

# Association makes donation to Friends of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary

By **NICOLE GRULKE**  
News Staff Writer

ALPENA — The International Shipmasters Association: Northeast Michigan Lodge No. 19 made a \$500 donation to the Friends of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary to help with transportation costs to bring students from all around Northeast Michigan to the sanctuary. This is the eighth year the association has donated funds to expose students to the many different aspects of maritime history and occupations.

"After doing some research, between donations from the association and private donations from its members, all together over \$5,000 has been given to the sanctuary over the last eight years," lodge President Lee Barnhill said. "Now children from all over northern Michigan have been coming to Alpena to experience the sanctuary and the many educational programs available."

There are around 20 members in the lodge, which is made up of

active professionals in maritime fields, retired professionals and associate members. Anyone who is involved or interested in maritime or the shipping industry is welcome to join.

The association was officially founded in 1890 to support the families of those who had lost their lives at sea. Now, 125 years later, their purpose has evolved to a focus on maritime safety and working with the Coast Guard on safety concerns. Their close association with the lakes and the industries using the lakes has been one of the reasons the lodge donates to the sanctuary to expose children to the history of maritime.

"Coming to the sanctuary teaches the children about maritime history and about many different aspects in the marine field," Barnhill said. "These children are the future mariners and more exposure to the different areas of work involving the Great Lakes helps to show them options available for different fields of work. The Great Lakes

is a huge resource commercially, economically and educationally."

By providing transportation funding to bring students to the sanctuary, the association is helping to foster a young interest in the lakes, and the sanctuary furthers that interest with educational programs, interactive exhibits and artifacts to teach students about the history lying beneath the waters' surface.

"Having students visit the sanctuary helps build in them a better appreciation for the heritage and the industry," lodge member and maritime historian Pat Labadie said. "Ships are not as visible now as they were in the old days, and by bringing students to the sanctuary, they can get a feel of what life was like as a mariner in the 1870s and how that compares to what it is like today."

Anyone who would like to learn more about the lodge or the association can visit the association's Facebook site, or go to [www.shipmaster.org](http://www.shipmaster.org) and click



News Photo by Nicole Grulke

**The International Shipmasters Association: Northeast Michigan Lodge No. 19 President Lee Barnhill, center, makes the association's annual \$500 donation to maritime archaeologist Stephanie Gandulla, and the Friends of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary while association members, left to right Pat Labadie, Wally Watkins, Ted Rayha and Max Lund look on. The yearly donation is used to ward transportation costs to bring students to the sanctuary, exposing them to the areas rich maritime history and different occupations involving the Great Lakes.**

on the link for the Northeastern Michigan Lodge 19.

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