

# 2024 Great Lakes Islands Summit

September 22-25, 2024

Les Cheneaux Islands, Michigan

In Northern Lake Huron



## Summary Report

*The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Great Lakes Islands Alliance*



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- The GLIA Staff who helped draft the agenda, arrange vendor contracts, coordinate GLIA's fundraising and communications needs, facilitate the meeting and even game-day troubleshoot!
  - Peter Huston, GLIA Events Coordinator
  - Matt Preisser, GLIA Coordinator
  - Philip Rice, GLIA Communications Specialist
  - Lisa Paul Sierk, GLIA Fundraising Specialist
- The GLIA Steering Committee which provides oversight and guidance for GLIA:
  - Renee Fultz, Mike Gora, Ned Hancock, Joe Shorthouse and Angel Welke
  - Alternates: Bob Anderson, Laurie Cook, Paul Juniper and Steve Wermuth
- The Stewardship Network, GLIA's fiscal sponsor and organizational advisor, who coordinated our event budget, managed on-line registration, fulfilled contracts with vendors and provided expert advice on running a major conference!
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  - Rob Luzynski, Community Coordinator
- Our many sponsors who provided direct financial support or in-kind donations of goods and services for the 2024 Islands Summit. See Appendix A for list of sponsors.
- Finally, we are grateful for the members of GLIA, who voluntarily traveled long distances at their own expense to contribute to this growing community of Great Lakes islands.



Photo Credit: St. Ignace News

## **About the Great Lakes Islands Alliance**

The Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA) is a voluntary, collaborative, bi-national network that brings together island community leaders, residents, and advocates from across the Great Lakes. Its mission is to “encourage relationship building, foster information exchange, and leverage resources to address shared challenges and embrace opportunities to benefit islands.”

At present, the membership of GLIA is composed of approximately 230 islanders from 20 different island communities in both the United States and Canada. Membership is open to any islander, both year-round and seasonal. GLIA’s membership includes a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, including elected officials, members of island boards and committees, Chambers of Commerce, non-profit organizations, educators and school administrators, EMS/fire/police organizations, property owner associations, island businesses, museums, libraries, historical societies, and property owners. Additionally, there are another 40 individuals from mainland entities (generally governments, universities, and non-profits) who believe in the mission of GLIA and track the work of the network as Partners and Observers.

GLIA achieves its objectives through multiple means, primarily through connection. Our core function is to connect islanders to one another and to facilitate the sharing of information: island-derived solutions, case studies, reports, contacts, grant opportunities, and other experiences. Secondly, we seek to improve understanding and appreciation of islands by governments and other decision-makers and thought leaders on the mainland.

GLIA holds open zoom meetings monthly throughout the year, supplemented by additional communications through email, webinars, and use of traditional and social media. GLIA meets in person once per year at our annual conference, the Great Lakes Islands Summit (Summit), the focus of this report.

Discussion topics are diverse and wide-ranging but always follow the contemporary interests and needs of the member islands. Sometimes these are unique to islands (e.g., ferry systems); some are also relevant to mainland communities (e.g., schools or environmental protection) however GLIA views the topic through an island lens.

GLIA organizes its efforts into two separate, but not mutually exclusive, focus areas. First, *Environmental Stewardship* seeks to “protect and conserve the natural environment on islands.” Island communities are defined by the Great Lakes and care about water quality and quantity, biodiversity conservation, pollution prevention, waste management, recycling, and climate adaptation and resiliency. Second, *Socio-Economic Wellbeing* seeks to “foster a robust quality of life for year-round islanders, seasonal residents, and visitors alike.” GLIA explores topics as diverse as tourism, blue economy (water-based) opportunities, health and safety, education, housing, infrastructure, cultural/historic heritage, and local governance and capacity.

For additional information on GLIA, including our Charter, Strategic Plan, Annual Reports, map of participating islands, and more, please visit our website: <https://glialliance.org>



The final headcount included approximately 100 attendees including islanders from 13 different island communities from the states of Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and the Province of Ontario. See Appendix B for the final attendance list with contact information.

In addition to providing the local community the unique opportunity of showcasing their area to one hundred visiting islanders, each Summit directly contributes to the local economy and extends their fall shoulder season. The 2024 Summit provided approximately \$35,000 in additional revenue to the local economy of Cedarville and Hessel.

### **Meeting Content**

The full agenda for the conference can be found in Appendix C. Below are brief narrative descriptions for each portion of the agenda.

#### *Sunday, September 22, 2024*

Attendees arrived throughout the day on Sunday. Sign-in and information packet pickup occurred at the Cedarville Hotel (the primary lodging location) and later at the group dinner at Les Cheneaux Distillers. Each attendee received a name tag, printed agenda, GLIA materials, local information and embroidered bag featuring the GLIA logo and Les Cheneaux islands motif. During dinner, the GLIA Steering Committee chair, Clark Township Supervisor, and GLIA Events Coordinator provided an informal welcome, recognized the many financial sponsors and other contributors for the 2024 Summit, and gave an overview of “what to expect” for the next several days.

#### *Monday, September 23, 2024*

The first full day of the Summit was headquartered at the historic Hessel School House. Built in 1937, the building served as a school through 1958. The decades following saw a variety of uses. In 2016, the site was restored and reimagined with the formation of the Hessel School House Corporation. This not-for-profit organization now supports varied uses and programming through the Avery Arts & Nature Learning Center.



Photo Credit: Hessel School House

The day began with GLIA’s traditional “Parade of Islands,” where each island cohort stands up and provides brief individual introductions and general description of their island. Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor, and Teresa Carmichael, President of the Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce, then provided a local welcome and overview of the local area.

The bulk of the day was dedicated to field trips. Attendees were asked to pick one of three options. Each 2-hour excursion was repeated late morning and early afternoon, offering attendees a chance to participate in two of the three options.

- Islands Boat Tour: The Isle Royale Queen III is an 81’ multi-level vessel with indoor and outdoor seating. Departing from Hessel Marina, the boat navigated the bays of Les Cheneaux while members of the Les Cheneaux Islands Association provided a narrated description of the area and fielded questions.



Photo Credit: Matt Preisser (left), Philip Rice (right)

- Township Marina and Neal House: Located along the shoreline in Hessel, this tour explored the idea of a public/private partnership to expand lakefront access and services, including upgrading a public marina, offering housing and providing indoor recreational space. The government officials of the Clark Township Board combined public funds with private contributions to enable the purchase of the Neal House from a long-time local resident. In the coming years, the structure will be remodeled for a new use as part of upgrades at the neighboring Hessel Marina. A key feature of this property will be dockage for transient boaters which



Photo Credit: Brandie Dunn

is seen as a key component to the growth and development of the community. Like many decisions, this waterfront development decision was not universally popular locally. GLIA encourages our members to acknowledge and openly discuss both the hard community discussions as well as the easy ones.

- Great Lakes Boat Building School: this facility trains students for careers in the marine industry. The Director of Development took the guests on a guided tour of the facility including classroom space and building floor where current students were working on boats, engines and related equipment. It was noted that many people on islands may be interested in this industry – both recent high school graduates and mid- and late-career job switchers – and GLIA could help the school reach that audience.



Photo Credit: Kate Tagai (bottom left); Matt Preisser (top and bottom right)

After the afternoon field trips, Summit attendees returned to the Hessel School House for a drum ceremony by citizens of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Intertwined with moving storytelling, the ceremony provided a first-hand, emotional look at the Indigenous history of the area and how tribal citizens today continue to recognize their many traditions and celebrate their way of life.



The remainder of Monday was informal networking time; having a chance to connect with other islanders is always a key facet of each Summit. A full group dinner was followed by an optional evening gathering at a local restaurant.



Photo Credit: Matt Preisser

### *Tuesday, September 24*

The next two days were anchored at the Clark Township Community Center. Tuesday began with a series of presentations covering the “GLIA business” portion of the event.

Angel Welke, the chair of the GLIA Steering Committee, started by recognizing the major, high-level sponsors of the 2024 Summit: Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Climate Strong Islands Network (a fiscally hosted project of The Ocean Foundation); Clark Township; Mackinac Island Community Foundation; and Resource Recycling Systems. A full list of event supporters was provided in everyone’s folders.

The Chair recognized the full Steering Committee by name, thanked them for their volunteer efforts, and talked a little about their role. Per GLIA’s founding Charter, the Steering Committee provides overall guidance/direction and synthesizes ideas and activities across GLIA; solicits new members and partner organizations; assists with seeking of outside funding; resolves conflicts and makes decisions on behalf of the full network; and more.

Angel then recognized GLIA’s paid, part-time staff (each presenting next) and briefly identified their role in maintaining our core, year-round operations. The staff would not be possible without support from several organizational partners: the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and The Stewardship Network. Finally, she recognized The Stewardship Network and the Island Institute as key advisors and organizational inspirations.

Next, the GLIA staff were given the floor for 5-10 minutes each and asked to briefly identify major accomplishments of the last year plus key next steps.

Matt Preisser has been the GLIA Coordinator since helping organize the first Summit in 2017. He highlighted the following GLIA accomplishments: (1) sustained volunteer effort (both Steering Committee and members who keep coming back month after month, year after year, largely on their own time and dime); (2) GLIA's new strategic plan, finalized last August, which will provide our goalposts for the next decade; and (3) the arrival of our additional staff, who are bringing lots of new ideas, expert backgrounds, and an extra sets of hands to move several of GLIA's key needs forward. For key next steps, he identified: (1) keeping, maintaining and increasing staffing (all staff are currently part-time and on grant funds); (2) developing more depth in GLIA programming; and (3) improving awareness about GLIA within the Great Lakes island communities (advocating a focus on reaching more islanders before investing too much outreach to mainland audiences).

Next, Peter Huston discussed his Events Coordinator position. Previously, he served a different role for GLIA as Project Manager. Following the direction of our strategic plan, that position was dissolved in order to support creation of new positions related to communications and fundraising (below) plus this one-time "Events Coordinator" role to help run the 2024 Summit. For accomplishments, Peter acknowledged the overall growth of GLIA since 2017 and how his role changed over time. He is excited by the strategic plan and feels GLIA is as strong as ever. For next steps, he plans to "retire" from his official GLIA job but will return to the role as a regular member from South Bass Island (and he hinted at maybe joining the Steering Committee as well). Peter spoke about the ongoing challenge each of the islands face in terms of keeping their island homes sustainable year-round communities. He wants to convince others about the benefits of idea exchange and shared experiences, in particular on topics like local funding mechanisms and affordable housing which are key issues on South Bass Island.

Philip Rice joined GLIA as its Communications Specialist in April 2024. He sees the following as major accomplishments within the communications realm: (1) creation of a holistic communications strategy (provided on GLIA website); (2) several press releases announcing major updates; (3) incremental updates to the GLIA website; and (4) new and re-affirmed connections with other groups around the region. For key next steps, Philip identified: (1) additional, bigger enhancements to the GLIA website; (2) implementing key parts of the Strategic Plan and communications strategy; (3) updating and distributing shared resources (e.g., summaries of island attributes, contact lists, etc.); (4) authoring new editorial content; and (5) proactively setting up and announcing monthly zoom meeting discussion topics for the entire next year.

GLIA's Fundraising Specialist, Lisa Paul Sierk, has also been on the team since April. Lisa cited the following as key accomplishments: (1) onboarding and reviewing past GLIA materials; (2) meeting GLIA members and learning about all the islands; and (3) evaluating and establishing opportunities for philanthropic outreach. In terms of key next steps, Lisa recognized that everything ties together and that ultimately people and organizations will give to groups doing good, important work. She looks forward to establishing regular outreach to enhance awareness of GLIA programming, which will sustain and drive philanthropic support.

After these presentations, the Steering Committee and staff then opened it up to the full group for question/answer and discussion. Topics included:

- Q: What is a GLIA member? This is confusing for many. What are expectations? Who from an island gets to participate? Are islands members or individuals or organizations? A: GLIA charter outlines roles and expectations. GLIA has always been open to any islander. The focus has been on individuals. We try to avoid saying “member islands” because that implies your community as whole (or its elected officials) has voted to join GLIA. That would be a much bigger lift. We recognize that islanders wear many hats and through individuals we can reach many facets of each island society. Additionally, we welcome a select number of mainland individuals and organizations who serve as advisors, partners and advocates. Everyone attending this Summit will be added to the GLIA distribution list, meaning you are now members. Please have others contact Matt if they would like to join.
- Q: Why isn’t there a membership fee? Seems like a nominal fee would be appropriate and also help raise revenue. A: We’ve looked at this in the past and elected to keep GLIA membership open and free for all. There are administrative costs to collecting fees and many organizations find those costs are greater than the revenue obtained. If we required fees, we would lose people. However, paying a fee allows people to have skin in the game. There was a suggestion to use the “public radio model,” meaning fees are optional and you give whatever you can. Other suggestions include multiple membership levels. Staff pledged to revisit the topics of membership and fees with the Steering Committee and to develop recommendations for consideration in 2025.
- Q: Why aren’t meetings recorded? It can be difficult for working islanders to attend. A: GLIA has decided against recording our meetings because that would likely affect free, unfettered dialogue. Several islanders have admitted this. People won’t be honest or talkative if they know there’ll be recording out there on the internet. Meeting minutes are not perfect but hopefully suffice. Staff pledged to revisit this topic with the Steering Committee.
- Observation that while islanders are naturally resilient, they still benefit from being exposed to new ideas.
- GLIA would benefit from additional outreach materials like pamphlets and rack cards, including both electronic and printed copies.
- Islands Data – there is a printout in attendee folders with data on many of the communities; much is outdated or incomplete. Mark Clymer resurrected this from 2018 and suggested we ask everyone to provide updates or direct GLIA to sources. Some of the more recent GLIA islands are not on here. Need particular help with things like summer populations. Email updates or questions to Mark.

For the keynote presentation, GLIA welcomed Kate Tagai, the Director of the Center for Sustainable Communities at the Island Institute. The Institute, a nonprofit founded in 1983 and based in Rockland, Maine, has a mission to “boldly navigate climate and economic change with island and coastal communities to expand opportunities and deliver solutions.” Their focus is the island communities in their region (coastal Maine), however they network with islands and groups outside their region (like GLIA). The Institute has long been a partner and inspiration for GLIA. The subject of Kate’s talk was “The Power of Networks.” Networks are the interconnections between people and organizations. They are based on relationships and build off curiosity, leadership, communication, sharing, and trust. Networks are hard to describe, and even harder to measure. She provided an analogy of trees and

their root systems in a forest. Scientists are finding that each root system is a complex arrangement between the tree itself and a community of symbiotic fungi and microorganisms. These organisms in turn support a type of communication between trees. GLIA, as the central, organizing anchor, is akin to the mother tree. Kate emphasized the power of storytelling and provided several examples where GLIA has contributed, in large and small ways, to island communities: supporting the island township's purchase of the island ferry; Beaver Island's participation in a federal energy program with technical assistance from Institute staff; air service on Penobscot Island (Maine) which found a partner in Angel Welke and Island Airways; and Maine islanders planting pollinator gardens after witnessing the successes on Lake Erie islands during the 2022 Summit. GLIA's role, in part, is to open up the possibilities and share models that have already been successful on other islands. Kate ended with a challenge to the audience – find someone new, ask what's been successful in their community, and bring that idea back home.



Photo Credit: Brandie Dunn

Next on the agenda was a series of panel discussions, each featuring a small group of speakers on subjects relevant to the host community, and of course, hopefully of interest to other islands. This was GLIA's first foray into this type of presentation at a Summit.

The first panel focused on spurring greater engagement by island youth. GLIA featured the local Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) as an interesting case study. The YAC is affiliated with the local school and supported by the community foundation and others. The committee advisors described the purpose and a group of students delivered a powerpoint presentation outlining their activities - they create and organize community projects, provide input on grant applications received by the foundation, donate their time to events, and more. The students fielded questions from the audience. One of the students takes amazing drone photos/video and it was suggested GLIA could use those images in future communications (see front cover of this report!).

The second panel featured three experts on philanthropy – the GLIA fundraising specialist, the Executive Director of the nearby Mackinac Island Community Foundation, and a private fundraising consultant from Kelley’s Island, Ohio. They described the value of developing a philanthropic needs assessment for your organization. There is value in spending time on strategic planning – “know who you are.” Suggest signing up for grant announcements. Encourage you to call a potential funder up front and ask, “is this a good fit?” Don’t waste their time and yours if it's not. Collaborative approaches are key – funders like to see community-wide impact and unified voices are stronger. Do your homework to identify your unique prospects – your pool may include individuals, businesses, foundations, and public sources (governments). Discussed how philanthropy is different on islands versus the mainland – in particular, islands have transient populations. Don’t be afraid of these – they have love for the island and can be among the biggest givers.

The third and final panel focused on island media. Panelists included a variety of media: the print newspaper editor from Drummond Island, a reporter covering Mackinac Island, and the media coordinator for the local Great Lakes Boat Building School who develops significant online content. They discussed understanding your audience and the extent of your intended reach. Websites are very important as these are typically the first point of contact. Ultimately storytelling is the key – having interesting, compelling stories to pull people in. They encouraged developing general interest stories for both islanders and people who are “fans of islands” (not residents). The panelists also discussed technology and differences in print versus online media.

After lunch, the agenda split into four breakout sessions, each focusing on a specific subject and featuring 2-4 speakers. The breakouts were held at different locations and as such, each attendee generally attended one. Each session was moderated by one of the four GLIA staff and each ended with a summary session where we fielded questions, highlighted what was learned, and drew some general conclusions. This was also an opportunity to discuss what, if anything, GLIA should do in this space going forward.

#### Breakout #1: Economic Development

- Teresa Carmichael, Board President, Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce (<https://lescheneaux.net/>). The mission of the Chamber is to promote a diverse, year-round economy that will provide a high quality of life for our community while preserving our natural and cultural resources. This community of 36 islands provides sheltered channels and bays within the Straits of Mackinac along with forests with trails and pathways. This rural and remote area can have challenges and brainstorming with islanders brought forth ideas and options.



Photo Credit: Joe Shorthouse

- Sue Bakkila, owner of Woods & Waters® (<https://www.woodsandwaters.eco/>), offers kayak tours in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, ideally situated in Les Cheneaux with 36 islands on the Lake Huron shoreline to explore. Guided kayak tour options range from 2-hours to multi-day and have both protected and "big water" kayak adventures to suit all skill levels. Kayak, paddleboard (SUP), and canoe rental (and retail sales), bike repair and bike rentals are offered to supplement income. Sue shared her experiences as a small business owner in the eco-tourism field and discussions ensued on other island-specific tourism options.
- Dave Murray, Friends of the Les Cheneaux Area Trails (<https://lctrails.squarespace.com/>), wrapped up the session with his focus on the Peekaboo Hill project and its plan to establish 4 to 5 miles of sustainable, multi-use track trails. The goal is a four-season trail, optimized for mountain bikes, and open to all human-powered, non-motorized uses. Michigan's Department of Natural Resources approved the trail application for 4+ miles of single-track multi-use trails with an anticipated opening soon. Discussions focused on volunteer and philanthropic support to assure use of the trails and support its maintenance.
- GLIA Brainstorm/Summary Session, moderated by Lisa Paul Sierk, GLIA Fundraising Specialist, was fielded following each speaker.

#### Breakout #2: Education

- Bob Lohff, Superintendent/6-12 Principal, Les Cheneaux Community Schools (<https://www.cedarvilletrojans.org>) and Bob Vaught, Superintendent of DeTour Area Schools (<https://detour.eupschools.org>): these are the two public schools in the area. Like most places, they are hubs of the community. They discussed enrollment (holding steady), internet connectivity, and building affordable housing for staff. Some unique offerings: small engine repairs (focusing on marine engines); dual enrollment for college-ready kids; athletic cooperation between the two schools (combined teams; considering replicating for band). They have a high percentage of staff that are graduates – discussed ways to keep home-grown individuals (they pay well within the region, have guaranteed 3-year bonus pay). Their funding is based on the tax base, not the number of pupils, so they do well. Encourage retirees to join the school for second careers. Also there is a “convert your degree” program for adults who want to go into teaching. Among challenges are transportation - it's a large geographic area and there is a shortage of bus drivers (as well as substitute teachers).
- Mary Eberts, Les Cheneaux Culinary School (<https://lcculinary.org>): Mary discussed this unique facility which offers post-secondary education in the culinary arts. It is a farm-to-table school where foods are locally-sourced to the extent possible. Organizationally it is a non-profit overseen by a board of directors. The school year runs September to September (the 11<sup>th</sup> cohort just started this week). In the summer (their final 12 weeks) they run a popular restaurant where the students cook the food and manage the restaurant. This serves as a paid internship. There is also a coffee shop in the summer. The Chef Certificate includes coursework in restaurant management, service operations, and other topics pertinent to the hospitality industry. Students are a combination of recent high school graduates, mid-career professionals, and even retirees with a passion for cooking. For housing, they work with local landlords. How do they recruit students? Combination of social media and word of mouth from diners and past students.
- Robin Pendery, Les Cheneaux Community Foundation: Robin shared information on the “Kick Start Program” (<https://lccf.org/kickstart-to-career-children-savings-accounts>). Each student

entering kindergarten receives a \$50 deposit into a college savings account. Each year, the Foundation will double-match anything a child's family and friends add to the account, up to a maximum of \$25/year. This was the first program of its kind in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The funds are available only when the students graduate and can be used for a variety of things from career or education costs (e.g. tuition) to uniforms. They promote the program in a variety of ways, including having lower grade teachers speak to parents. This is viewed as a creative way to support young families and encourage them to stay in the area.

- GLIA Brainstorm/Summary Session, moderated by Matt Preisser, GLIA Coordinator:
  - Several attendees were teachers or members of school boards. Discussed the challenges of small island schools. Kate from the Island Institute mentioned the Institute's "Teaching and Learning Collaborative" (<https://www.islandinstitute.org/ii-solution/outer-islands-teaching-learning-collaborative>). This was set up specifically for peer support for one room school houses. Inquiries from Great Lakes educators are welcome!
  - Use GLIA as an information-sharing forum to share opportunities (like the culinary and boat building schools) for jobs and education. Islanders like to go to other islands – familiar with the rural setting. GLIA could share timelines, application periods, etc.
  - Islands and island schools come in different sizes. Need to identify "islands like me", i.e., cohorts of islands that are similar in size, character, etc.
  - Homeschooled students – not many on islands, but they do exist.
  - School boards – a unique constituency. Could GLIA try to convene school boards to meet one another and share information? Past attempts to convene principals/superintendents were challenging because they are so busy and have more pressing needs each week and month.

### Breakout #3: Environmental Stewardship

- This session met in the Les Cheneaux Community Library meeting room. The room holds about 20 people, and we had that many and probably more at our peak. The audience was probably 60/40 with local participants and other islanders.
- One of the challenges of this event is tapping into the local zeitgeist and that included finding key experts available and willing to participate. We were excited to have three presentations scheduled,
  - "Water quality, lake levels and invasives" by Bob Smith with the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council (<https://www.lescheneauxwatershed.org/>)
  - "Wildlife and fisheries management" by Randy Schaedig with the Islands Wildlife Association (<https://www.facebook.com/IslandsWildlife/>)
  - "Aldo Leopold Festival" with Ken Drenth (<https://aldoleopoldfestival.org/>)
- As misfortune would have it, two of the speakers had to back out at the last minute. Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor, filled in for Bob and Dustin Tassier stood in for Randy (even used Randy's powerpoint). Our anchor presenter Ken Drenth did an amazing job of explaining the magic surrounding the creation and on-going success of Aldo Leopold festival. Leopold was a forester, philosopher, writer and naturalist who is considered to be one of the fathers of wildlife ecology and the broader conservation movement. He spent many of his young formative years around the Les Cheneaux islands.

- Ken presentation on Aldo Leopold Festival generated lots of comments and questions. Mark's presentation demonstrated how successful the community has been dealing with critical issues like invasives and water quality. The home run was learning how Dustin's group has evolved from a Ducks Unlimited chapter into an effective fundraiser for other local environmental groups. Everyone was energized by the discussions and most expressed how fortunate the community is to have such a successful group like Islands Wildlife that does wonderful hands-on events for kids and is an effective funder of other community projects.



Photo Credit: Brandie Dunn (left), Laurie Cook (right)

#### Breakout #4: Planning & Preparedness

- Mike Kasper, Mackinac County Emergency Management - Mike presented an overview of "Operation Safe Harbor," an evacuation plan developed and tested in 2023 by the Michigan National Guard, in cooperation with the Mackinac County Office of Emergency Management. The plan included the deployment of a floating dock on the north side of the island intended to facilitate the evacuation of tourists who might become stranded on the island if the harbor were to become inaccessible to ferry boats due to a freighter incident or an oil spill. The plan also included mitigation efforts to contain an oil spill were one to occur in the Straits of Mackinac, using booms to corral the oil into a concentrated location and burn it. "Operation Safe Harbor" included dozens of partners and collaborating organizations including an engineering company out of Sault Ste. Marie, local law enforcement, military personnel, the City of Mackinac Island, both ferry companies on Mackinac Island, and local volunteers. The project is ongoing and will conduct additional drills annually.
- Mark Merchberger, Clark Township Fire Chief - Mark presented on the fire department activities for the Les Cheneaux area, with an emphasis on how fire response and EMS operations take place in the many islands throughout the Les Cheneaux archipelago. The department recently acquired a fire boat which can pump water from the lake and extinguish fires while remaining positioned in the water. The EMS uses an off-road vehicle to reach locations off the shoreline that may be wooded or inaccessible by other modes of transportation. Mark explained that fire preparedness is a major concern because many of the old homes in the Les Cheneaux islands are wood frame, and residents often do not have operational fire extinguishers. He emphasized the need to test fire extinguishers and purchase new ones when older ones expire.



- GLIA Brainstorm/Summary Session, moderated by Philip Rice, GLIA Communications Specialist
  - Participants in the discussion indicated that forest fires are a major concern on many islands in the Great Lakes.
  - Beaver Island has an ordinance against fireworks but many do not follow it. This continues to be a concern.
  - An incident on Middle Bass Island recently highlighted the need to have up-to-date defibrillators that are properly charged and ready for emergencies at all times.
  - Participants expressed a need for better funding for emergency management and preparedness. Perhaps a large Federal grant could be sought by multiple islands working together?
  - Beyond emergency preparedness, the issue of mass trauma within island communities was raised. When a traumatic event occurs, what is the fallout for the community? How are community members directed to mental health resources etc. following an incident?

### *Wednesday, September 25*

After breakfast, an hour was provided on the agenda for nearby island communities to provide presentations. GLIA recognized that there are 6-7 other islands within an hour of this Summit location, and most of these do not have the facilities to host a 100-person Summit. Attendees were encouraged to extend their trips and visit these additional islands.

Staff from the Drummond Island Tourism Association provided a slideshow which described Drummond Island and its community, which is approximately 45 minutes to the east. This included key sites, demographics, description of the island economy and importance of the natural environment. They fielded a number of questions about the local economic drivers, including jeeps/off-road vehicles and the quarry which are not common on most other islands.

Next, Joe Shorthouse from Manitoulin Island talked about the Chi-Cheemaun ferry, or “big canoe” in Ojibwe, which is having its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. This magnificent ferry takes passengers, vehicles and freight on a two hour trip across Georgian Bay from Tobermory, Ontario at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula to South Baymouth on Manitoulin Island.

To close out the Summit, the GLIA Steering Committee chair and GLIA Coordinator:

- Again thanked the 2024 Summit sponsors and planning team for making the event happen.
- Honored Peter Huston who will be retiring from his role as GLIA Events Coordinator at the conclusion of this Summit. Peter played an integral role in communicating with all the players, namely the 20+ speakers plus those vendors providing food or lodging to Summit attendees.
- Led a recap of the conference, including 5-10 minute summaries of each of the four breakout sessions so everyone could hear what was discussed.
- Held an open-floor discussion to hear reactions and observations. Examples:
  - How can we reinvent our island economies?
  - What can outsiders tell us about our communities? What do they see?
  - Environmental stewardship: we can always do better
  - “Don’t stop believing” (song by music group Journey)

- Reprising her task at the first Islands Summit in 2017, Kate Tagai noted how everyone is feeling a mixture of feelings right now – maybe excitement, hope, fatigue, comradery, curiosity, confusion, or uncertain where to begin. A mic was passed around the room and Kate asked people to share any final thoughts or sum up their feelings in a few words.

### **Key Summit Take-Aways**

1. GLIA serves a valuable function but needs marketing materials to explain what it is and what it does. These materials should feature storytelling that highlights our group successes plus examples of how individual islands have benefitted. Emphasis should be placed on reaching more people within our island (as opposed to mainlanders). Many first-time attendees were excited to learn about GLIA but lamented not hearing about it before this Summit.
2. GLIA should better define/refine what it means to be a “GLIA member.” The fairly loose, open-ended definition is admirable but confusing to many people.
3. Some level of professional staffing is needed to perform GLIA’s core backbone functions (e.g., coordination, meeting facilitation, communications, fundraising, program development). Islanders should always provide overall direction for GLIA but most already wear many hats in their community and few have time or ability to run GLIA on a day-to-day basis or participate on additional committees. At the current rate, funding for the communications and fundraising specialist positions will run out in roughly April 2025. Sustainable funding must be priority for GLIA to grow its presence and impact.
4. The virtual monthly zoom meetings are excellent, convenient, low-cost ways to keep things moving along but the in-person Summits are irreplaceable when it comes to developing relationships and understanding issues in a deeper way. Attendees recognized the significant lift in running Summits but asked that GLIA try to avoid skipping years like in the recent past.
5. This Summit, more than others, has included space for young voices and families (several attendees brought their kids). Do more of this in the future! Everyone was impressed by the Youth Advisory Committee and how the community empowered them to take an active role in guiding grants to worthy local organizations. Ensure that island schools and related youth programs are invited to every Summit.

### **Next Steps**

To formally conclude the Summit, Matt noted the following next steps:

1. Tell us what you think! Please complete the post-Summit survey (either paper copy or electronic form).
2. A press release will be drafted within a week – please circulate widely within your networks, in particular your island media.
3. A full 2024 Great Lakes Islands Summit report, summarizing everything about the conference (agenda, attendance list with contact information, discussion content), will be drafted by early December.
4. The Summit yielded several programmatic ideas – GLIA staff and Steering Committee will be revisiting these in the coming months.
5. Islands data (printout of older GLIA material included in attendee packets) – please review your demographic and other data and send any updates to Mark Clymer.

6. The monthly GLIA meeting for October is next week. Keep or cancel? The majority wanted to stick with the meeting and use it to get more feedback after letting things sink in for a week.
7. End-of-year fundraising: as noted above, GLIA's current operations and future growth potential requires resources. Expect some fundraising messages through the end of 2024 and additional discussion on other funding models (like the Public Radio model) which may provide opportunity for next-level growth and sustainability.
8. Next Summit: GLIA tradition has always been to announce the next Summit at the conclusion of the current one. Bob Anderson and Angel Welke from Beaver Island, Michigan announced that they are excited to welcome GLIA to the next Summit in fall 2025 (exact dates TBD)! They are proud to again host the Summit and continue the positive energy and momentum that we are all feeling!



Photo Credit: Peter Huston

## Appendix A: 2024 Summit sponsors





## 2024 GREAT LAKES ISLANDS SUMMIT

### THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SUPPORTERS

**Sponsors:** this event would not be possible without the generous financial support from the following individuals and organizations!

#### **Major Grants (\$5000+)**

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
Climate Strong Islands Network

#### **Lake Superior Level (\$2,500+)**

Clark Township  
Mackinac Island Community Foundation  
Resource Recycling Systems

#### **Lake Michigan Level (\$1,000+)**

Bob and Alana Anderson  
Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce  
Ottawa County Improvement Corporation  
Richard Linn

#### **Lake Erie Level (\$500+)**

Beaver Island Music Festival/Patrons of the Arts in Rural Communities  
Breezeswept Docks  
Hartleb Agency

#### **Lake Ontario Level (\$100+)**

Madeline Island Chamber of Commerce  
Lori Miller

**Supporters:** we would also like to recognize the following organizations who provided in-kind contributions and services that were essential for this event!

Aldo Leopold Festival  
Ang-Gios Restaurant  
Cattails Cove  
Cedarville Hotel  
DeTour Area Schools  
Drummond Island Digest  
Drummond Island Tourism Association  
Focus on Funding  
Friends of the LC Area Trails  
GLIA Steering Committee  
Great Lakes Boat Building School  
Hessel School House-Avery Arts & Nature Learning Center  
The Island Institute  
The Islander Bar  
The Islands Wildlife Association

Les Cheneaux Community Foundation  
Les Cheneaux Community Library  
Les Cheneaux Community Schools  
Les Cheneaux Culinary School  
Les Cheneaux Distillers  
Les Cheneaux Islands Association  
Les Cheneaux Watershed Council  
Little Buoy Bakery & Café  
Mackinac Island Emergency Management  
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians  
Snows Bar & Grill  
State of Michigan, Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy  
The Stewardship Network  
St. Ignace News/Mackinac Town Crier  
Woods and Waters  
Youth Advisory Committee

## Appendix B: final attendance list

**2024 Great Lakes Islands Summit**

Participant List (thru 9/13/24)

| <b>Island Name</b>    | <b>Last Name</b> | <b>First Name</b> | <b>Email</b>                            | <b>Organization (if applicable)</b>  | <b>Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)</b>  |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|---|--|---|
| Beaver Island, MI     | Anderson         | Alana             | aaanders49@gmail.com                    | Forest View Senior Housing   | Board member  |
| Beaver Island, MI     | Anderson         | Robert            | reanders49@gmail.com                    | Beaver Island Community Center   | Board member; GLIA Steering Committee Alternate   |
| Beaver Island, MI     | Burton           | Carol             | carolburtonbimf@gmail.com               | PARC Patrons of the Arts in Rural Communities / BIC<br>Beaver Island Chamber | Executive Director Festival Coordinator / Chamber President / BOR Chair / Business Owner  |
| Beaver Island, MI     | LeFevre-Welke    | Angela            | lefevream@hotmail.com                   | Island Airways   | Business owner, community volunteer, GLIA Steering Committee  |
| Beaver Island, MI     | Partridge        | Ann               | ann@biruralhealth.org                   | Beaver Island Rural Health Center  | Healthcare Administration including Emergency Preparedness...many hats!   |
| Beaver Island, MI     | Taylor-Blitz     | Lori              | director@beaverislandhistory.org        | Beaver Island Historical Society of MI                                       | Executive Director of Historical Society, Planning Commission Chair, VP Health Center   |
| Beaver Island, MI     | Welke            | Bobbi             | supervisor.stjamestownship.bi@gmail.com | St James Township  | Township Supervisor and on committees for Emergency Services Authority, BI Rural Health Center, Waste Management, Housing Taskforce |
| Bois Blanc Island, MI | Beugly           | Jay               | sailinginland@gmail.com                 |  | Harbormaster, Parks and Rec committee, wildlife association   |
| Bois Blanc Island, MI | Beugly           | Mandy             | amanda.beugly@gmail.com                 |  | School board  |

| Island Name                       | Last Name  | First Name | Email                              | Organization (if applicable)                                      | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)   |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Bois Blanc Island, MI             | Dunn       | Brandie    | Brandiedunn@msn.com                | BBI Association   | Island Newsletter Editor/Content Creator; environmental work (host Spotted Knapweed pull events); I am an Illinois and Wisconsin Master Naturalist and Xerces Society Ambassador and have a very soft spot for Bumble Bees. |
| Bois Blanc Island, MI             | Dunn       | Michael    | michaeledunn@msn.com               |   | Veterinarian. Special interest in fishing.  |
| Drummond Island, MI               | Asztalos   | Ashley     | events@visitdrummondisland.com     | Drummond Island Tourism Association                               | Events coordinator for DITA   |
| Drummond Island, MI               | Covert     | Julie      | editor@drummondislanddigest.com    | Drummond Island Digest  | Editor/Owner  |
| Drummond Island, MI               | Kolo       | Christina  | operations@visitdrummondisland.com | Drummond Island Tourism Association                               | Operations coordinator for DITA   |
| Drummond Island, MI               | Vaught     | Bob        | Rvaught@eupschools.org             | DeTour Area Schools   | Superintendent/Principal  |
| GLIA Partner                      | Brush      | Lisa       | lbrush@stewardshipnetwork.org      | The Stewardship Network   | CEO/Founder   |
| GLIA Partner/ 2024 Summit Keynote | Tagai      | Kate       | ktagai@islandinstitute.org         | Island Institute  | Title: Director for the Center for Sustainable Communities  |
| GLIA Staff                        | Huston     | Peter      | phuston@glialliance.org            | GLIA  | GLIA Event Planner; Lake Erie Foundation; lives on South Bass Island.   |
| GLIA Staff                        | Paul Sierk | Lisa       | lpaulsierk@stewardshipnetwork.org  | GLIA  | GLIA Fundraising Specialist. Summer home on Middle Bass Island.   |
| GLIA Staff                        | Preisser   | Matthew    | preisserm@michigan.gov             | GLIA; Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy | GLIA Coordinator  |



| Island Name              | Last Name | First Name | Email                        | Organization (if applicable)                          | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)  |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| GLIA Staff               | Rice      | Philip     | philip.andrew.rice@gmail.com | GLIA  | GLA Communications Specialist.<br>Lives on Mackinac Island   |
| Guest                    | Fleming   | Anne       | anne@landtrust.org           | Little Traverse Conservancy                           | Community Outreach &<br>Communications   |
| Guest                    | Foose     | Melanie    | foosem@michigan.gov          | Michigan EGLE   | Supervisor, Great Lakes<br>Management Unit   |
| Guest                    | Fortino   | Stephanie  | stephanie@stignacenews.com   | St. Ignace News/Mackinac<br>Island Town Crier         | Reporter   |
| Guest                    | Kasper    | Mike       | mkasper@mack911em.org        | Mackinac County<br>Emergency Management               |  |
| Guest/Sponsor            | Frey      | Jim        | frey@recycle.com             | RRS (Resource Recycling<br>Systems)                   | CEO  |
| Guest/Sponsor            | Halliwill | Holly      | hhalliwill@recycle.com       | RRS (Resource Recycling<br>Systems)                   | Program Specialist   |
| Guest/Sponsor            | Seltzer   | Elisa      | eseltzer@recycle.com         | RRS (Resource Recycling<br>Systems)                   | Materials management senior<br>consultant (recycling,<br>composting, etc.) with RRS.<br>Have supported Beaver Island<br>and Mackinac Island and<br>interested in the unique<br>challenges and opportunities<br>island life offers. |
| Harsens Island, MI       | Stieber   | Harold     | stiebha@gmail.com            | Harsens Island St Clair Flats<br>Association (HISCFA) | Retired CPA, Former HISCFA<br>Treasurer  |
| Kelleys Island, OH       | Wermuth   | Janet      | jwermuth@focusonfunding.com  |   | Winery/vineyard<br>owner/operator  |
| Kelleys Island, OH       | Wermuth   | Steve      | swermuth1@gmail.com          |   | Vineyard/Winery<br>Owner/Operator; GLIA Steering<br>Committee Alternate  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Adams     | Elliot     | elliota88@gmail.com          | Les Cheneaux Yacht Club                               |  |

| Island Name              | Last Name  | First Name | Email                        | Organization (if applicable)                               | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)  |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Badour     | Paula      | pao711@yahoo.com             | Clark Township   | Township Deputy Supervisor;<br>Photography   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Bakkila    | Sue        | sue@woodsandwaters.eco       | Woods and Waters   | Ecotourism business  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Bernard    | Rob        | Bernardr264@gmail.com        | Les Cheneaux Club  | Member/Board Member  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Bohn       | Greg       | Gregoryj.bohn@yahoo.com      |  | Business owner   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Brown      | Lynn       | lynnhyattbrown@yahoo.com     |  |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Burnside   | Calvin     | calvin_burnside@icloud.com   | Clark Township, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians | Code Enforcement Officer;<br>Camping   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Cain       | David      | manager@lescheneauxclub.org  | Les Cheneaux Club  | General Manager  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Cain       | Lisa       | davelisaron@gmail.com        | Les Cheneaux Club  | Operations Coordinator   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Carmichael | Teresa     | teresa@flotationdocking.com  | Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce                           | Director   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Clymer     | Mark       | supervisor@clarktwpmi.gov    | Clark Township   | Twp Supervisor - Grants, Contracts, Utilities, Recreational Infrastructure; Interests: Boating, Sailing, Ice Boating, Hiking |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Coates     | Tom        | Thomas.coates@glbbs.edu      | Great Lakes Boat Building School                           | Director of Development  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Drenth     | Ken        | kdrenth46@gmail.com          | Les Cheneaux Community Foundation                          | Board Director   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Duncan     | Emily      | eduncan-lcs@eupschools.org   | Les Cheneaux Community Schools                             |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Eberts     | Mary       | mary@lcculinary.org          | Les Cheneaux Culinary School                               |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Franz      | Kate       | office@hesselschoolhouse.net | Hessel School House - Avery Arts & Nature Learning Center  | Office Administrator   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Heil       | Max        | maxheil18@gmail.com          | Clark Township   | Recreation Director, Harbor Master; Boating, Biking, Hiking  |

| Island Name              | Last Name   | First Name | Email                          | Organization (if applicable)             | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)  |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Henige      | Shannon    | shannonhenige@gmail.com        | Muddy Waters Photography                 | Owner/Photographer   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Keighley    | James      | keighleyja@gmail.com           | Les Cheneaux Islands Association         |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Lohff       | Bob        | blohff@eupschools.org          | Les Cheneaux Community Schools           | Superintendent/Principal   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Meadows     | Sydney     | sydneyjmeadows@gmail.com       | Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce | Coordinator - all things chamber   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Merchberger | Mark       | mmerchberger@cloverland.com    | Clark Township                           | Fire chief   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Mowery      | Jessica    | assessor@clarktwpmi.gov        | Clark Township                           | Township Assessor  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Murray      | Dave       | dhyarrum@gmail.com             | Friends of the LC Area Trails            |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Niewirowicz | Dan        | danniewirowicz@gmail.com       | Les Cheneaux Club                        | Member/Board Member  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | O'Brien     | Terrance   | totocp@icloud.com              |  |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Pendery     | Robin      | lcommunityfoundation@gmail.com | Les Cheneaux Community Foundation        | Coordinator  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Potvin      | Jessica    | jpotvin-lcs@eupschools.org     | Les Cheneaux Community Schools           |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Reding      | Sarah      | sreding59@gmail.com            | Clark Township Recreation Committee      | Chair of the Township Recreation Committee. We are currently building a Mountain Bike Trail and beginning planning on a pathway from Hessel to Cedarville. |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Schepperly  | Chris      | cschepperly@gmail.com          | Les Cheneaux Islands Association         |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Schepperly  | Lin        | lmschepperly@gmail.com         | Les Cheneaux Islands Association         | Am now president, in the past I was social director for 5 years.   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Stefanski   | Bob        | lynnhyattbrown@yahoo.com       |  |  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Stegehuis   | Gina       | gina.stegehuis@glbbs.edu       | Great Lakes Boat Building School         | Media and Outreach Coordinator   |

| Island Name              | Last Name | First Name | Email                     | Organization (if applicable)   | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)   |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Tabor     | Paul       | Paultabor500@gmail.com    | Les Cheneaux Islands Association                                     |   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Tassier   | Dustin     | dmtassier@gmail.com       | Islands Wildlife Association   |   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Weiss     | Bart       | troop180@mail.com         | Les Cheneaux Club  | Member/ Board member  |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Windsor   | Kara       | kwindsor@saulttribe.net   | Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians                           | Youth advisor   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Wolters   | Lynn       | lwolters016@gmail.com     | Les Cheneaux Watershed Council                                       |   |
| Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Wolters   | Valerie    | vwemail22@gmail.com       | Les Cheneaux Watershed Council                                       |   |
| Mackinac Island, MI      | Linn      | Rick       | rhlinn@yahoo.com          | City of Mackinac Island  | City Treasurer, EMS/Medical Center, Fire Department, Community Foundation                                     |
| Mackinac Island, MI      | McGreevy  | Stephanie  | smcgreevy@micf.org        | Mackinac Island Community Foundation                                 | Executive Director and CEO  |
| Mackinac Island, MI      | Rollins   | Christine  | carollins@comcast.net     | Chair, deputy clerk, administrator fire department, deputy treasurer |   |
| Mackinac Island, MI      | St. Onge  | Anne       | imatmipl@yahoo.com        | Mackinac Island Library  | Librarian   |
| Mackinac Island, MI      | Sych      | Maria      | msych@micf.org            | Mackinac Island Community Foundation                                 | Marketing & Administrative Associate  |
| Madeline Island, WI      | Jenkins   | Diane      | islewo@yahoo.com          |  |   |
| Madeline Island, WI      | Peters    | James      | madeline1186605@yahoo.com |  | Member of the Town Plan Commission, Affordable Housing Committee and the Historical Preservation Association. |

| Island Name            | Last Name  | First Name | Email                      | Organization (if applicable)           | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)  |
|------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| Madeline Island, WI    | Schaub     | Lee Ann    | leeann@madferry.com        | Madeline Island Ferry Line             | Human Resources and Marketing. President of the Madeline Island Chamber of Commerce. Year-round island resident. |
| Madeline Island, WI    | Schaub     | Rob        | robertcschaubiii@gmail.com |  | Year-round resident, retired EMT, Teacher, Manager of a seasonal bike and moped rental business                  |
| Manitoulin Island, ON  | Cook       | Laurie     | hlaurie.cook@yandex.com    | GLIAN                                  | Nature and wildlife conservation. Local politics/ planning. GLIA Steering Committee Alternate                    |
| Manitoulin Island, ON  | Shorthouse | Joe        | jmwildroses@gmail.com      |  | Retired university entomologist. Member of GLIA Steering Committee   |
| Manitoulin Island, ON  | Shorthouse | Marilyn    | jmwildroses@gmail.com      |  | Active participant in island issues  |
| Middle Bass Island, OH | Gora       | Jean       | jean@middlebass.org        |  | Mike Gora's wife   |
| Middle Bass Island, OH | Gora       | Michael    | mike@middlebass.org        |  | GLIA Steering Committee  |
| Neebish Island, MI     | Miller     | Lori       | millerlori8@gmail.com      |  |  |
| Neebish Island, MI     | Reed       | Phylis     | phylisreed@gmail.com       | Neebish Island Improvement Association | President, Neebish Is. Improvement Assoc. , initial member of GLIA.  |
| South Bass Island, OH  | Berry      | Judy       | judyplib@yahoo.com         | village of Put-in-Bay                  | Mayor, Interested in all aspects of island infrastructure  |
| South Bass Island, OH  | Fenton     | Tracy      | fentont1954@gmail.com      |  | Love island living, Love the island music scene.   |

| Island Name           | Last Name | First Name | Email                   | Organization (if applicable)               | Tell us about yourself (roles, responsibilities, interests)  |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| South Bass Island, OH | Fultz     | Renee      | leinwc@gmail.com        | Lake Erie Islands Nature & Wildlife Center | Director of the Lake Erie Islands Nature & Wildlife Center, Steering Committee member of GLIA, board member of the Put-in-Bay Chamber of Commerce  |
| South Bass Island, OH | Hineline  | Bernadette | lallybern@icloud.com    |  | Volunteering, senior activities  |
| South Bass Island, OH | Huston    | Amy        | sarah4cochran@gmail.com | Lake Erie Islands Historical Society       | Event Planner, volunteer   |
| South Bass Island, OH | Richwine  | Chondra    | pibgirls@me.com         |  | I enjoy being active and the outdoors.   |
| Washington Island, WI | Heal      | Jeff       | lionjeff09@gmail.com    |  | Director of Island Historic Farm Museum, Lions Club Secretary, Sportsman's Club Secretary, Meals on Wheels driver, Performing Arts Center sponsor. |
| Washington Island, WI | Heal      | Tiana      | offagain@earthlink.net  |  | Community Van coordinator, Meals on Wheels driver, Acquize Instructor, Lions Club, Trinity Quilters.   |

## Appendix C: final agenda



**2024 Great Lakes Islands Summit**  
 Les Cheneaux Islands  
 Cedarville/Hessel, Michigan  
 September 22-25, 2024

Sunday, September 22

| Time              | Topic  | Location   |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Afternoon         | Arrivals & Hotel Check-in (confirm check-in time with your lodging)  | Variable   |
| 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm | Group Dinner & Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Summit sign-in and packet pickup</li> <li>● Welcome and Event Overview               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Angel LeFevre-Welke, GLIA Steering Committee Chair</li> <li>○ Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor</li> <li>○ Peter Huston, GLIA Events Coordinator</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | Les Cheneaux Distillers<br>172 S Meridian St, Cedarville, MI 49719 |

Monday, September 23

| Time    | Session   | Location  |
|---------|---|---|
| 7:00 am | Group Breakfast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Catering by Little Buoy Bakery &amp; Cafe</li> </ul> | Hessel School House<br>3206 W. Cedar St, Hessel, MI 49745 |
| 8:00 am | “Parade of Islands” (brief round-robin introductions by island)   | Hessel School House                                       |



| Time     | Session   | Location   |
|----------|---|--|
| 9:00 am  | Introduction to the Les Cheneaux Islands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor</li> <li>• Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce (invited)</li> </ul> | Hessel School House  |
| 9:45 am  | Drive/walk to field trips   |  |
| 10:00 am | Field Trips (split group, repeat in afternoon)  |  |
|          | <u>Group A</u><br>Islands boat tour, Hessel Marina<br>(Guides: James Keighley & Paul Tabor, Les Cheneaux Islands Association)   | <u>Group B</u><br>Township Marina & Neal House<br>(Guide: Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor)  |
|          |   | <u>Group C</u><br>Great Lakes Boat Building School<br>(Guide: Tom Coates, Director of Development) |
| 12:00 pm | Drive/walk to Hessel School House   |  |
| 12:15 pm | Group Lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catering by Cattails Cove</li> </ul>   | Hessel School House  |
| 1:15 pm  | Drive/walk to field trips   |  |
| 1:30 pm  | Field Trips (repeated)  |  |
|          | <u>Group D</u><br>Islands boat tour, Hessel Marina<br>(Guides: James Keighley & Paul Tabor, Les Cheneaux Islands Association)   | <u>Group E</u><br>Township Marina & Neal House<br>(Guide: Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor)  |
|          |   | <u>Group F</u><br>Great Lakes Boat Building School<br>(Guide: Tom Coates, Director of Development) |
| 3:30 pm  | Drive/walk to Hessel School House   |  |
| 3:45 pm  | Drum Ceremony and Presentation by the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians  | Hessel School House  |
| 4:45 pm  | Networking/free time  | Hessel School House  |
| 6:00 pm  | Group Dinner  | Ang-Gios Restaurant<br>232 M-134, Cedarville MI 49719  |

| <b>Time</b> | <b>Session</b>   | <b>Location</b>   |
|-------------|--|---|
| 8:00 pm -   | Optional evening gathering<br>(restaurant reserved for GLIA; cash bar) | The Islander Bar<br>134 S Pickford Ave, Hessel MI 49745 |

Tuesday, September 24

| <b>Time</b> | <b>Session</b>  | <b>Location</b>  |
|-------------|---|--|
| 7:00 am     | Group Breakfast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catering by Little Buoy Bakery &amp; Cafe</li> </ul>   | Clark Township Community Center<br>133 M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719 |
| 7:30 am     | State of the GLIA Network and Open Discussion/Q&A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GLIA Steering Committee</li> <li>• GLIA Staff: Matt Preisser, GLIA Coordinator; Peter Huston, Events Coordinator; Philip Rice, Communications Specialist; Lisa Paul Sierk, Fundraising Specialist</li> </ul> | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 8:30 am     | Keynote: The Power of Networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kate Tagai, Director, Center for Sustainable Communities, Island Institute (Rockland, Maine)</li> </ul>   | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 9:15 am     | Panel Discussion: Civic Engagement by Youth<br>(moderator: Matt Preisser) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jessica Potvin, Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) Coordinator</li> <li>• YAC Students (invited)</li> </ul>  | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 10:00 am    | Break   | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 10:15 am    | Panel Discussion: Island Philanthropy (moderator: Lisa Paul Sierk) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephanie McGreevy, Executive Director, Mackinac Island Community Foundation</li> <li>• Janet Wermuth, Fundraising Consultant, Focus on Funding, Kelleys Island</li> </ul>                  | Clark Township Community Center                                    |

|          |   |  |   |  |
|----------|---|--|---|--|
| 11:00 am | Panel Discussion: Island Media (moderator: Philip Rice)   |  |   | Clark Township Community Center  |
|          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julie Covert, Drummond Island Digest</li> <li>• Stephanie Fortino, St. Ignace News/Mackinac Town Crier</li> <li>• Gina Stegehuis, Media and Outreach Coordinator for Great Lakes Boat Building School</li> </ul> |  |   |  |
| 11:45 pm | Drive/walk to lunch   |  |   |  |
| 12:00 pm | Group Lunch   |  |   | The Tipper Room<br>74 East Hodeck Street<br>Cedarville, Michigan 49719   |
| 1:45 pm  | Drive/walk to breakouts   |  |   |  |
| 2:00 pm  | Concurrent Breakout Sessions (you pick)   |  |   |  |
|          | <u>Economic Development Track</u><br>Cedarville Hotel meeting room  | <u>Education Track</u><br>Clark Township Community Center  | <u>Environmental Track</u><br>Les Cheneaux Community Library  | <u>Planning &amp; Preparedness Track</u><br>The Tipper Room  |
| 2:00 pm  | Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teresa Carmichael, Board President</li> </ul>   | Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bob Lohff, Super/6-12 Principal, Les Cheneaux Community Schools</li> <li>• Bob Vaught, Superintendent of DeTour Area Schools</li> </ul> | Water Quality, Lake Levels, Invasive Species and More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bob Smith, Les Cheneaux Watershed Council</li> </ul> | “Operation Safe Harbor,” 2023 Island-wide Evacuation Drill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bryce Tracy and Mike Kasper, Mackinac Island Emergency Management</li> </ul> |
| 2:30 pm  | Eco-Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sue Bakkila, Woods and Waters</li> </ul>   | Culinary Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary Eberts, Les Cheneaux Culinary School</li> </ul>  | Wildlife & Fisheries Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randy Schaedig, Islands Wildlife Association</li> </ul>                    |  |

|           |   |  |  |  |
|-----------|---|--|--|--|
| 3:00 pm   | <b>Peekaboo Hill Multi-Use Trail</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dave Murray, Friends of the LC Area Trails</li> </ul> | <b>Kick Start Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robin Pendery, Les Cheneaux Community Foundation</li> </ul> | <b>Outreach &amp; Education via Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ken Drenth, Aldo Leopold Festival</li> </ul> | <b>(2:45) Wildfire Preparedness &amp; Response (Fireboat, Dry Hydrants and more)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mark Merchberger, Clark Township Fire Chief</li> </ul> |
| 3:30 pm   | <b>GLIA Brainstorm Session</b>  | <b>GLIA Brainstorm Session</b>   | <b>GLIA Brainstorm Session</b>   | <b>GLIA Brainstorm Session</b>   |
| 4:00 pm   | Networking/free time  |  |  | --   |
| 6:00 pm   | Group Dinner  |  |  | Snows Bar & Grill<br>1187 S Park Ave, Cedarville, MI   |
| 8:00 pm – | On your own   |  |  | --   |

Wednesday, September 25

| <b>Time</b> | <b>Session</b>   | <b>Location</b>  |
|-------------|--|--|
| 8:00 am     | <b>Group Breakfast</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catering by Little Buoy Bakery &amp; Cafe</li> </ul>   | Clark Township Community Center<br>133 M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719 |
| 9:00 am     | <b>Intro to Drummond Island and nearby Island Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christina Kolo, Drummond Island Tourism Association</li> <li>Joe Shorthouse, Manitoulin Island</li> <li>Other nearby island reps (invited)</li> </ul> | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 10:00 am    | <b>Group discussion - Summit reactions, what's next?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angel LeFevre-Welke, GLIA Steering Committee chair</li> <li>Matt Preisser, GLIA Coordinator</li> </ul>   | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 10:30 am    | TBD  | Clark Township Community Center                                    |
| 11:00 am    | <b>Summit Closing Remarks</b>  | Clark Township Community Center                                    |

We encourage you to visit these nearby island communities on your own!

Bois Blanc Island, Michigan

- Ferry Dock, Cheboygan, MI (1 hour from Cedarville) <https://plauntransportation.com/>

Drummond Island, Michigan

- Ferry Dock, DeTour Village, MI (30 min from Cedarville) <https://www.eupta.net/ferry-system/>

Mackinac Island, Michigan

- Ferry Dock, St. Ignace, MI (30 min from Cedarville) <https://www.sheplersferry.com>
- Ferry Dock, Mackinac City, MI (45 min from Cedarville) <https://www.sheplersferry.com>

Manitoulin Island, Ontario

- Swing Bridge, Little Current, ON (4 hours from Cedarville, border crossing involved)

Neebish Island, Michigan

- Ferry Dock, Barbeau, MI (1 hour from Cedarville) <https://www.eupta.net/ferry-system>

St. Joseph Island, Ontario

- Bridge near Port Findlay, ON (1 hour 30 min from Cedarville, border crossing involved)

Sugar Island, Michigan

- Ferry Dock, Sault Ste. Marie, MI (45 min from Cedarville) <https://www.eupta.net/ferry-system>

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**Thank you for joining us! Safe travels home!**



GREAT LAKES  
ISLANDS ALLIANCE

<https://glialliance.org/>

## Appendix D: Summit Survey

## 2024 Islands Summit Survey Results

*Les Cheneaux Islands September 22-25*

Great Lakes Islands Alliance collected responses from attendees (40) and non-attendees (9) to learn what participants found valuable, what barriers existed to access, and general qualitative reactions. The survey also collected demographic data on the age and residency status (seasonal, full time, etc.) of attendees. The survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Islands Summit with relatively few barriers. Quality of content at the Summit (topics, opportunities, etc.) was the most important deciding factor, outweighing distance or convenience of location. Despite nearly half the attendees being first-time participants, more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those surveyed said they intended to attend in the future, indicating a high level of retention.

### Have you attended the Islands Summit before?

49 responses



### Do you plan to attend the Islands Summit in the future?

49 responses

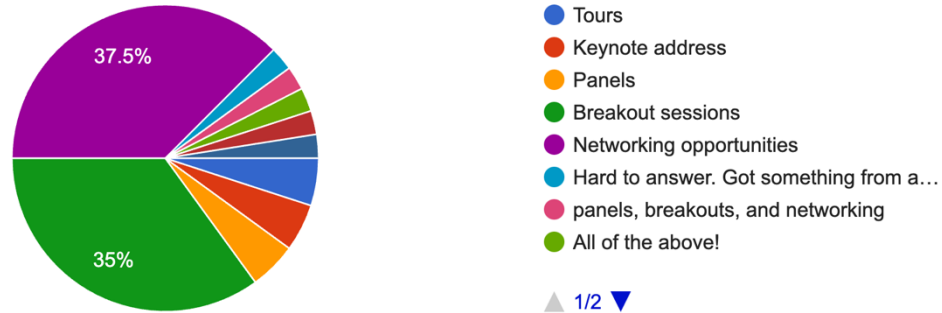


**97.5%** of respondents indicated they were very happy or extremely happy they attended the Summit.

**Networking opportunities** and/or a **combination** of all offerings constituted nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all opinions on the strongest aspect of the summit.

What did you feel was the strongest aspect of this year's Islands Summit?

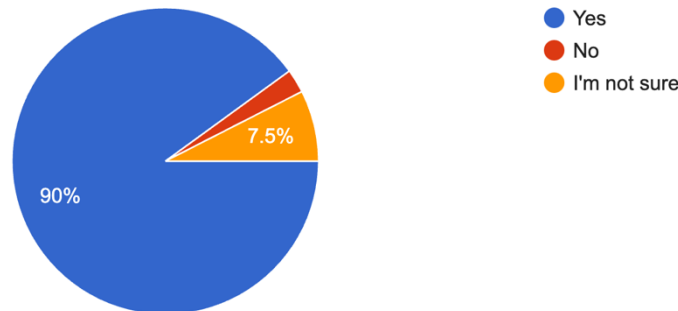
40 responses



**90%** of respondents believed they acquired valuable knowledge or skills take home, while **92.5%** of respondents felt that the Summit was of value to them professionally or personally.

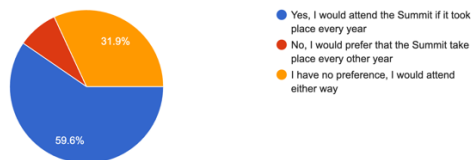
Did you learn something new that you believe will be useful to your community at home?

40 responses



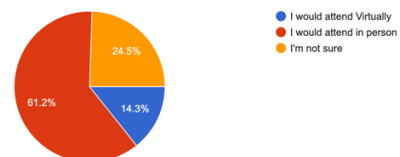
Thinking ahead to the next Summit, would you attend if it were held as soon as next Fall?

47 responses



If the Summit were held online (virtually) or hybrid, how would you choose to participate?

49 responses



Attendees showed a strong preference for Summits to be held **on an annual basis** (60%), and tended to **prefer in-person** (61%) rather than virtual meetings.



**The survey also collected a number of open-ended responses ranging from reactions to suggestions for future topics. Below is a sample of these responses.**

*"I think in-person summits are a very important aspect of GLIA - an opportunity for all islanders to visit one another, further communications and understandings of one another, help overcome issues, discuss ideas and make lasting relationships."*

*"I would have liked more small interest group discussions, less presentations. Please no 7am breakfast, and breakfast could be 30 minutes. Tours were great! I would have liked to actually go to an island though. Loved the panels and networking! Random idea: have a different colored name tag for Steering Committee members so it's easier for people to recognize who they are. Really hope we have more in-person summits consistently!!"*

*"When attending a conference I find great value in doing working discussions. Little break outs and discussions develop skills and effective communication. It also strengthens relationships and would have made the topics more relevant for me."*

*"Networking allowed us to really get to know other islanders and how they are dealing with similar problems."*

*"The networking at this event was amazing, so many great new connections. Panels were great. I wish the breakout sessions were more discussions instead of presentations, also wish we could have attended parts of different tracks instead of being locked into only participating in one track. The keynote was absolutely fantastic and gave a good foundation for the summit that brought the ideas together."*

*"Talking to other islanders about their issues was very helpful"*

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**To see the entire survey and all responses/data, visit**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/18CBSbrthg3DvBX1hs\\_LOMVObc7RBYqPeWSx4xr7XzJU/viewanalytics](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/18CBSbrthg3DvBX1hs_LOMVObc7RBYqPeWSx4xr7XzJU/viewanalytics)