

TRAVEL

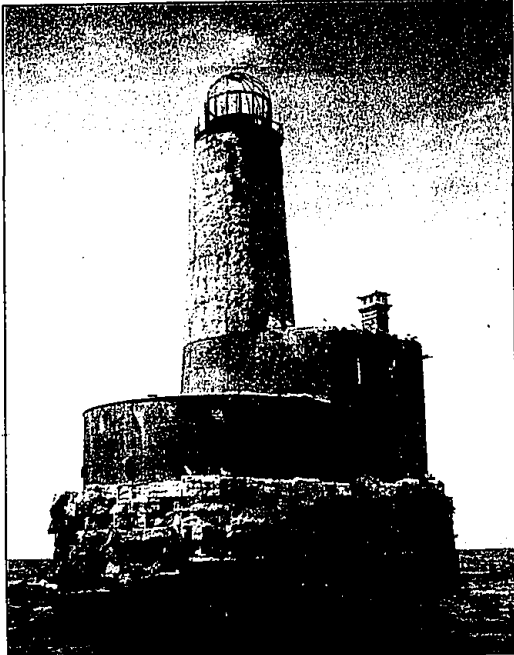
Author sheds light on Lake Michigan treasures

BY KELLY KALESKI WYOGNIK
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Wayne Sapulski will go to a lot of expense and trouble to get what he wants — the best lighthouse photograph possible.

His images are captured in *Lighthouses of Lake Michigan: Past and Present*, (Wilderness Adventure Books, Manchester, Mich., \$29.95) a newly published book that includes over 250 color pictures, archive

prints, antique postcards, and maps. "I make the effort to get to the site by boat or land to get close," said Sapulski, a graduate of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City. "I'm not interested in a speck. I'll go back three to five times to get a great shot. The weather is very poor all over the Great Lakes. There's reduced visibility because of fog and haze, all the things that make color photography difficult."



Neglected: Completed in 1851, the Waugoshance Lighthouse marked the turning point for ships traveling between the Straits of Mackinac and ports along the shore of Lake Michigan. Although it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, it probably won't be restored. The lighthouse, is in ruins, and no longer active.

Sapulski, a Livonia resident, grew up in Allen Park, and was always fascinated by freighters. He's U.S. Coast Guard licensed first class pilot on the Great Lakes for ships of unlimited tonnage. After several years of sailing, he changed careers and now works as a respiratory therapist at Mott's Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor, but the Great Lakes are still a very important part of his life. Writing the book allowed him to combine his love of photography, lighthouses, and Maritime history.

"I love getting away," he said. "At many lighthouse locations you can turn your back on the present, it's so comforting, nothing has changed." His book is an excellent guide for anyone interested in lighthouses and Lake Michigan. Even though the Great Lakes are miles away from any ocean, the area contains the greatest concentration of lighthouses in North America. Sapulski's up close photographs make it easy to picture yourself on the shore, looking at these magnificent structures, and daydreaming about the past. You can almost hear the waves. A tenacious researcher, Sapulski found many historic photos and antique postcards of Lake Michigan lighthouses. Juxtaposed against Sapulski's photographs of what these lighthouses look like today, these elements allow the reader to travel back in time and imagine what some of these lighthouses looked like in the early 1900s.

Sapulski started photographing lighthouses in 1989 while vacationing in Door County, Wis., which has a high concentration of lighthouses.

"I'd been all over the Great Lakes on ships, and saw lighthouses, but never up close," he said. "Ships are constantly on the move. The only time you stop is to unload or get fuel. Lighthouses were built to warn you to stay a half to a mile away."

His favorite lighthouses are ones that are hard to reach and often privately owned, like the Squaw Island Lighthouse. Squaw Island is the northwestern most island in the Beaver Island archipelago. Because they were government housing and meant to be functional, most lighthouses are simple. Sapulski said he was fascinated with the architecture of this lighthouse — it's a red brick two-story house with an attached octagonal tower.

The Grosse Pointe Lighthouse near Chicago is "a showplace," he says. It's been restored and is operated by the Evanston Historical Society.

Even though ships now rely on electronic navigation tools, Sapulski said quite a few lighthouses function as a back-up system. "They still serve a very real purpose," he said. "It's reassuring to see what you're looking at and get a fixed location on it."



Tourist destination: Big Sable Point Lighthouse, in Ludington State Park, is a popular destination. The lighthouse is active, and houses a museum. It's open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily from May 1 to Oct. 31.

Tips

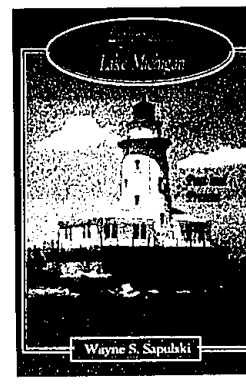
No Great Lakes vacation would be complete without a visit to a lighthouse. If you're a lighthouse fan and want to learn more, Sapulski suggests you do your homework. Get a good lighthouse guide, and some decent maps. Allow enough time. "It will take you longer than you thought to find some of these lighthouses," he said. His book provides extensive detail about these Lake Michigan treasures, along with information about the status of the lighthouse — active or inactive, open or closed to the public, along with access information. Some lighthouses, like the Waugoshance Light on the northwestern tip of Michigan's lower peninsula, are only accessible by boat.

Sapulski is busy working on his next book, *Lighthouses of Lake Superior: Past and Present*. "Lake Superior is beautiful," he said. "It's wild, and undeveloped. A lot of lighthouse locations are very remote and pristine."

Look for books in the future on the Lighthouses of Lake Huron, Erie and Ontario. If you're interested in learning more about freighters on the Great Lakes, check out one Sapulski's favorite Web sites, www.boatnerd.com.

Lighthouses of Lake Michigan: Past and Present is available at your local bookstore, or visit Amazon.com. Sapulski is a member of the Great Lakes Lightkeepers Association, an organization dedicated to

preserving lighthouses and the history of the people who kept them by developing a new generation of preservationists. For more information, write to the Great Lakes Keepers Association, c/o Henry Ford Estate, 4901 Evergreen Road, Dearborn, MI 48128-1491, (313) 436-9160, e-mail: glka@hotmail.com or visit the Web site www.glka.com



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