

Upcoming events

- Jan. 8-12** **1997 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archeology sponsored by the Society for Historical Archeology.**
Site: Corpus Christi, Texas. For more info., contact Dr. David L. Carlson, Texas A&M University; College Station, TX 77843; (409) 847-9248.
- Feb. 14-15** **"Heritage: The Next Generation" sponsored by the Ontario Heritage Federation.**
Site: Toronto, Ont. For more info., write Ontario Heritage Federation, 10 Adelaide St. East; Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3; (416) 325-5000.
- Apr. 26-27** **WUAA Spring Meeting.** Site: Madison, Wi. For more info., contact Tom Villand, (608) 221-1996.

Wisconsin Underwater Archeological Association

P.O. Box 6081

Madison, WI 53716



*For those interested in the study and preservation of
Wisconsin's underwater history and cultural resources.*

Wisconsin's UNDERWATER HERITAGE

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November 1996



WUAA Spring Meeting

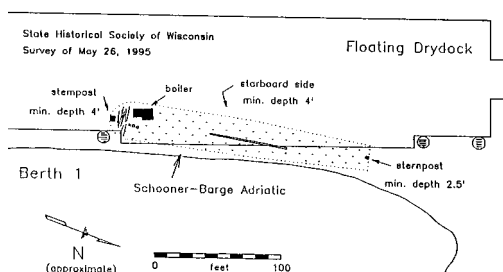
The Spring meeting of the Association will be held Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27, 1997 in Madison. Meetings on Saturday will be held at the Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin campus. A business meeting will be held in the morning, followed by lunch at the Union. In the afternoon Dick Boyd will give a presentation on the history of scuba diving equipment and how it relates to underwater archeology. Following Dick's talk there will be a seminar on how to conduct individual research projects.

On Sunday there will be a field trip to the Dryerson Fish Weir site on the Yahara River south of Madison and also a tour of the State Historical Society's Preservation Laboratory.

WUAA 1996 Field Season Review

Adriatic

June saw the WUAA in Door County, working with the SHSW underwater archaeology program in an investigation of a schooner at Bailey's Harbor and the wreck of the schooner-barge *Adriatic* at Sturgeon Bay. The latter wreck features an interesting self-unloader rig which is believed to have been one of the earliest bulk cargo self-unloader boats on the Great Lakes. Torrential overnight rains had WUAA members wetter while in their tents than while in the lake, but in spite of this a significant amount of survey data was collected



over three days. Historical research is planned for this winter. The *Adriatic* may be the subject of future field investigations.

Lac de Flambeau

With spring coming late to the North Country, WUAA members had a frosty start to the field season. On

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Fall Meeting & Association News

The Fall 1996 meeting of the Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association was held on Saturday, October 5, 1996 at the West Point Dive Park near Red Granite, Wisconsin. Following the business meeting, Association members had an opportunity to examine the wreck training mock-up that is being built for WUAA's use at West Point Dive Park by Craig Fink and Russ Leitz. Several members also took an opportunity to dive at the park during the afternoon.

Business

After several successful years, the Pearl Lake training programs was canceled this year. However, the classroom portion of the training program will again be offered during Our World Underwater in Chicago next April. Donations from Dave Cooper and Dick Boyd from past years' seminars continue to have a positive effect on the Association's cash position. The secretary/treasurer report showed that WUAA cur-

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Wisconsin's Underwater Heritage

is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association, a nonprofit association of individuals and organizations who are interested in studying and preserving the underwater cultural resources and historical sites of Wisconsin.

In addition to publishing this newsletter, the Association also holds meetings twice a year and provides financial support to members' research and publication projects. For membership information, contact the secretary or write to the address below. Annual membership dues are \$15.

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Madison, 608-221-1996

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Wausau, 715-842-1762

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WUAA 1996 Field Season Review

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May 10, the team braved drizzle, snow flurries, ice floes, and freezing water to assist the Lac de Flambeau tribal historic preservation office and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (SHSW) in an underwater survey at Lake Pokegama. The effort is part of a multi-year archaeological survey of the Lac de Flambeau reservation. One of the objectives of the project is to locate an 1830s era American Fur Company fur trade post known to be in the vicinity. While the divers were disappointed in their efforts, historical research conducted by the tribe is rapidly narrowing the search area, and perhaps WUAA members will have an opportunity to locate this site in an upcoming year.

Bullhead Point

In reviewing the Association's work on the wrecks at Bullhead Point near Sturgeon Bay, it was noted that there may be sufficient data to begin work on a publication. During this winter season, historical research will be done in preparation for publication. Additional fieldwork at Bullhead Point may be done next spring with a target date for publication tentatively set for the Fall of 1997.

Selah Chamberlain

WUAA and the SHSW jointly sponsored a project in August to survey the wreck of the steamer *Selah Chamberlain* located off Sheboygan. Nine volunteers and four SHSW underwater archaeologists mapped, videoed, and documented the wreck over the period of a week. High temperatures topside and 39 degree

water and low visibility on the wreck made for a challenging work environment. However, a detailed survey of the hull, starboard side, and machinery was completed, leaving documentation of the port side for an upcoming field season. This was an excellent opportunity for experienced WUAA volunteers to hone mapping skills developed on shallower, clearer wreck sites. The success of the project owes much to Robert and Charlie Tom, Kimm Stabelfeldt, and the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute for the use of their boats; to the City of Sheboygan for use of a field headquarters building; and to Bill Wangemann and Steve Radovan of Sheboygan for logistical and research assistance. Expenses were shared by SHSW, WUAA, and project participants. We also thank Mr. Jim Kennedy of Cross Plains for his personal donation towards project expenses.

Dyreson Fish Weir

High water in the Yahara River has hampered further efforts to survey the Dyreson fish weir, but there are hopes of returning to the site this fall or winter. However, WUAA's earlier work at the site has paid off in an unexpected way. This spring, Dane County purchased the 126-acre property for the establishment of a county park, which will protect both the underwater and upland elements of the site from encroaching development and threats such as dredging.

Great Lakes Maritime On-Line

At the right is a list of Internet addresses for some of the Great Lakes maritime history-related sites on the World Wide Web.

Historic Database On Ships

A database of articles on ships, lighthouses, piers, docks, quarries and self unloaders from the Door County Advocate is being prepared. Approximately thirty years of information has been recorded, but not typed, in a little under a year. Since the Door County Advocate started in 1862, the project of collecting data will hopefully be completed in about three years.

Ship information is being recorded by date in the newspaper, page number (when pages are numbered), ship name and ship type, plus a short comment unless the ship was just listed as being in port. A ship is listed once per year to indicate it existed plus any other time it is mentioned for things such as being ashore, being repaired, wrecked, etc.

Lighthouses, piers, docks, quarries and self unloaders will be listed as to date in the newspaper, page number (when pages are numbered) and a short comment.

Anyone wanting to inquire about the project can contact Russel Leitz by mail at 4518 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901 or call 414-231-9082 or by email at 75477.1261@compuserve.com.

Army Corps of Engineers Soo Locks Visitor Center
<http://sparky.nce.usace.army.mil/behind/excensoo.html>

Association for Great Lakes Maritime History
<http://little.nhlink.net/wgm/glmh.html>

S.S. Canadiana Preservation Society, Inc.
<http://www.webpay.com/canadiana.html>

Canal Park Museum
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/cpmm.html>

Door County Maritime Museum
<http://www.uic.edu/~mkoenig/dcm/dcm.html>

Dossin Great Lakes Museum
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/museums2.htm#dossin2>

Friends of the Milwaukee Clipper
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/fmc.html>

Great Lakes Historical Society
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/museums2.htm#GLHS>

Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association
<http://www.ais.org/~lsa/grtlakes.html>

Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society
<http://www.ais.org/~lsa/grtlakes.html>

Great Lakes Vessel Passage Home Page
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/boatnerd.html>

Marine Historical Society of Detroit
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/mhsd.htm>

Marine Museum of the Great Lakes
<http://stauffer.queensu.ca/marmus/>

Mariner's Museum
<http://www.mariner.org>

Michigan Maritime Museum
<http://www.artcom.com/museums/nv/mr/49090-05.html>

Naval and Servicemen's Park Museum
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/museums2.htm#N>

Save Ontario Shipwrecks
<http://yoda.sscl.uwo.ca/assoc/sos/>

Society for the Preservation of the Carferry Milwaukee
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/spcm.html>

State Historical Society of Wisconsin
<http://www.wisc.edu/shs-archives>

Steamship William G. Mather Museum
<http://little.nhlink.net/wgm/wgmhome.html>

Wisconsin Marine Historical Society
<http://www.execpc.com/~wmhs.html>

Wisconsin Maritime Museum
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/~ncschult/museums2.htm#WMM>

Fall Meeting & Association News

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rently has \$150 in checking and \$2,050 in savings.

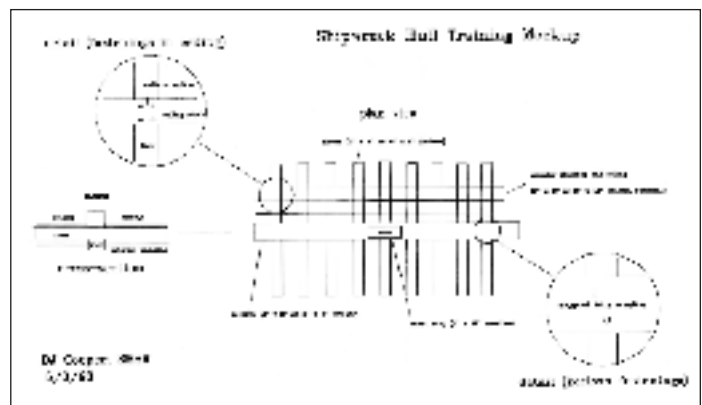
There was an update on work on the "Our Four Lakes: Their Legends, Sites and Secrets" publication project. Rather than continuing to look for a publisher, a prototype of a book that the Association could self-publish was presented at the meeting.

Several proposed changes in the Association's newsletter were discussed at the fall meeting. Those changed include expanding the newsletter to six or eight pages and trying to incorporate more graphics and photos. To achieve that expansion, production responsibilities will need to be split among several association members. Bob O'Donnell has agreed to continue providing editorial materials, Betsy True has volunteered to do the layout and pre-press work and Tom Villand will do the copying and mailing.

The need for a membership drive was discussed with some effort to be made before the spring meeting which will be held in Madison in April.

Tom Villand and Danny Aerts made a presentation on the Association's work at the former Leathem & Smith Quarry near Sturgeon Bay at the Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes Conference in Duluth, held October 10-12.

In reporting on State Historical Society activities, Dave Cooper noted that WUAA was mentioned prominently in an article he wrote entitled "Building Bridges in the Badger State: Partnerships in Wisconsin Underwater Archeology" for Underwater Archeology 1996.



National and International News

South Carolina

State of South Carolina, National Park Service, and Navy underwater archaeologists have been involved in this year's study of the recently discovered Civil War submarine *H.L. Hunley*, lost off Charleston Harbor following an attack upon a blockading Union warship in February 1864. The small steel ship was propelled by a hand crank system operated by the crew of nine; attached to her prow was a long pole equipped with 90 pounds of explosives. The submerged *Hunley* assaulted and sank the Union warship *Housatonic*. In the ensuing excitement the *Hunley* slipped away, never to be seen again. Apparently something went wrong during the escape and the *Hunley* sank, entombing her entire crew. The discovery of the famous site by underwater archaeologists working for author Clive Cussler was announced in the New York Times on May 11, 1995. News of 1996 investigations at the site may be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cla.sc.edu/sciaa/sciaa.html>.

Texas

Texas has been the site of another exciting archaeological discovery, the 1685 wreck of the French ship *Belle*,

lost by the explorer Sieur de La Salle. The wreck is of especial interest to Great Lakes divers, historians, and underwater archaeologists interested in the 1679 wreck of La Salle's fur trading vessel *Grifon* on Lake Michigan, a wreck which has never been located. The wreck of the *Belle* was discovered in July 1995, and was identified by royal crests marking a bronze cannon recovered from the site. Intensive excavation of the site began this year. You may visit the excavation of the *Belle* in person, or via the *Belle's* WWW site at <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/belle/index.htm>.

Canada

An excavation of a British ship of the same period is underway in Canada. Visit this excavation at <http://www.gouv.qc.ca/mccq/document/epaphips/wreck01.htm> to learn more about the wreck resulting from the British attack on Quebec City in 1690. The excavation is under the direction of Parks Canada's marine archaeology unit, and involves sport diver volunteers working with federal marine archaeologists.

State and Regional News

SHS Underwater Archeology Program

The SHSW has obtained funding from the UW Sea Grant Institute for the development of a World Wide Web site devoted to Wisconsin's Lake Superior shipwrecks. Check out "Ice Water Mansions" at

<http://www.seagrant.wisc.edu/Communications/Shipwrecks/>. Also, the SHSW is working with a group of Apostle Islands divers and charter boat operators to develop an underwater maritime heritage trail on Lake Superior, with waterproof site guides and boat moorings, to facilitate recreational use and interpretation of the area's underwater resources.

Recent projects in addition to the *Adriatic* and *Selah Chamberlain* (discussed in the WUAA field season article) include an unnamed wreck near Little Sturgeon Bay, and the *Lucerne* in Lake Superior.

The underwater archaeology staff of the SHSW have also undertaken a number of smaller field projects, including investigation of a prehistoric dugout canoe in Kenosha County and inspection of a historic dock on the Mississippi River. SHSW underwater archaeologists have also been busy with numerous public programs, workshops, and school presentations on underwater archaeology.

Wisconsin Marine Historical Society

In September, the Wisconsin Marine Historical Society held an open house at its headquarters in the Milwaukee Public Library. The open house event also featured a sale of surplus Society artifacts, periodicals, books and other items in order to raise funds for the WMHS' operating expenses. Through an individual contribution, the Marine Historical Society has also commissioned a poster promoting the Society and its work.

M/S William A. Irvin

The former Army Corps of Engineers tug *Lake Superior* has been acquired and is now being operated as a museum by the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. The tug is moored behind the museum ship *William A. Irvin* on Duluth's waterfront. The 53-year-old tug was used by the Corps from 1950 until it was retired from service last winter.

Cormorant Expedition and Save Ontario Shipwrecks

The Canadian Navy vessel *HMCS Cormorant* was involved in a number of underwater explorations on the Great Lakes this summer. Members of SOS Port Dover

had an opportunity to join the crew of the *HMCS Cormorant* in its mini-sub exploration of the waters of Lake Erie. While exploring the bottom of Lake Erie, the ship's mini-sub located the relatively intact wrecks of several vessels including a large steam tug and what is believed to be the wreck of the 255-foot, wooden steamer *Persian* which sank in 1874. In addition, a two-masted 120-foot schooner was found lying in about 170 feet of water off Port Dover, Ontario.

Lady Elgin

Earlier this year, a Cook County (Ill.) judge ruled against the Illinois Preservation Agency in its efforts obtain sole rights to the wreck of the steamer *Lady Elgin* in Lake Michigan under the U.S. Abandoned Shipwreck Act. The agency's efforts have been opposed in court by Harry Zych who discovered the wreck in 1989 and has been seeking salvage rights to it ever since. Zych has already recovered some artifacts from the wreck and wants to display them in a traveling exhibit.

Illinois Judge Margaret McBride found that the IPA failed to prove that the ship, which sank in 1860, had been abandoned by either its owner or the insurance company. At last report, the Illinois Attorney General was still deciding whether to file an appeal.

Three Brothers Wreck

Earlier this year, National Park Service personnel found the wreck of the wooden steamer *Three Brothers* off South Manitou Island in northern Lake Michigan. Built in 1888 as a lumber hooker, the vessel was lost and thought to have broken up during a storm in 1911. Diver inspection of the wreck has determined that the ship's hull is remarkably intact and still has its original name plate.

Shipwreck Divers Lost

Two divers were lost this summer in shipwreck diving accidents on the Great Lakes. In Lake Michigan, a 39-year-old diver was lost when he became entangled in the anchor lines of the wreck of the *William Brown*. The *Brown* was a 140-foot ore carrier which exploded and sank in 80 feet of water in 1886 in Green Bay.

In Lake Superior's Whitefish Bay, a 26-year-old diver was lost when she had trouble with her breathing apparatus while diving the wreck of the *Vienna*. The wooden steamer was sunk following a collision with the steamer *Nipigon* in 1892. It now lies in 145 feet of water.

Shipwrecks In Review

by Dick Boyd

We present a review of some important events in the exploration, study and archeology of notable shipwrecks with emphasis on those located in the Great Lakes. Other incidents of archeological or historical interest are also mentioned. (See the Spring 1996 issue for the first part of Dick's review)

Edmund Fitzgerald

In September 1995 the first actual scuba dives on the *Edmund Fitzgerald* were completed by Mike Zee of Chicago and Terrance Tysall of Orlando. The duo used trimixes of oxygen, helium and nitrogen to descend a video/ROV cable to the wreck where they spent about 12 minutes. The decompression back to the surface required about 4 hours and several gas switches. The dive was not without incident and the adventurers had to overcome several regulator freeflows and gas handling problems. Reports suggest that the *Fitzgerald* was not declared a Canadian gravesite, however comments from the divers indicate that they were very cautious not to disturb the wreck in anyway.

Lottie Cooper / Sheboygan

At Sheboygan, the wreck of the *Lottie Cooper* has been a big tourist attraction at the new city marina. The *Cooper*, sunk in 1894, had been discovered during dredging operations to improve and expand the existing harbor. Through the cooperation of the City, the construction company and the state Office of Underwater Archeology, large sections of the schooner were raised, cleaned and reassembled into a unique shore display. Over the past two years the display has been

improved with some landscaping, a gravel walkway, plus interpretive signs and literature. Anyone interested in shipwrecks or ship structure should be sure to visit the *Cooper* when in or near Sheboygan.

Traverse Bay Anchor

An interesting isolated artifact was discovered by several Lake Michigan divers off Northport, Mi. on Grand Traverse Bay. Here they found a large anchor typical of the kedge models carried by Great Lakes schooners and dating from the late 1800's. The 10 foot high anchor had a banded wooden cross arm and weighed about 2000 pounds. After securing the proper DNR permit, the divers raised the artifact from 40 feet of water; it will be restored for display in a nearby park. Such anchors were commonly found by divers in the 1960's and 70's, but they have now become relatively rare.

Lawrence / Poverty Island

Perhaps one of the more curious wreck sagas of the year revolved about the sunken schooner *Gay Captain Lawrence* which was found off Poverty Island in upper Green Bay by a Michigan dive salvage group. The *Lawrence* is another piece in the ongoing puzzle of the so-called Treasure of Poverty Island, thought to be a lost gold shipment of Civil War vintage. This treasure has been sought by mariners and divers probably since the turn of the century. In 1933 the *Lawrence* was purchased in Milwaukee by a salvage expedition which retrofitted the schooner-yacht and set off for Poverty Island. For most of the summer, the explorers scoured the

underwater terrain of the passage, seeking the hidden fortune.

During this time, rampant rumors circulated suggesting that the group was very close to finding the money. In September of the year, eyewitness reports described a celebration aboard the *Lawrence*, as though some significant event had occurred. Had some important clue to the treasure been found? Who knows ... because on September 19 a wild storm sank the *Lawrence*! Although the salvors escaped unharmed, they apparently never made any further attempt to complete their quest.

The finding of the *Gay Captain Lawrence* in 1993 once again generated interest in the treasure legend, especially when the dive group tried to gain legal salvage rights to the wreck. The divers wanted to excavate around the hull to hopefully obtain evidence that might clarify just what the explorers had found in 1933. After some legal sparring with the State of Michigan, a court decision confirmed the State's ownership of the *Lawrence*. Michigan officials were apparently suspicious of the divers' motives, not to mention that the basic proposition was based strictly on legend; thus no excavation permit was granted.

Detroit, Florida, Thomas R. Scott & John Breden

The dive season of 1994 produced several major shipwreck finds in Lake Huron including the schooner *John Breden*, the wooden steamer *Florida*, the steambarge *Thomas R. Scott* and the side-wheeler *Detroit*. The latter was a pre-Civil War vessel which was sunk in a dense fog off Grindstone City, Mi., while enroute

to Sault Ste. Marie in May of 1854. The 150-foot long side-wheeler was rammed by the bark *Nucleus*, which suddenly appeared out of the mist and sent the steamer to the bottom in over 200 feet of water.

The vessel was located with side-scan sonar in early June by Dave Trotter's group, Undersea Research Associates. Dives to the wreck have disclosed that it is in fine condition, having settled reasonably gently on the bottom leaving the decks, hull and propulsion system largely intact. During the explorations, a large metal strongbox was discovered on the aft deck. This has spurred talk about obtaining a permit to raise this container and have a public opening in collaboration with some maritime museum. Stay tuned! On a grim note, a member of the dive team, Danny Fader, took a serious hit of the bends after being forced to the surface without decompression when his regulator malfunctioned at depth.

In deep water off Alpena, Ed Ellison's crew of wreck hunters located the 270 foot wooden steamer *Florida* which was rammed and sunk in 1897 by another steamer, the *George W. Roby*. The vessel is reported to be in decent shape with plenty of intact cargo. The group will leave the wreck undisturbed, although considerable interest has been aroused by several large oak-wood barrels ... they apparently contain whiskey which is about to turn 100 years old!

In late August, the Canadian Navy's dive ship *Cormorant* located the wreck of the steambarge *Thomas R. Scott*. This 107 year old wooden vessel rests in 380 feet of water in

northern Georgian Bay where she was lost in 1914. The wreck was examined and filmed using a small manned submersible.

Out in southern Lake Huron, the wreck of the schooner *John Breden* was found by Gary Biniecki's dive team. The vessel had sunk during a gale in July of 1899 while in tow of the steambarge *Winslow*. After some careful archival research, the group was able to reconstruct the trek of the ship and roughly pinpoint the place of her sinking. A 5 hour sonar search found the wreckage in relatively shallow water just south of the Sanilac Shores Underwater Preserve. The wreck site has been surveyed and mapped by underwater archeology students working with the State of Michigan.

Cannon

Another interesting miscellaneous archeological find was that of an ancient cannon found in the bottom of the Detroit River in 1994. It was finally identified by a British weaponry expert as a British model of about 1725-1750. It still remains a mystery as to how it ended up in the Detroit River.

(To be continued in the next issue.)

Underwater Archaeology Video Available

The underwater archaeology program of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin is offering an educational video for loan to dive clubs and businesses, historical and archaeological societies, and other organizations interested in Great Lakes maritime history, underwater archaeology, and shipwreck preservation. The video may be borrowed free of charge for two-week loan periods, and will make an enjoyable and educational program for your organization or class.

Assembled by underwater videographer Allen Brown, the video is introduced with a message by sport diver and actor Gene Hackman. The tape includes the program "Finders, Keepers: Preserving Great Lakes Shipwrecks" produced by the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History, and a program on the archaeological survey of the steamer Niagara, produced by Wisconsin Public Television.

The video is in VHS format, runtime 26 minutes. To complement the video, we also have free copies available of our full-color "Help Preserve Wisconsin's Maritime Heritage" poster. Contact: David Cooper, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State St., Madison, WI 53706, 608-264-6493.