



# Duluth Seaway Port Authority

SUMMER 2017

NORTH STAR PORT



## Canada 150: Celebrating our neighbors to the north

O Canada! So begins the national anthem of our neighbors to the north. This year, more than ever, those lyrics are being sung with great gusto.

On July 1, Canada kicked off a yearlong celebration of the country's 150th anniversary. It is a celebration with which I feel connected in many ways.

My mother was born near the Niagara River and raised in Welland, Ontario, along with her brother and sister. Some of the very first travel events in my life were trips to visit family around Niagara Falls, the River and, of course, Niagara on the Lake. My uncle and aunt and their families eventually settled in Buffalo, N.Y., which is one of the busiest border crossings along the U.S./Canadian border.

My first professional job evolved into a position with a Canadian company via a corporate merger. Throughout my career, I have been across Canada several times as part of business travels—from Montreal and Toronto in the east to meetings in Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Grand Prairie and Vancouver. Most of these visits occurred during February which, as I tell visitors to Duluth, “we know you really love us if you visit in February!” When it came to cheering for athletes in international competitions, my family always had a rooting interest ... first was U.S.A., second was Canada and third was Italy (not surprising with ‘Coda’ as a surname).

I am a U.S. citizen and very much at home anywhere in the United States. As this country feels like my real home Canada would be the equivalent of the home of a life-long friend. You know the kind of place where you feel comfortable opening the door, announcing yourself and walking right into the living room. When you arrive, no one in the room is surprised. They are just happy

you dropped by and say, “Hey, grab a beer from the fridge and have a seat.”

Canada is different from the United States in many ways, yet it also is so familiar and comfortable that it is easy to sometimes forget just how connected we really are to the best of neighbors. It was only recently, when I began to focus on our relationship with Canada, that I realized my natural connection was not unique. I have discovered that Canada is a touchstone to many Americans whether they are conscious of it or not.

I need only look as far as the Port Authority's Clure Public Terminal, where over two-thirds of our business originated in or is destined for Canada. In our harbor, some 20 percent of all waterborne traffic and over 80 percent of the Port's international trade is with Canada. That linkage—by water, road and rail—holds true for the entire state as Canada is also Minnesota's largest trading partner. According to the Canadian government, Canadian trade supports over 174,000 Minnesota jobs and \$13 billion in bilateral trade. Canada also is ranked as the number one customer to over 35 U.S. states. Our nation trades goods and services of over \$1.3 million every minute of every day with our neighbors to the north.

These are just the raw economic truths of our connectivity. These truths are manifested across our history. Of Canada, Franklin D. Roosevelt said it well, “We as neighbors are true friends because we maintain our own rights with frankness ... We seek to be scrupulously fair and helpful, not only in our relations with each other, but each of us at home in our relations with our own people.”

I believe that our relationship with Canada runs strong and deep here in America. So to my Canadian friends I say, “Stop on by, the door is open. Come on in. Grab a beer and plan to sit a spell. Once you settle in, we can resume some friendly debates on hockey, baseball, fishing and, of course, craft brewing.”

O Canada ... great neighbors, distinguished trade partners and consummate friends. We congratulate your success and wish you the very best of luck for the next 150 years!



Vanta E. Coda II  
Port Director



CANADA 150



Jon Dyess

The CSL Assiniboine prepares to depart the Twin Ports with a load of iron ore.

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**About North Star Port**

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An iconic stern shot of the *Stewart J. Cort*.

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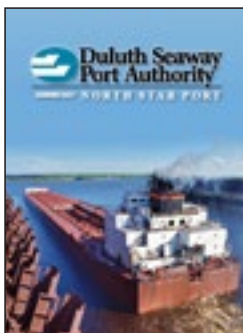
**On the covers**

**On the front:**

The *James R. Barker* departs the CN Duluth Dock June 3 with the first shipment of UTAC's Mustang pellets for ArcelorMittal.

**On the back:**

The *H. Lee White* discharges a load of limestone at the Graymont Superior lime production facility in June.



Paul Scinocca



Chris Mazzella

Jon Dyess

# Munson loses steam, but gains momentum

When something “loses steam,” usually it runs out of energy and can’t keep pace. That is not the case with the *John G. Munson*. The self-unloading freighter recently ended her 64-year career as a Great Lakes steamer and was transformed into a diesel-powered vessel of the future.

Representatives of Great Lakes Fleet and Keystone Shipping Company joined nearly 200 people for a recommissioning ceremony April 20 at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay, Wis. The vessel spent the 2016-17 shipping season at the shipyard having her steam power plant converted to a cleaner, more efficient diesel propulsion system. The new main engine, built in Germany, is a MAK 43C 6-cylinder, which generates roughly 8,000hp.

Joshua H. Juel, manager, Great Lakes Fleet, delivered the keynote address. He reflected on the world back in August 1952 when the *John G. Munson* was first commissioned in Manitowoc, Wis. Over 10,000 people attended that event, many of them arriving from Chicago on a specially chartered train.

“Harry Truman was winding down his presidency, rock and roll had yet to



Chris Winters

Installation of the new main engine in the *John G. Munson*

be invented, and United States Steel Corp. (USS) was one of the largest companies in the world,” Juel told the crowd, which had gathered indoors for the ceremony to avoid rain. “It is hard to imagine that any of those individuals at that first commissioning could have believed we would be standing here in Sturgeon Bay some 65 years later to recommission the *John G. Munson* as a motor vessel, which should extend its service life for decades to come.”

*John G. Munson* was built for Bradley Transportation, then a wholly-owned USS subsidiary that operated as the company’s fleet of self-unloaders and was primarily engaged in the limestone trade. The vessel was named after the former president of both Michigan Limestone and its Bradley Transportation Division. In 1939, Munson became vice president for the parent USS. The *John G. Munson* still transports limestone from Michigan quarries as well



Chris Winters

The recommissioning ceremony of the *John G. Munson* was held April 20, 2017, at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding.



Chris Winters

The *John G. Munson* in dry dock being fitted with a new variable-pitch propeller



Christian Dalbec

Built as a work boat, the *John G. Munson* has created jobs for thousands in its 65 years on the Lakes.

as iron ore/taconite from Minnesota's Iron Range to USS mills on the Lower Lakes.

In his remarks, Juel recalled that the *Munson* was built as a work boat, which has created job opportunities for thousands through the years. He concluded by thanking all of the people assembled—including leadership and project sponsors from CN, the hard-working crew from Bay Shipbuilding and the talented team assembled by Keystone Shipping Company, with

particular praise for project lead Mitch Koslow and the tireless efforts and technical skills of Scott McPherson, chief engineer.

Investing in the diesel propulsion system offers a variety of benefits for Great Lakes Fleet, including fuel efficiency, lower maintenance costs and reduced emissions. The *John G. Munson* is one of nine vessels in the Great Lakes Fleet. After the diesel conversion, the *Munson* made her first visit to Duluth on May 7.



Chris Winters

Logging out the *Munson's* final engine orders as a steamship on the engine room telegraph Dec. 17, 2015



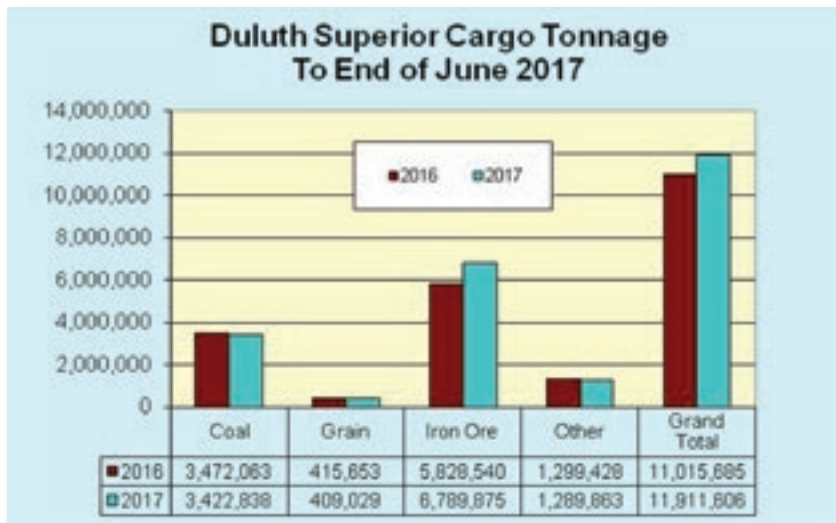
# Minnesota iron ore boosts Port and Seaway trade

Iron ore shipments through the Port of Duluth-Superior have shown strong, steady increases this season. It's encouraging to have all six Iron Range mines operating once again. Year-to-date tonnage for pellets (6.8 million short tons) is running a full 16 percent ahead of 2016 and outpacing the five-year average by the same spread. BNSF's Allouez dock in Superior is seeing a double digit increase year-over-year in loadings. The CN ore docks in Duluth and Two Harbors also are experiencing similar increases in throughput.

Not only are domestic deliveries up on the Lower Lakes, overseas shipments have risen exponentially as well. Over 35 percent of the pellets moved through the Twin Ports through June were loaded onto Canadian carriers and shipped via the St. Lawrence Seaway to Quebec then transferred to larger oceangoing vessels for international delivery.

Increased volumes of iron ore, grain and other commodities were echoed across the Seaway, with total cargo shipments up 20 percent year-over-year through June. Much of that rise is attributable to a surge in U.S. iron ore exports from Minnesota mines to steel-makers in China and Japan.

Coal shipments are holding steady here in the Twin Ports, little changed from a year ago. Grain shipments are still running a full 10 percent ahead of five-year averages, though June tonnage was slightly off last year's pace. Again, U.S. grain exports reflect a similar upward trend through the Seaway.



John Rochon, shiploader operator at the Superior Midwest Energy Terminal, loads coal via remote control from the facility's conveyor system into cargo holds on the *St. Clair*. Coal at that facility can be loaded at a rate of up to 11,500 tons per hour.

DSPA



Jane Herrick

The *Federal Yukon* approaches CHS to load wheat.



Nick Stenstrup

The *Algoma Discovery* takes on a load of iron ore at BNSF Railway Dock 5 in Superior.

# Cliffs' new Mustang pellets

Courtesy Cliffs Natural Resources



There was no mistaking the first outbound shipment of Cliffs Natural Resources' new superflux pellets as it passed through the Duluth Ship Canal June 3 aboard the *James R. Barker*. The 1,000-foot self-unloading bulk carrier flaunted an enormous banner that read: "Moving Cliffs' Mustang Pellets For ArcelorMittal."

The historic cargo launched a new era for Cliffs' United Taconite (UTAC) operations on the Iron Range, one that secures a long-term customer for UTAC's Thunderbird mine in Eveleth and Fairlane plant in nearby Forbes. The specialized pellet mixes iron ore with limestone and dolomite and is formulated to feed ArcelorMittal's Furnace No. 7 at Indiana Harbor, the largest and most efficient blast furnace in North America. Cliffs has a 10-year pellet agreement with ArcelorMittal.

Cliffs invested \$75 million into UTAC's existing facilities in Forbes to support production and transport of the superflux pellets. The project added a new storage facility, limestone crusher, conveyors and rail infrastructure. It was completed in nine months, requiring 250,000 hours of labor and creating 120 construction jobs at the height of construction.

"Building a new facility on budget, without any lost time accidents and in only nine months through the Minnesota winter is no small undertaking," said Lourenco Goncalves, chair, president and CEO of Cliffs Natural Resources. "(It is) one that only the Cliffs team can accomplish."

Production of the new pellet represents a remarkable turnaround for UTAC facilities, which were idle just a year ago due to a downturn in the domestic steel industry. The resurgence of mining and production at UTAC positively impacts supporting industries and communities across the state. The first load of 60,000 tons of Mustang

Kevin Davis/Courtesy Interlake Steamship Co.



Interlake Steamship Co. placed a banner on the ship's boom in recognition of the first Mustang shipment.



Courtesy Cliffs Natural Resources

The first shipment of Mustang pellets was cause for celebration. Participating in the ribbon cutting on May 30, 2017, were (from left): Brian Zarn, United Steelworkers Union Local 6860 president; Congressman Rick Nolan; Lourenco Goncalves, chairman, president & CEO, Cliffs Natural Resources; Senator Amy Klobuchar; and Santi Romani, (retired) general manager, United Taconite.

pellets was loaded onto the *James R. Barker* at the CN Duluth Dock, and many more loads are expected to follow.

"We feel very fortunate to carry the Mustang pellet for Cliffs and ArcelorMittal," said Brendon O'Connor, Interlake's vice president of marketing and marine traffic. "We recognize the tremendous investment made by Cliffs in producing the Mustang pellet and the understandable excitement from ArcelorMittal to receive this improved and customized raw material."

The new pellet is called Mustang because UTAC (formerly Eveleth Taconite) was constructed and operated in the mid 1960s by Henry Ford of Ford Motor Company. Although the mine is now owned by Cliffs, Ford's influence still permeates operations, with facilities like the Thunderbird mine and Fairlane plant both named after popular Ford automobiles.



Paul Scinocca

The *James R. Barker* loads Mustang pellets June 3 at the CN Duluth Dock for delivery to ArcelorMittal.

# Gains in freight at Clure Terminal

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority's Clure Public Marine Terminal has handled a wide variety of project cargoes and other shipments this season—everything from Brazilian kaolin clay and gensets from Finland to mining shovels from Belgium and wind turbine components from Germany. Duluth Cargo Connect crews also offloaded two converter vessels that arrived by tug/barge from Sarnia, Ontario, destined for final delivery to Manitoba.

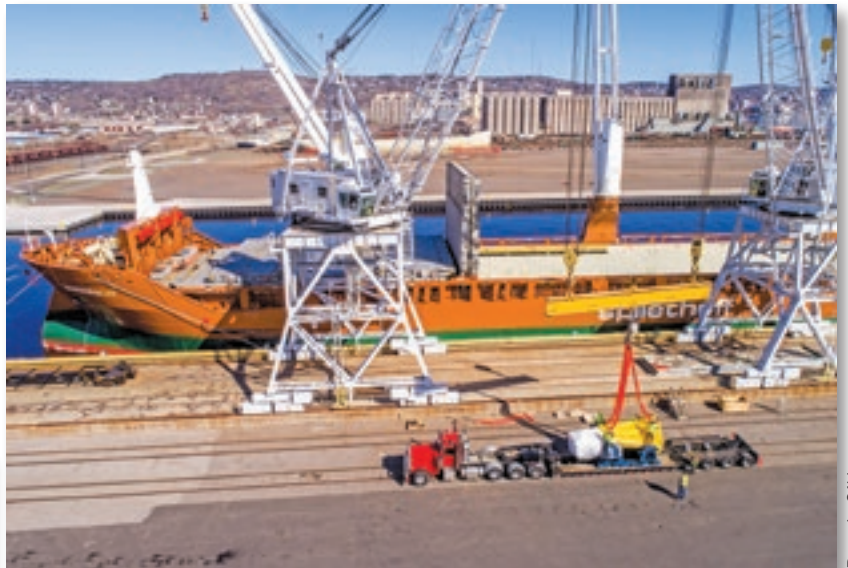
The pace of containerized freight moving through the new CN Duluth Intermodal Terminal also is picking up speed. Duluth Cargo Connect officials see this as another component of an increasingly diversified cargo base serving customers across North America's heartland.

"In its first three months of operation, our intermodal terminal handled well over 300 containers—import and export," said Vanta Coda, Port Authority executive director. "That was not only transloading units between truck and rail but also providing a host of ancillary services to best serve regional customers." [duluthcargo.com](http://duluthcargo.com)



Dennis O'Hara

Wind turbine components being staged for ALLETE Clean Energy projects.



Dennis O'Hara

Gantry cranes on the Clure Terminal offload nacelles from the *Marsgracht*.



DSPA

Two converter vessels arrive by tug/barge from Sarnia.



DSPA

Landside intermodal traffic continues to pick up speed in Duluth.



# DSPA shrinks environmental footprint



The Duluth Seaway Port Authority (DSPA) has made great strides toward reducing its environmental footprint—posting its highest scores in a decade during the latest round of Green Marine evaluations.

Each year, participating ship owners, ports, terminals, shipyards and Seaway corporations complete voluntary self evaluations which are verified by an accredited, third party every two years.

“The certification process is rigorous and transparent,” said David Bolduc, Green Marine’s executive director.

“As a founding member of Green Marine in 2007, the Port Authority has completed 10 years of continuous improvement in our environmental and community impact footprint,” said Jim Sharrow, DSPA director of port planning and resiliency. “There are 36 North American ports currently enrolled in Green Marine, and I am proud to say that Duluth scores in the top 25 percent in the areas of greenhouse gases, spill prevention and environmental leadership.”

By focusing on Green Marine’s six key areas, the Port Authority has improved from rankings at Level 1 or 2 to hitting a solid 5 in those three categories. Improved scores reflect

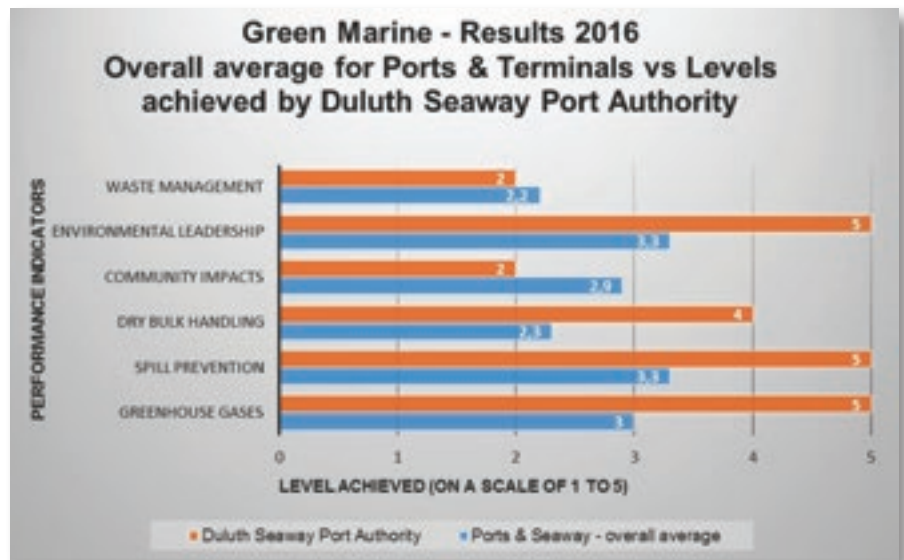
concrete actions taken that support Green Marine’s mission of advancing environmental excellence.

“When it came to reducing greenhouse gases, for example, investing in fluorescent and motion-controlled lighting reduced our electricity use by 50 percent here on the Clure Terminal,” said Sharrow. “We’ve now installed LED fixtures for office, street and area lighting for even further performance improvement.”

RC Helland Consulting, LLC, verified the Port Authority’s most recent report and documented improvements in many areas. For example, DSPA has begun capturing fuel consump-

tion and greenhouse gas emissions data and has written a Storm Water Prevention Plan that addresses issues of runoff, water sampling, inspections for potential leaks and employee training in spill response. Measures also have been put in place to control dust from bulk kaolin clay, lighting upgrades have reduced power consumption, and dredged materials are being utilized in beneficial ways.

[www.green-marine.org](http://www.green-marine.org)



## Manufacturers and fabricators enjoy Clure Terminal tour



Robert Welton

Duluth Cargo Connect hosted the May meeting of the Arrowhead Manufacturers and Fabricators Association (AMFA). Attendees heard a presentation about how this region is directly connected to an efficient, high-capacity, flexible freight network that stretches across North America. They took a bus tour of the entire facility, had an introduction to the new CN Duluth Intermodal ramp and captured a group photo in front of wind blades on the Terminal’s newly redeveloped \$18 million expansion.

# St. Louis River Quest—

St. Louis River Quest marked its 25th anniversary this spring with a record 1,530 sixth-grade participants and an official proclamation by Duluth Mayor Emily Larson recognizing the week of May 15, 2017, as “St. Louis River Quest Week.”

The proclamation was a fitting tribute to a program that has impacted over 23,000 young people since its inception through hands-on learning experiences that promote civic engagement, encourage environmental stewardship and instill community pride.

St. Louis River Quest is a community-based volunteer organization founded in 1993 to introduce area youth to the St. Louis River estuary, highlighting its importance to the region and ongoing efforts to preserve its well-being. Students embark on a half-day journey through a dozen learning stations aboard the *Vista Star* and at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. Each station engages them in a compelling topic, from pollution prevention,

stopping aquatic invaders and fishy physics to sustainable forestry, waste water treatment, hydroelectric power, commercial shipping and more. Station sponsors work directly with educators to align resource materials with Wisconsin and Minnesota science and social studies standards.

Organizers hope the half-day field trip is not just educational, but fun, memorable and impactful—even informing the career choices students make in the future. River Quest alum Jason Mosol graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth this spring with degrees in environment and sustainability as well as urban and regional studies. He still recalls his River Quest adventure as a sixth grader at Hermantown Middle School.

“My father was a presenter that day for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, doing the ‘Cold Hand Luke’ learning station,” said Mosol, who returned to River Quest in 2016 as an intern, staffing the same station on hypothermia. “I also remember standing up on the top deck on a rainy day. It was



DSPA

Students observe the harbor from the top deck of the *Vista Star*—one of 12 hands-on learning stations offered during River Quest.



DSPA

What’s the difference between storm and sanitary sewers? Students discover answers at the City of Duluth Utility Operations’ station.

## River Quest for Seniors



Mary T. George

Why let kids have all the fun? In honor of St. Louis River Quest’s 25th anniversary, organizers took the program on the road to University for Seniors at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Over the course of four weeks, 35 adult learners participated in a dozen River Quest stations. Plans are in the works to offer the class through University for Seniors again this fall or spring.

Using a stream table, Jason Butcher, aquatics program manager for the U.S. Forest Service – Superior National Forest, engages seniors in a discussion about stream geomorphology and how human impacts can change a stream’s physical integrity and biological health.

# 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



pretty exciting to see the whole harbor from the water.”

The idea originated with Duluth businessman John Goldfine, whose family owned the Vista Fleet at the time. His family had launched a river-themed educational program with a riverboat they owned in Chattanooga, Tenn., and Goldfine saw an opportunity to replicate it on the St. Louis River estuary, where serious cleanup efforts were underway. He approached the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District with the concept. Nearly 20 waterfront-related industries, including Hallett Dock Co., Midwest Energy Resources Co., Minnesota Sea Grant and the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, jumped onboard to sponsor what would become the first St. Louis River Quest. Today’s program relies on the support of nearly 300 local businesses, nonprofits and individuals who donate time, talents and resources. The Port Authority remains its lead sponsor.

“Visionary leaders launched this program a quarter century ago to help young people become more civically engaged, more environmentally conscious,” said Adele Yorde, River Quest board president and public relations director for the Port Authority. “We continue to build on that momentum by helping students understand the impact we each have on the environmental health and economic vitality of this harbor ... and that thoughtful



Terry White

*It floats, you don't.* The Duluth Sail and Power Squadron share lessons on buoyancy and the importance of wearing a life jacket.

partnerships between industry, government and the public can result in safe, productive use of our natural resources.”

## Captain Ray Skelton River Quest Writing Contest

Students are encouraged to chronicle their adventures through essays or poetry and submit entries to the Captain Ray Skelton River Quest Writing Contest.

See the full-length essay and poem at: [www.seagrants.umn.edu/riverquest/](http://www.seagrants.umn.edu/riverquest/)



Abigail Gavin

### 2017 Essay Winners

#### First Place:

Abigail Gavin,  
Superior Middle School

#### Honorable Mention:

Meggie Johnson, Ordean East

### 2017 Poetry Winners

#### First Place:

Amelia Wise, North Shore  
Community School

#### Honorable Mention:

Cindy Zhao, Marshall School  
Aurora Breidenbach, Ordean East



Amelia Wise

### Excerpt from “Sustainability in Lake Superior” by Abigail Gavin

*“Lake Superior affects us all, whether we live in the middle of it or not. We all use that water in some way. We drink it, swim in it, and use it to wash our hands, which is why it’s so important to keep it clean. A tenable environment is important, especially when you live near a freshwater lake. A sustainable environment is important, yet difficult to contain in Lake Superior because lack of vegetation can contaminate the water, aquatic invasive species can take over, and non-point source pollution is hard to clean up ...”*

### Excerpt from “River Quest Poem” by Amelia Wise

*“Our rivers are a source of life.  
We need to keep them out of strife.  
What we put into our yards,  
floods into our boulevards,  
Then into our glorious lake.  
As you can see it’s quite the mistake,  
pollution cuts like a knife  
and affects our wildlife ...”*

# Funding flows to river cleanup efforts

“Fearlessly optimistic.” That is how Nelson French of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency says he feels about prospects for cleaning up polluted sediment and industrial waste in the St. Louis River estuary and the Duluth-Superior harbor by 2020. His confidence is buoyed by \$25.41 million in State bonds approved by the Minnesota Legislature this spring and expected to trigger a match of \$47.19 million in federal funds. “We are in a really good position,” he said.

The local funds will help remediate 10 identified sites through partnership agreements with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Federal EPA funding will flow through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and the Great Lakes Legacy Act Program—provided that GLRI funding survives the Federal budgeting process.

“Concern about Federal budget cuts is always there, but I’m confident (funding for GLRI) will continue,” said French, noting that Congress has authorized GLRI funding at \$300 million per year through 2021 in its environmental appropriations bill. “There is strong bipartisan support as well as the support of business, industry and environmental groups.”

The St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) was listed as one of 43 AOCs on the Great Lakes in 1987. Since then, significant work has been done to restore the AOC, including improved municipal wastewater treatment, significant controls on storm water overflows, and the remediation and restoration of some contaminated sites.

The combined \$72.6 in State and Federal funds will cover design and cleanup activities at Minnesota Slip, Slip 3, Slip C, Northland Pier /AGP Slip, Azcon Corp./Duluth Seaway Port Authority Garfield Slip C, ponds behind Erie Pier, Munger Landing, Mud Lake West, Thomson Reservoir and Scanlon Reservoir. French expects environmental review and permitting for Minnesota Slip to be completed by this November for construction in 2018. Design of the other nine projects will begin this fall to meet the completion target of 2020. That will be followed by three to five years of monitoring.

Removal or containment of contaminated sediments at these 10 sites plus U.S. Steel and several Wisconsin sites is the largest task remaining in a 2013 Remedial Action Plan. The Minnesota team expects to complete all work by 2020 and has a goal of delisting the St. Louis River AOC by 2025.

“We are moving toward an era of vitality,” said Kris Eilers, executive director of the nonprofit St. Louis River Alliance. “We are very appreciative of the Minnesota Legislature for working so hard to include river cleanup money in the bonding bill and Governor Mark Dayton for including it in his bonding proposal.”

“We have developed some amazing partnerships,” Eilers said. “All of these different players have come together and figured out a plan to clean up a mess that many people thought was impossible to fix.”



Dennis O'Hara

## Waves of revelers celebrate the ‘Big Lake’

Lake Superior is so big its official celebration can’t be contained in one day. Folks have celebrated Lake Superior Day on the third Sunday in July since the 1990s, but, in recent years, the revelry has expanded. This year’s started Friday, July 14, and continued through the weekend.

The Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center was a hub of activity with family programs focused on freshwater resources, informational tables about water use and water issues, films about the Great Lakes and its maritime industry, tours of the pier and Aerial Lift Bridge, and “Ten-minute Tent Talks.” Adele Yorke from the Port Authority presented multiple sessions called “All Hands on Deck: Navigating Our Port & the Great Lakes.”

Weekend activities in Duluth also included evening dance performances on the Lakewalk and brewery tours focused on how Great Lakes water influences local craft beers. Across the bay, Lake Superior Day activities were coordinated by the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve on Barker’s Island.



Phil Bencomo/Lake Superior Magazine

Learning how ballast water provides stability for ships was one part of the Port Authority’s tent talk at Lake Superior Days.

## McDougall's Dream

Celebrate the Twin Ports' shipbuilding legacy and support the restoration and preservation of the SS *Meteor* at the 13th annual McDougall's Dream, Saturday, Sept. 23, from 1-9 p.m. at the Richard I. Bong Veterans Historical Center.

The event raises funds for the SS *Meteor* Whaleback Ship Museum on Barker's Island. The *Meteor* is the last remaining whaleback freighter designed by Alexander McDougall and built in Superior, Wis., from 1887 to 1898. McDougall designed the innovative steel-hulled vessels to ride low in the water and shed waves off their backs like whales.

McDougall's Dream activities will include daytime talks on maritime topics, with dinner, a keynote speaker and silent auction in the evening. This year's presenters include: Tamara Thomsen - Wisconsin Historical Society; Matthew Daley - Grand Valley State University; Roger Pellet - retired



Historical photo of the launch of one of McDougall's whalebacks

Courtesy Superior Public Museums

VP, BendTec, Inc.; Ken Buehler - Lake Superior Railroad Museum; and Tom Crossman - Crossman Consulting.

There also is a "nooks and crannies tour" scheduled between afternoon and evening talks. This year's tour will feature seven new exhibit panels in the *Meteor's* cargo hold. Reservations are recommended. Call (715) 394-5712.

## Gales of November pick up speed

The Gales of November will once again be a two-day event in Duluth, starting with a joint presentation by keynoters Bruce Burrows and James Weakley at the Friday luncheon on Nov. 3. Together, they will explore the maritime industry's response to unique challenges and opportunities presented along the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway system. Burrows is president of the Chamber of Marine Commerce based in Ottawa, while Weakley is

president of Lake Carriers' Association, headquartered in Ohio.

Friday's luncheon, presented by the Chamber of Marine Commerce, will be cohosted by the Lake Superior Marine Museum Association and the Propeller Club of Duluth-Superior. Additional tours and presentations are set for Friday with a full slate of speakers and exhibits on tap Saturday, including noted authors and historians Tony Dierckens, Jerry Sandvick and



Bruce Burrows

James Weakley

Frederick Stonehouse. All events will take place at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. [www.LSMMA.com](http://www.LSMMA.com)

## Two new tugs in town

Heritage Marine has upgraded its fleet. Two new tugboats arrived in Duluth in early June to replace the former *Edward H.* and *Nels J.*, both of which were sold—the first to Marine Tech in Duluth, the second to Dean Marine in Detroit.

Casual boat watchers might not notice the switch since the new vessels have taken on the names of their predecessors and soon will be sporting the company's signature maroon and gold colors. The new *Edward H.* was formerly called *Ford Point*, and the new *Nels J.* was the *Taurus*. Both traveled

to Duluth from Belfast, Maine, via the St. Lawrence Seaway, bringing more maneuverability and horsepower to the Heritage Marine fleet.

The new *Nels J.* has a 3900hp main engine, and a bow thruster with an additional 800hp in all directions. The new *Edward H.* is already working in Two Harbors. According to owner Mike Ojard, "On its second day on the job, with an 800hp stern thruster, the *Edward H.* assisted the *Tim Dool* on approach to the CN ore docks—staying at 90 degrees with winds at over 30 mph."



Two new Heritage Marine tugs come home.

Mary T. George

# Sky Harbor runway project cleared for takeoff



A \$9.3 million runway realignment project at Duluth's Sky Harbor Airport will get off the ground this fall. The Minnesota State Legislature passed a transportation bill in May that included \$6.6 million for improvements at Sky Harbor and the Duluth International Airport. The allocation will help leverage an additional \$47 million in Federal Aviation Administration funds to upgrade both airports.

"Leveraging Federal and State funding has been a key strategy in preparing for construction at both airports," said Scott Sannes, director of commercial and industrial projects for SEH, Inc., the engineering, architecture, environmental and planning company overseeing the realignment. "It is rare to combine funding for two airports simultaneously. The leveraging of Federal funds, which contribute 90% of the project cost, allowed for broad support of the State funding package which was recently approved by the legislature."

Officials had feared a delay could lead to Sky Harbor's closure. The small airport on Minnesota Point in Duluth was flagged by the Minnesota Department of Transportation back in 2006 over concerns that trees in an adjacent forest posed a hazard to aircraft. Nearby residents mobilized to protect the old growth trees that were identified for removal, resulting in the current plan to shorten and reorient the runway, rotating it five degrees so the trees are not in the flight path.

Approximately 7.5 acres of new land will be created along the bayside shore to accommodate the realigned runway. The project will require more than 70,000 cubic

yards of fill. Much of it will come from dredged materials and be delivered by barge.

"Beneficial reuse of dredged material is a win-win for the project," Sannes said. "Not only does it provide a much needed location for disposal of this material, it saves the Sky Harbor project money and significantly reduces project impacts by avoiding approximately 5,000 truck trips through Canal Park and along Park Point."

The first phase of the project, beginning this fall, will involve the perimeter berm and fill deposits. Periodic runway closures are expected over the next two years. The new runway is slated to open in fall 2019.



Plans underway will shorten and reorient the Sky Harbor runway.

Courtesy SEH, Inc.

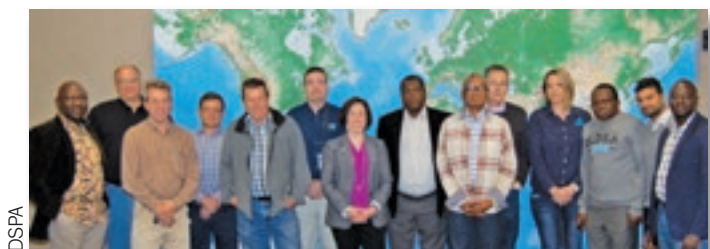
## Groups land in Duluth to learn about Port operations



DSPA



DSPA



DSPA



Robert Weitron

The Port Authority has hosted several visiting grain trade and maritime industry groups this year including (clockwise from bottom left): an African trade team; a delegation from the Port of Baku, Azerbaijan, hosted by the U.S. State Department; a Chinese trade delegation; plus the summer meeting of the American Great Lakes Ports Association.

## Minnesota Sea Grant's Kitson earns early career award



Marte Kitson

Minnesota Sea Grant Extension Educator Marte Kitson has received an Early Career award from the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network.

Kitson started her Minnesota Sea Grant career in community education and outreach on aquatic invasive species in July 2010. Before long she was successfully competing for

extramural funding, leading novel outreach programs, expanding internship offerings and finding engaging ways to educate teachers, students and members of both the public and private sectors. She also was Minnesota's education lead for three Minnesota Sea Grant-led EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative-funded projects.

"Kitson is a consummate Sea Grant extension professional who plays a vital role in the health of the Great Lakes region by taking the best science-based solutions produced by Sea Grant-funded researchers and others and making that information understandable and useful to Great Lakes residents, businesses and communities," said Minnesota Sea Grant Director John Downing. "She is a wonderfully positive force."

Among her many accomplishments, Kitson was the lead author of the St. Louis County Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan, laid the groundwork for Minnesota's Surrender Events where owners of fish and other aquatic animals can give them up instead of releasing them into the wild, and led the first mentor-teacher multi-day shipboard science workshop with colleagues aboard the S/V *Denis Sullivan* on behalf of the Center for Great Lakes Literacy.



Jay Austin

## Austin honored for excellence in research

Large Lakes Observatory professor Jay Austin has received the University of Minnesota Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Research/Creative Activity. The award honors his excellence in research as an observationalist, bringing oceanographic techniques to the field of lake studies. Austin has been at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) since 2005. In addition to his work with the Large Lakes Observatory, he is a professor and department head in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. He holds bachelor of science degrees in physics and mathematics from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and received a Ph.D. in physical oceanography, jointly awarded by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1999. His initial work at UMD dealt with the response of large lakes to climate change.

## Longtime DECC employee named executive director

Chelly Townsend has been named the next executive director of the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC), replacing Dan Russell when he retires Aug. 31. Currently assistant executive director, Townsend has worked at the DECC in various capacities for 27 years.

Townsend initially was hired in 1990 as director of food service, shortly after the Cityside Convention Center opened. She spent the next two decades overseeing exponential growth in catering and concessions as the DECC opened the Harborside Convention Center in 2001 and the AMSOIL Arena in 2010. In 2011, Townsend was promoted to a newly created assistant ex-

ecutive director position, replacing Bob Hom, who retired as the DECC's longtime director of operations, while continuing her role as food service director.

The regional search process to replace Dan Russell began in January 2017, attracting what Search Committee Chair Roger Reinert called an "excellent pool of candidates." DECC Board Chair Jay Seiler said Townsend's selection will ensure a smooth transition, and "the DECC won't miss a beat going forward under her leadership."

"Being chosen to lead the DECC is an extreme honor, and I thank the board for its confidence in me," Townsend said in a statement. "I also thank Dan Russell for giving me opportunities to

learn the entire operation over the years. That trust, along with our already having a great team in place at the DECC, means the public will see continued momentum and the same excellent customer service it has enjoyed for years."

The DECC's annual budget is more than \$10 million. It employs approximately 500 people, including 90 on a full-time basis.



Chelly Townsend

# LaVoy retires as aquarium rides wave of success

Jack LaVoy jokes there was never a person more under-qualified than he was in 2007 when he was tapped to head the Great Lakes Aquarium. The former state lawmaker, economic development leader and forest products industry executive clearly sold himself short. His retirement in early August capped an era of remarkable stabilization and growth for the once-struggling facility.

Today's Great Lakes Aquarium is the region's top paid attraction. Income and memberships have doubled, and attendance has climbed more than 50 percent since LaVoy took the helm 10 years ago. Nearly every square foot of the facility has been transformed for optimal performance. Fresh exhibits, such as Unsalted Seas and Shipwrecks Alive!, plus the new Discovery Center classrooms and event space have attendance on track for a third straight record-setting year.

"In addition to being the right person at the right time to lead the Aquarium into a new chapter, he is simply a wonderful person," said Duluth Mayor Emily Larson. "He cares for his staff, developing talent from within, and brings a truly collaborative spirit to all he does."

Heading the Aquarium has given LaVoy a front row seat and unique perspective on the synergy between the



Duluth's Great Lakes Aquarium drew more than 144,000 visitors last year.

industrial and recreational aspects of the working harbor and international port.

"As much as Aquarium visitors are struck with the majesty of Lake Superior, they are equally impressed by the fascinating reality of a major working seaport here in the heart of North America," LaVoy said. "The regular presence of so many ocean-going and inter-lake cargo vessels, moving in and out of our harbor, are an endless source of fascination for both visitors and natives alike."

Exhibits and interpretive programs developed or enhanced during LaVoy's tenure continue to raise public awareness of maritime-related topics, such as Lake Superior shipwrecks,

aquatic invasive species, how vessels move through the Great Lakes-Seaway, key cargoes that drive commercial shipping in our region, and the global significance of large freshwater lakes.

"We have a great team in place," LaVoy said. "It is a good time to pass the baton."



Jack LaVoy

## ... passes baton to new executive director

Great Lakes Aquarium has named Joe Montisano as its new executive director, following a nationwide search.



Joe Montisano

Montisano brings more than 25 years of experience working with animals and habitat, including over a decade leading the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens. Since 2015, he served as executive director of The Coastal Humane Society in Brunswick, Maine.

Montisano has extensive fundraising experience and led a development team at the Central Florida Zoo to raise \$24 million for new capital projects. Aquarium board members felt

Montisano's ability to raise funds and create new revenue sources would allow the facility to grow its education programs and add exhibits.

"I am very grateful and humbled to be joining Great Lakes Aquarium at this pivotal time in its history," said Montisano. "I know I have large shoes to fill. Jack LaVoy, the board and the team have all done an incredible job of taking the Aquarium to new levels of excellence."



## Beery joins Minnesota Sea Grant

Thomas Beery has joined the University of Minnesota Sea Grant program as the coastal resilience extension educator. Beery's role is to collaborate with Minnesota's coastal communities, organizations and resource managers to identify and develop tools and skills these communities need to be resilient and adaptable in the face of extreme weather and other coastal hazards. He also will develop and lead workshops and other education programs for teachers, community leaders, natural resource professionals and other stakeholders.



Thomas Beery

Beery earned a doctorate in education, teaching and learning from the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), a master's degree in environmental education from UMD, and a bachelor of science degree in education from the University of Wisconsin Madison. Since 2013, he has worked with the Man and Biosphere Health Research Group at Kristianstad University in Sweden, where he was an assistant professor and postdoctoral fellow in the School of Education and the Environment. Earlier, he taught in fifth-grade classrooms, for the Isle Royale Institute and at Lake Superior Center/Great Lakes Aquarium. He was an instructor at the Center for Environmental Education in UMD's Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

"Duluth is special," Beery said. "I am eager to once again be a part of the vibrant research, education and public service community."

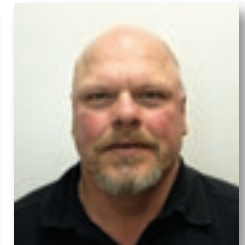
## CN Duluth and Two Harbors ore docks

Lou Weichseldorfer, port manager for the CN facility in Two Harbors since 2015, was named port manager of the CN Duluth Dock in May of this year. Weichseldorfer's railroad career spans 16 years, including eight as port manager at the Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock Company in Conneaut, Ohio. Brion King now serves as assistant port manager at the CN Duluth Dock.

James Cone assumed responsibilities as port manager at CN Two Harbors in May, having worked with the maintenance groups and dock operations as assistant manager since 2015. Previously, Cone worked for Steel Dynamics Inc., with Mesabi Nugget and Mining Resources projects. He earned a B.A. in management in 2006 and spent nine years earlier in his career at Northshore Mining. Cone's new assistant manager is Geoffery Nokes.



Lou Weichseldorfer



Brion King



James Cone



Geoffery Nokes



Ships often pass in transit. Here, the *Joseph L. Block* departs as the *Algoma Enterprise* arrives in the harbor.

David Schauer

## Ceres' changing of the guard

Superior native Ben Herstad is the new port manager for Ceres' Duluth-Superior operations, in charge of hiring crews to load and unload grain ships visiting the Twin Ports.



Ben Herstad

Carl Amundson has stepped into the role of vessel superintendent.

Herstad joined Ceres in fall 2013 as vessel superintendent and spent over three years learning the ropes under the tutelage of his predecessor, Chuck Ilenda, who retired earlier this year. Ilenda "saw something" in the young man who formerly ran Herstad's Woodworking, a custom cabinet shop in Superior, and "trained him up" in the stevedoring business.

Ceres has been operating in the Port of Duluth-Superior since the early 1960s. The company currently services the Port's half-dozen active grain elevators, handling some two million tons of agricultural bulk products each year.

## PORT PASSINGS

**Ernest “Ernie” E. Gronroos**, 91, of Hawthorne, Wis., died April 2, 2017. Gronroos was a long-time merchant mariner for U. S. Steel, serving as first mate on several Great Lakes ships. He also worked as shipkeeper in winters at Fraser Shipyards. In all, Gronroos worked “on the boats” for more than 35 years, retiring in the late 1970s. He lost his wife, Sigrid, in 2013 after 55 years of marriage. That year, he moved from the family farm in Bennett, Wis., to Northern Residence in Hawthorne. He is survived by a sister, stepson, daughter-in-law, several grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many other relatives.

**John “Jack” William Sheedy**, 86, former Duluth city councilor and Duluth Seaway Port Authority commissioner, died May 12, 2017. Sheedy attended high school in New London, Conn., then entered the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, graduating with a degree in engineering. He served eight years on the Duluth City Council and resigned in November 1975 to become a commissioner for the Port Authority (1975-1977). An avid athlete, Sheedy ran his first marathon at the age of 50 and his last at 65. He is survived by a brother, four children and 10 grandchildren.

**Jules “Jay” Bruce Coombes**, 85, of Duluth, died May 15, 2017. Coombes worked for the U.S. Steel Great Lakes Fleet until his retirement at age 49. He continued to work doing home improvement and designing displays for a local fishing outlet. He was an avid reader, athlete and outdoorsman who loved camping and fishing. He is survived by his wife Patricia, a son, two daughters, three siblings, 10 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

**Daniel “Chub” R. Rabideaux**, 84, of Duluth, died May 20, 2017. Formerly of Red Cliff, Ashland and Superior, Wis., Rabideaux enjoyed a long career of sailing that began working with his father as a log rafter on the pulp boats of Lake Superior. He then got a job with U. S. Steel and worked the ore boats sailing the Great Lakes for 43 years, retiring as a bosun (boatswain) from the *Edwin H. Gott*. He is remembered as an avid fisherman and sports fan by family and friends. Rabideaux is survived by two sons, three grandchildren, a step-grandson, two great-grandchildren and five siblings.

**Lewis Gulick**, 93, director of the American Great Lakes Ports Association (AGLPA) in Washington, D.C., in the 1990s, died May 20, 2017, in Falls Church, Va. Gulick was a Washington journalist and senior Congressional staffer for many years. Immediately prior to joining AGLPA, he was director of the minority staff on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

**Bob Abrahamson** of Superior, Wis., died June 27, 2017, due to complications of COPD. He was author of the 2014 book *Luck of the Draw—The Mataafa Story*. The book tells of the ship that was wrecked in 1905 in Lake Superior just outside the Duluth harbor during a storm that was eventually named after her. Details on services to follow at a later date.

**Joseph Rudolph Maisuk**, 86, of Duluth, died July 12, 2017. A graduate of Morgan Park High School, Maisuk served in the U.S. Navy from 1952-1956 during the Korean War. He worked for U.S. Steel from 1950-1980 (Steelworkers Local 1028) and as a longshoreman from 1959-1994 (Int’l Longshoremen’s Association Local 1366). He is survived by his wife of nearly 57 years, Patricia, two daughters, a grandson, a sister, a brother and many other relatives.



Wes Harkins

**Wesley R. Harkins**, 96, died May 25, 2017, in Duluth. The acclaimed Great Lakes photographer, writer and former shipyard public relations director was inducted into the Great Lakes Marine Hall of Fame in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., in 2004. He was Duluth-Superior Harbor Man of the Year in 1980. Harkins started his career in the U.S. Navy and attended officer training at the College of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., and Dartmouth College in Hanover, N. H. Following World War II, he worked briefly for Northern Pacific Railroad before joining the staff of *Skills Mining Review*, where he gained acclaim for his weekly maritime columns and photos over a 13-year tenure, interrupted briefly in the early 1950s when he was recalled by the Navy during the Korean War. In 1959, he joined Fraser Shipyards as public and industrial relations director, a position he held until 1983.

Harkins maintained a visible presence on the waterfront in “retirement.” He spent eight years as a shipkeeper of Interlake Steamship Co. vessels during layup in Duluth-Superior. He also was active in several maritime-related organizations, including the Duluth-Superior Harbor Club, Twin Ports Propeller Club, International Shipmasters Association, Lake Superior Marine Museum Association and the Friday ROMEOS (Retired Old Men Eating Out). Harkins was preceded in death by his wife, Vivian, in 2005 and a daughter in 2001. He is survived by two daughters, two sons, 13 grandchildren and many great- and great-great-grandchildren. His memory lives on in all who knew him. (See *In Focus* on pg. 19).

# IN FOCUS: Wes Harkins

*This is the sixth in a series of profiles about the gifted photographers whose images bring the Port's working waterfront to life.*

Marine photographer and writer Wes Harkins viewed every subject through this lens: "Give it life. Tell a story."

"Wes was a master," recalled friend and shipyard colleague Tom Caine at a memorial service for Harkins, who died May 25, 2017, at the age of 96. "He captured photos and documented each situation so beautifully. We have Wes to thank for a preservation of history in the Port of Duluth-Superior and around the Great Lakes."

Harkins' photos were published in magazines (including *North Star Port*) and on calendars throughout the Great Lakes.

"Like all good photographers, Wes had the patience to capture his subjects—mainly Great Lakes ships and docks—at just the right moment," said former Port Authority Executive Director Davis Helberg in eulogizing Harkins. "And like all careful writers, he cared a lot about getting things right."

Harkins' ability to tell a story through words and images continued when he left *Skillings Mining Review* to become public and industrial relations director at Fraser Shipyards in Superior.

Long after his retirement, local reporters continued to tap his extensive knowledge of Port and Great Lakes history and his portfolio of captivating images.

"Wes retired in the early '80s, but, 30 years later, he still knew people all over the Great Lakes," wrote Kenneth Newhams, *Duluth Shipping News*. "And he was listened to; people wanted to know what he thought about things."

In a comment posted on that website, Jerry Lawson, long-time friend and maritime colleague added, "Wes was the single greatest photographer in the history of the Great Lakes ... a quiet man of great stature and impeccable character who will be deeply missed."

Harkins achieved legendary status through his long life and career. In 1980,

he was named Duluth-Superior Harbor Man of the Year, and, in 2004, he was inducted into the Great Lakes Marine Hall of Fame. For years, he and his two long time friends Dick Bibby (who died in 2015), and Gil Porter (who died in 2016), were collectively known as "The Ancient Mariners" (or "Three Musky Steers," as Bibby liked to call them). Harkins was the last surviving member.

"They're all gone now," Helberg told the gathering of Harkins' friends and family, "but each in his own way left us with enough memories to fill a thousand-footer. At 96, (Wes) had a good run."



The "Three Musky Steers"... plus one (from left): Dick Bibby, Davis Helberg, Gil Porter and Wes Harkins.

Now he's through the locks and up bound to the biggest lake we know where we all want to be someday beyond the wind and snow.

— Excerpt from a poem for Wes Harkins by Jim Banks



Photos by Wes Harkins, courtesy of his son Rick



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