALetter distribution is via e-mail through local Lodge Secretaries.
Therefore, **please make sure your Lodge Secretary has your correct e-mail address to ensure delivery.**
Remember that ISMALetter is always available on our website, ***www.shipmaster.org***, at any time.

From the Editor

I welcome aboard Matt Zaleski as co-editor of the ISMALetter for the next year. His extensive knowledge and experience in the news industry will be seen in the coming issues for 2026.



It would be appreciated if **Lodge Secretaries** could send Lodge news to me for the next issue. Please send news stories with photos with captions to:

mike@milwaukee lodge6.org.

The deadline for stories to be included in the next newsletter is MARCH 31, 2026.

Captain Mike Loescher – Milwaukee Lodge No. 6



Duluth Aerial Bridge (Photo: visitduluth.com)

2026 Event Calendar

February 25-26	Chicago Maritime Industry Day	Alsip, IL
March 7	Detroit Lodge #7 Dinner Dance	Dearborn-Detroit, MI
March 8	62 nd Annual Blessing of the Fleet at Mariners' Church of Detroit	Detroit, MI
March 22	World Water Day	
March 23	World Meteorological Day	
May 4	Great Lakes Awareness Day	
May 18	International Day for Women in Maritime (IMO)	
May 22	National Maritime Day (US)	
June 8	World Oceans Day	
June 15	Global Wind Day	
June 25	The Day of the Seafarer (IMO)	
June 26	Soo Locks Engineer's Day	Ste. St. Marie, MI
June 28	Thunder Bay Blessing of the Fleet	Thunder Bay, ON
July 20	Lake Superior Day	
August 4	Coast Guard Day (US)	
August 8	Lake Michigan Day	
September 7	Canada Merchant Navy Day	
September 25	IMO World Maritime Day	
October 5	National Shipbuilding Day (US)	
November 11	US Veterans Day Canada Remembrance Day	
December 2-4	International Workboat Show	New Orleans, LA
January 28-31, 2027	137 th ISMA Grand Lodge Convention	Toledo, OH

Please verify these dates prior to making travel plans!

As an organization, ISMA strives to:

- To be the respected voice of licensed professional mariners in matters related to navigation and safety on waters of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway System. In this process, we work with, and provide input to, regulatory agencies, legislative bodies, industry associations and other working groups on matters affecting navigational safety.
- To provide opportunities for licensed merchant mariners to network, to offer their feedback, and to enhance their knowledge in a variety of ways.
- To maintain mutual respect, support, and encouragement among our members, and to promote the pursuit of personal and professional excellence.
- To encourage and assist those preparing for careers as merchant marine officers.



Connect with ISMA

ISMA Website



www.shipmaster.org

ISMA LinkedIn Page



[linkedin.com/company/international-ship-masters-association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-ship-masters-association)

Please follow ISMA on LinkedIn and “Like” and/or comment on our posts with your LinkedIn account. You may also invite your LinkedIn Connections to “Follow” ISMA. It will help greatly with public awareness of ISMA.

ISMA Facebook Page



www.facebook.com/InternationalShipMastersAssociation

Please follow ISMA on Facebook and “Like” and/or comment on our posts with your Facebook account. You may also invite your Facebook Friends to “Follow” ISMA. It will help greatly with public awareness of ISMA.

International Ship Masters' Association

2026 Grand Lodge Officers

★ **Grand Lodge President** ★

Captain **Chris Edyvean**

cjedyvean@hotmail.com

Grand Lodge First Vice President

Captain **Paul LaMarre III**

plamarre@portofmunroe.com

Grand Lodge Second Vice President

Captain **Tom Blakely**

tblakely@gmail.com

Grand Lodge Secretary Treasurer

Captain **Tom Foster**

thomas.foster63@yahoo.com

Navigation and Legislative Committee (NELC)

Chairman: **Scott Skrzypczak**

NELC@shipmaster.org

Canadian Co-chairman:

Captain **Seann O'Donoghue**

ismalodge15@gmail.com

Membership/Outreach/Website Committee (MOW)

Website: www.shipmaster.org

Chairman: **Matt Zaleski**

matt@hubbubmarketing.com

Change of Course Committee (CoC)

Chairman: Captain **Luke Clybourn**

lclyburn@comcast.net

Send Information for Next ISMA Letter Issue

By MARCH 31, 2026 to:

Newsletter Editor

Captain **Mike Loescher**

mike@milwaukee lodge6.org





**International Shipmasters Assn.
Port Huron Lodge #2**



Presents

132ND ANNUAL DINNER DANCE



**Saturday February 28th, 2026 at:
Blue Water Convention Center-Port Huron**

800 Harker St.- 48060

Rooms Available at Double Tree Hilton

Special Room Rate \$149.00 + Tx.

Reserve Hotel Room On-Line <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/ph2annualdinnerdance2026/>

Or: Call Direct: 810-984-8000 - Mention Code "ISM"

Hospitality Suite - Light House Room - first floor - Open - 4:00 – 6:00 pm

- Blue Water Convention Center – Grand Ballroom -

Social Hour - 2-drink tickets + Cash Bar – Music – Starting 6:00 pm

Buffet Dinner – featuring Grilled Salmon and N.Y.Strip 7:00 pm

DJ Music and Dancing 'till 10:30 pm

Hospitality Suite – re-opens 10:30 till ,,,,,?

Dinner Dance Reservations \$80.00 USD, per Person

Buy Now

On-Line payment using PayPal



Go to Lodge 2 web page: <https://www.shipmaster.org/lodge-2.html>

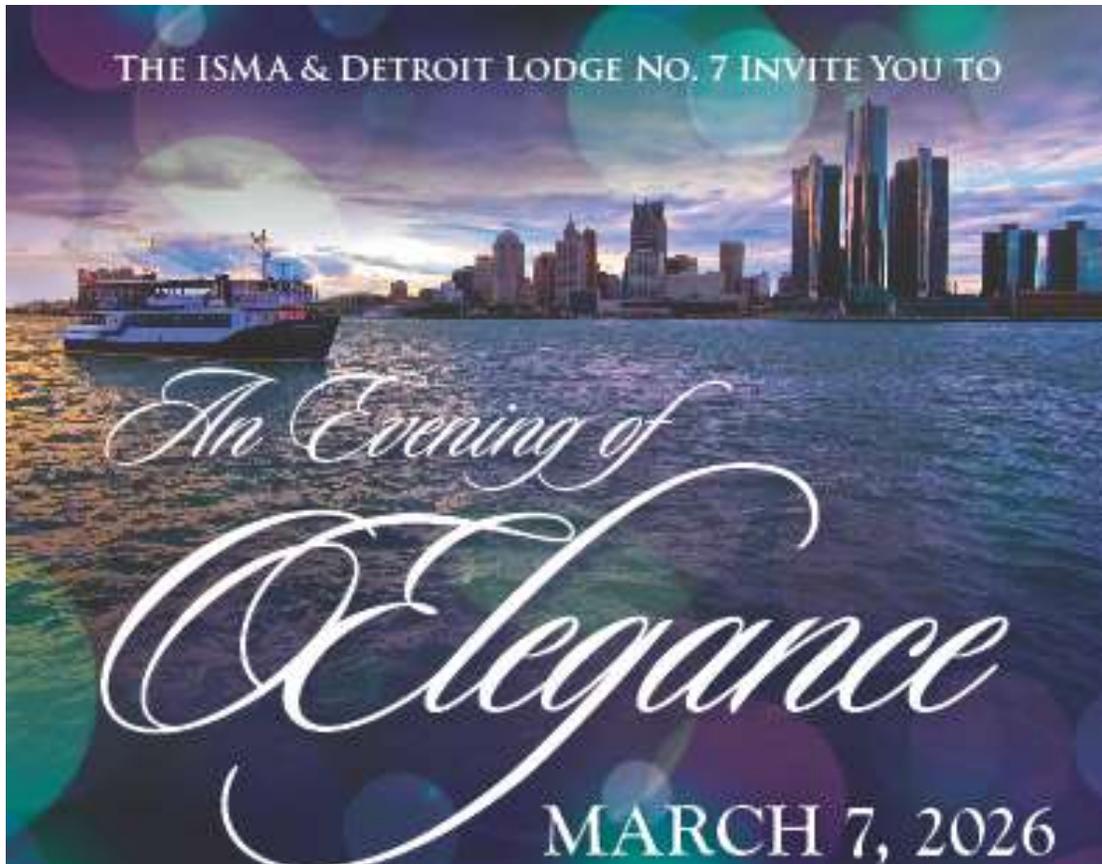
Or: Make Check payable to: ISMA Lodge #2

Send to: Judy Pitrago- 41 N. Flower St. - Crosswell, MI 48422

For more information call 810-679-2171 or: Email: eandjpitrago@att.net

01/07/2026- (3rd Draft) -RGH





THE ISMA & DETROIT LODGE NO. 7 INVITE YOU TO

An Evening of Elegance

MARCH 7, 2026

Membership isn't required
—family and friends
are welcome to attend.

\$75 per person,
including dinner, dessert,
and one drink ticket

6:00 PM – Cocktails
7:00 PM – Dinner
Entertainment: Rareform Big Band

DoubleTree by Hilton
Dearborn-Detroit
5801 Southfield Fwy
Detroit, MI 48228
www.hilton.com

Reserve your room for the
weekend with special pricing!



BUY YOUR TICKETS AT
WWW.DETROITLODGE7.ORG

FLY YOUR PENNANT - SALUTE 3 PROLONG, 1 SHORT

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**33RD ANNUAL MARINERS SERVICE
AND
BLESSING OF THE GREAT LAKES FLEET**



**THE INTERNATIONAL SHIPMASTER'S ASSOCIATION IS
PRESENTING THE ANNUAL MARINERS' SERVICE WHICH AS
A LOCAL MARINE TRADITION DATES TO THE MID 1800'S.**

**ALL GEORGIAN COLLEGE DECK AND ENGINEER CADETS,
MARINERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE
INDUSTRY, CAPTAINS, PILOTS, NAVY, COAST GUARD,
TUG FLEET CREWS, SAILORS, YACHT CLUBS, MARINE FIRE,
HISTORIANS, ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.**

FOOD AND HOSPITALITY TO FOLLOW AFTER THE SERVICE.



SUNDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2026, 10:00 am

at

**ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
1049 4th AVE. EAST, OWEN SOUND, ONTARIO**

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

isma.lodge15@gmail.com

PHOTO CREDIT: DAVE CARR



**ISMA TOLEDO
LODGE #9**

**ISMA Grand Lodge Convention
Toledo, OH
Jan. 28 - 31, 2027**

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____
 E-MAIL _____
 SELLER _____

FREIGHTER CRUISE RAFFLE

**Grand Prize: A Trip for 4 - 6 Adults Aboard
M/V Honorable James L. Oberstar**

Good for the 2027 season • Guests must be at least 18 years of age • Adhere to all company policies & procedures • Be flexible concerning ports of departure / return.

Drawing Date: Sat. Jan. 30, 2027 10 p.m. Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel
 Donation - \$10 ea. or 6 for \$50 ♦ Winner need not be present to win. ♦ Tickets cannot be redeemed for cash.
 To purchase tickets: Mail check made payable to ISMA Toledo Lodge 9 / P.O. Box 5218 / Toledo, OH 43611
 For questions or concerns, please email: ISMAToledo9@gmail.com or call: 419-345-5206

<p>Second Prize Round trip for two aboard historic car ferry S.S. Badger</p>	<p>Third Prize Pilot boat ride to touch a freighter Good for four people Courtesy - Lake Pilots' Association</p>	<p>Fourth Prize A trip on the legendary mailboat J.W. Westcott</p>
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M/V Hon. James L. Oberstar



INTERLAKE STEAMSHIP



M/V Honorable James L. Oberstar - Toledo Built!

Steamer Charles M. Beeghly joined The Interlake Steamship Company fleet in 1967. When built in 1959 by American Ship Building Company at Toledo, Ohio, as Shenango II, she was one of the largest vessels (710 feet long) on the Great Lakes. In 1972, the Beeghly was lengthened by 96 feet at Fraser Shipyards, Inc., Superior, Wisconsin. She was converted to a self-unloader at Fraser Shipyards in 1981, and is capable of discharging cargo at a rate of 6000 tons per hour. Her steam turbine power plant was replaced with two Bergen B:32:40L diesels during the 2008-2009 winter layup period. She returned to service in June 2009. The Beeghly was named for a former president and chairman of the board of Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation. In 2010 the M/V Charles M. Beeghly was renamed the M/V Hon. James L. Oberstar honoring the former congressman of the same name from Minnesota who served the US House of Representatives for nearly a half century.

