

Letter from the President of LEIHS

Dear Members, Islanders, and Friends,

First, I want to welcome our new board members Amy Huston, Dona Mitchell, Betsy McCann, and June Stoiber. Each of them has already taken on different duties and we're excited to move to monthly meetings for better organization and workflow.

Maggie Beckford, our longest sitting board member for 25 years, called a special meeting on September 22 to elect officers through 2027. I am proud that Maggie nominated me to be President for the next two years. I was elected treasurer in 2024, and my financial and historical mentor Susie Cooper, was elected Treasurer in September. Barb Hunter was elected for a full term as secretary, and Kendra Koehler, who successfully managed the museum in 2024 with volunteers and an intern, is your Vice President.

As a 5th generation islander, my love and passion for history is deeply rooted in island soil. My story began on South Bass in 1888. I've been a board member for close to a decade, and now it is my honor to lead the Historical Society into its next chapter. I'm keeping in mind it is our duty, first and foremost, to practice fiduciary responsibility, and to protect and preserve our museum collection.

Dan Savage has retired. LEIHS is pursuing a reorganization of the Lake Erie Islands Historical Society's operation. Funds that were allocated for payroll, travel expenses and employee benefits will now be spent on building and grounds maintenance, updating equipment to improve the visitor experience, and providing programming and events for our members and visitors.

We will continue to work hard to attract new members as well as give our current members motivation to help us continue our mission to educate the community and our visitors on the history of the Lake Erie Islands and its people.

That motivation includes

- A quarterly newsletter called the Historical Journal to provide transparency and keep members current on events and programming, interesting items in the archive, and how members can help their museum. Timely website updates, social media posts and a new monthly Gazette column.
- Tapping into our great core of volunteers who will help us eliminate over \$40,000 in payroll costs. We have had a wonderful response from our community in volunteering for recent events and staffing the Heritage Resale Shop and Museum. We welcome you to join our growing list of volunteers for the 2026 season. Contact Kendra Koehler, Volunteer Museum Manager, for more information and to sign up.
- Developing new programs and events with priority reservations for our members.
- Setting a Museum Calendar by the end of each year for the following season.
- Providing island youth with programs during the winter months at the museum.
- Making Public Participation time for members at board meetings.
- Updating the society's bylaws following a guideline provided by the Ohio Attorney General's office. Betsy McCann is already gathering information so we can start this winter.
- Restructuring the current museum membership levels, and passing a resolution outlining the membership voting structure, including Family Memberships receiving two votes.
- Posting the board's meeting minutes online after they are official (approved). The minutes from the Annual Membership Meeting were posted September 28.

The Lake Erie Islands Historical Society Museum belongs to all of us. We will continue to encourage current members to get involved to help strengthen the museum for future generations to enjoy. I look forward to your feedback, questions, concerns, and ideas.

In closing, September 27, 2026, marks 40 years since the Lake Erie Islands Historical Society held its first membership election to form its first full Board of Trustees under the non-profit's bylaws back in 1986. The museum will celebrate this milestone on its anniversary date with a Birthday Party for the membership, volunteers and guests.

Sincerely,

Dustin Heineman
President
Lake Erie Islands Historical Society

BOARD OFFICERS

President
DUSTIN HEINEMAN

Vice President
KENDRA KOEHLER

Secretary
BARB HUNTER

Treasurer
SUSIE COOPER

BOARD MEMBERS

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AMY HUSTON
BETSY McCANN
DONA MITCHELL
BILL SLOUGH
GEORGE STOIBER
JUNE STOIBER
BETSY VOLCHKO

Monthly Meetings

*The Museum Board
will now meet monthly.
We'll stay informed
throughout the winter
on Zoom.*

