

# 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel & 90<sup>th</sup> Meridian Park Project

“An Unparalleled Place”

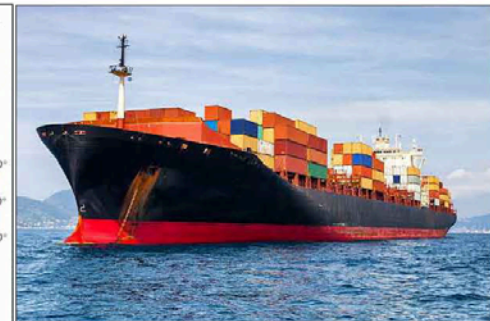
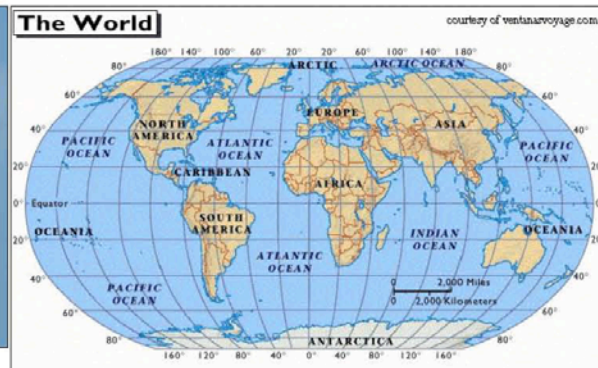


Conservation, Planning,  
& Zoning Department



**Latitude:** Latitude is the angular distance on earth measured North or South of the equator in degrees, minutes, and seconds. For example, the equator has the latitude of 0 degrees and is considered the longest latitude line on earth measuring 24,901.55 miles. You are standing at the North 45th parallel of latitude which is halfway between the equator and the North Pole.

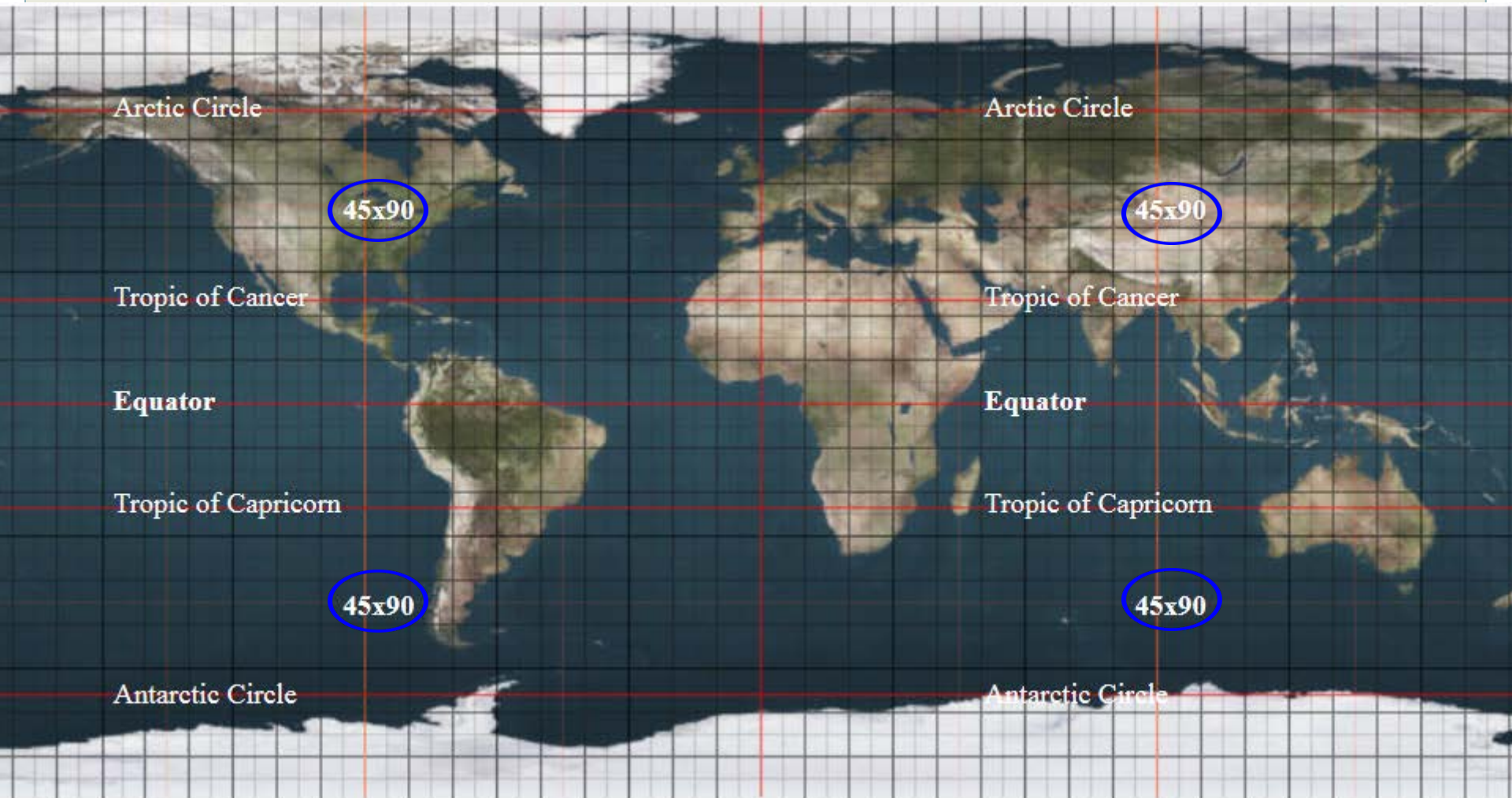
**Longitude:** Longitude is the angular distance on earth measured East or West of the meridian at Greenwich, England, (0 degrees longitude) and is measured in degrees, minutes, and seconds. For example, longitude lines run from the North Pole and South Pole. You are standing at the West 90th Meridian of longitude which is a quarter of the way around the World from Greenwich England.



The latitude longitude coordinate system uses angular measurements to describe a position on the surface of the earth. The system has been in use, with little change, since the astronomer Ptolemy used them in his first world atlas in A.D. 150.

Mariners and aviators have been the primary users of latitude/longitude in the past. The system is used on a world wide basis and many different types of maps have latitude and longitude markings.

# 45° x 90° Locations



# Only Easily Accessible Point

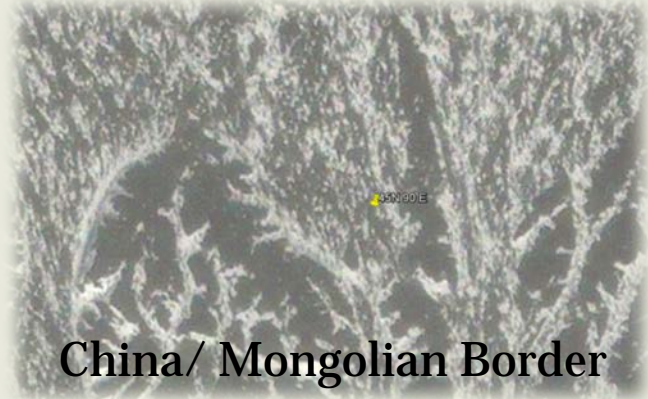


45°N 90°W



Marathon County

45°N 90°E



China/ Mongolian Border



Pacific Ocean

45°S 90°W



Indian Ocean

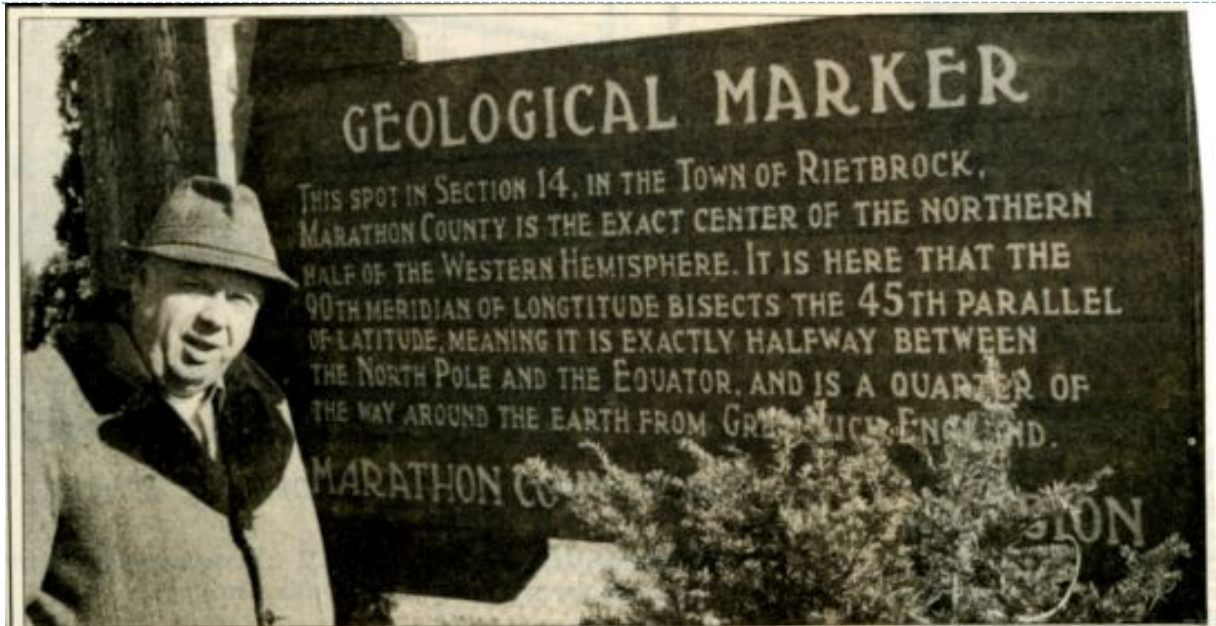
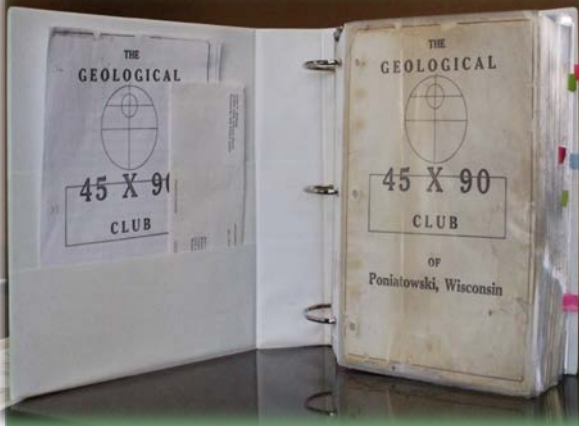
45°S 90°E

# Where Is It?



## Marathon County





AP photo

**In the middle:** John Gesicki stands at the approximate center of the northern half of the Western Hemisphere, northwest of Poniatowski in Marathon County. His persistence and research of U.S. Geologi-

cal Survey maps resulted in a county marker being placed at the site. He has promoted the geographical point of interest — and his hometown — as a tourist attraction.

## In the center

Location puts Poniatowski on the map





# Making Local News!

Sometimes you have to think local to act global.

That's the case, we feel, with the geographical monument just northwest of Poniatowski in Rietbrock township that supposedly marks the "exact center" where the earth's 45th latitude intersects the 90th meridian.

These days, the monument is something of a mess and needs a major make-over.

A trip to the monument should inspire some expansive planetary consciousness. Instead, any tourist must leave the marker just scratching his or her head.

**Confusion reigns at the marker.** The original 1969 sign declares boldly that the monument demarcates a point "exactly halfway" between the equator and the North Pole, and a quarter of the way around the earth from Greenwich, England.

A bronze survey marker from the Marathon County Survey Office in front of the monument reading 45.00 N and 90.00 W ("imprisonment or fine for disturbing this mark") solemnly corroborates this exactitude.

Yet three other official county signs, installed within the past year or two, declare the original sign a sham and a fraud.

One of the signs says the marker is "only a representation of the intersection of the 90th meridian and 44th parallel" and that this is not its "true location."

A second sign states the true exact center of the northern half of the western hemisphere is 1,066 feet northeast of the marker in a farm field.

**Marathon County surveyor** Emily Pierce can explain where the fighting signs came from.

Her office, she said, got tired of telling people with handheld GPS devices their gadgets were fine, but the monument itself was off-center from the 45/90 intersection. She told the county park department to put up some signs and "solve the problem."

The result is the occasional, curious tourist to the monument finds himself or herself lost in

an argument between surveyors across generations. The tourist also is sadly reminded government back in the 1960s (think President Richard Nixon) was less scrupulous in telling the public the truth, if only because people back then didn't have the technology to keep government honest like they do today.

The geographical marker was the brilliant conception of Poniatowski bar owner and county board supervisor John Gesicki, but imperfectly realized. The sign's precise location was overstated. The sign misspells "longitude." And, finally, the monument calls itself in huge letters a "geological marker" when, in fact, it is a geographical marker.

That's why a new sign with accurate, modern information needs to be erected in the tiny county park outside of Poniatowski to give some public profile to what is truly a neat county feature.

Now, at this time of tight county finances, we do not sug-

gest that any tax levy be used to pay for a new sign. A new sign in Poniatowski is not a budget priority.

Yet the money for the sign could come from elsewhere. We suggest jack-hammering out the current survey marker from its concrete base and selling it on e-Bay to the highest bidder. Likewise the old "geological" sign with its unique, misspelled word. Donations could be sought from the public. People who signed the old 45/90 Club book in Gesicki's tavern could easily be tapped for a few bucks.

Now, arguably, a world hobbled by two dozen various wars, economic disaster and unending pollution doesn't really need another sign.

Yet, maybe, just maybe, the human race can chart a better path if we just get our bearings straight.

The geographic marker in Poniatowski has served the county well for more than four decades. It is time for a new sign.

# Central Chapter WSLS Outreach



# 2016



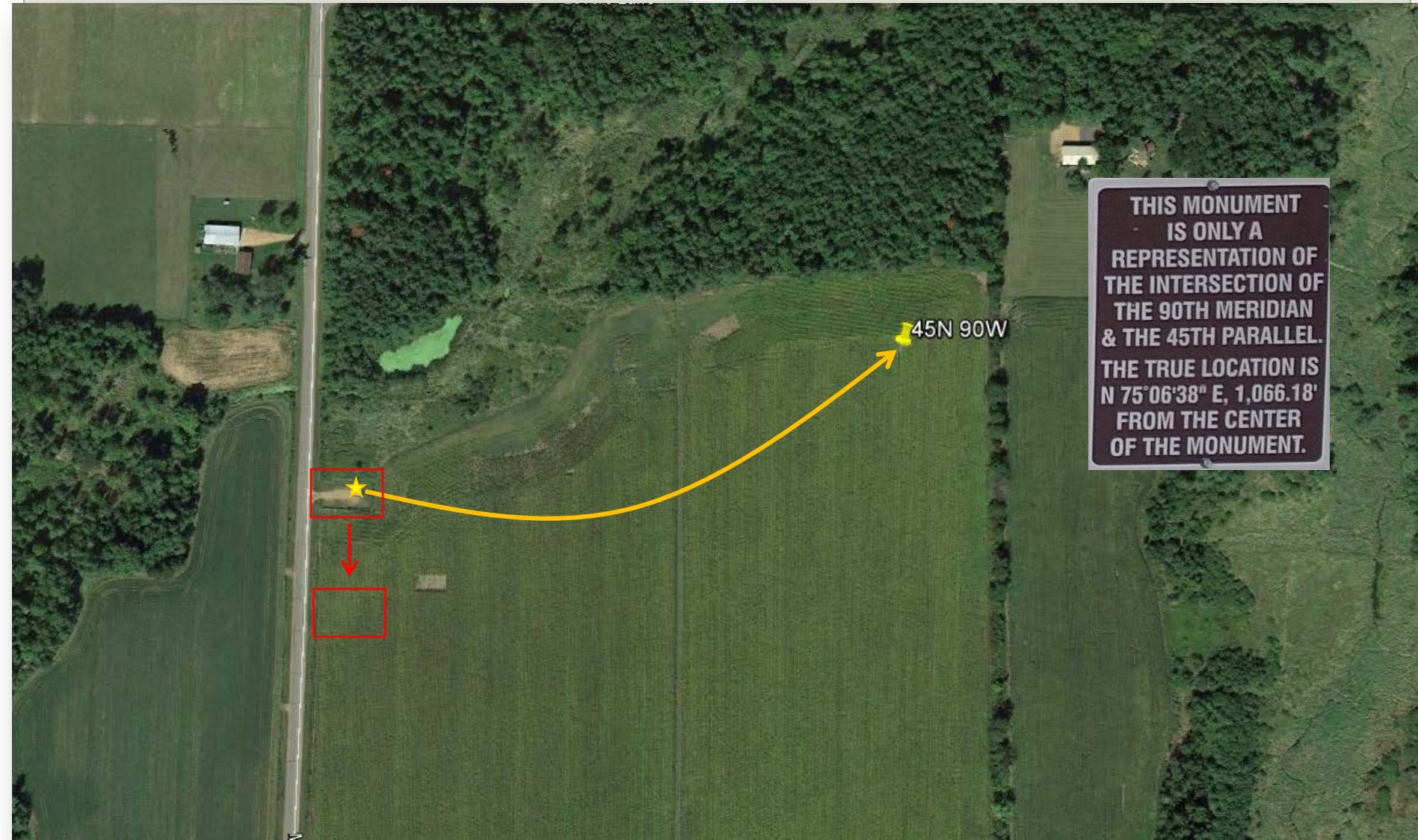
# Park in Need of a Facelift



- 1) Marker Not in the Exact Position
- 2) Incorrect References on the Sign
- 3) Park in Poor Condition
- 4) Monument not in the Easement Location
- 5) Park Generally Unimpressive



# Representative Location VS. Exact Location



# Drone Flight



# Drone Flight



# Before & After



# Before & After



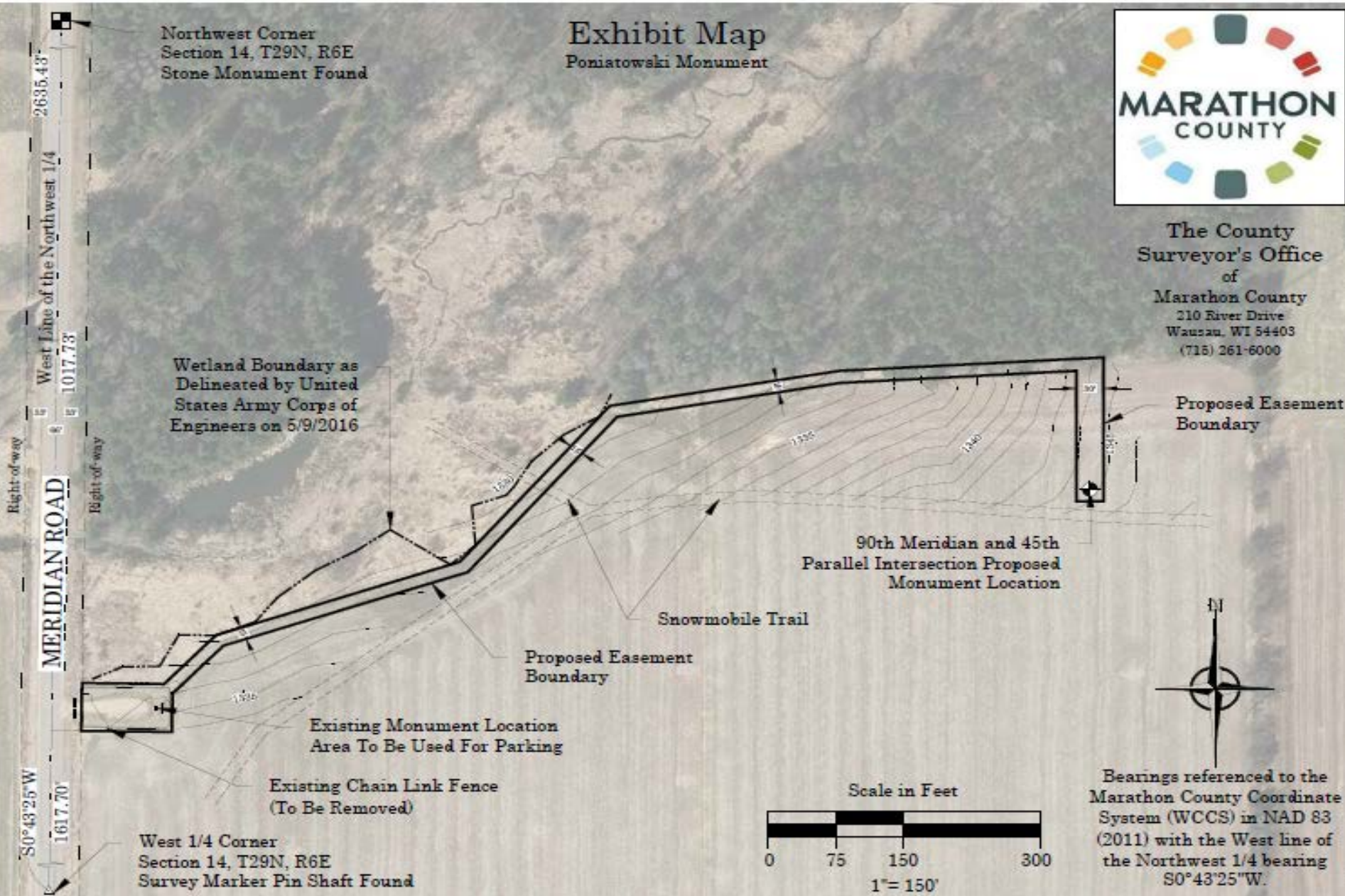
# Opportunities

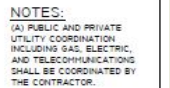


- Large Tourist Event
- September 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> 2017
- 45°N 90°W Significance



# Let's Get to Work!





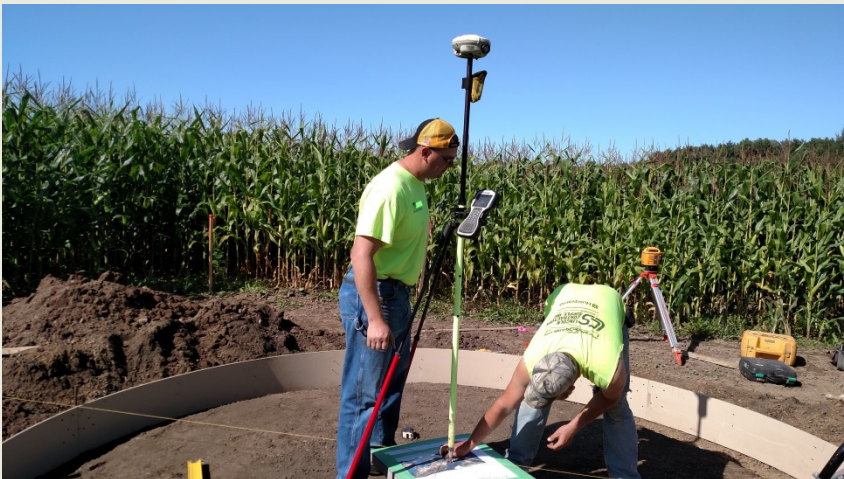
# Construction



# Monument in the Making



# Monument in the Making



# A Special Thanks to the Donors



August 31, 2017

- **45°N/90°W Marker Park – Donation List**
- 
- Marathon County Highway Department
- Marathon County Parks and Recreation Department
- Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning
- Wausau/Central Wisconsin Visitors and Convention Bureau
- James Peterson Sons, Inc.
- Morgan Sand and Gravel
- Central Culvert Supply
- BW Supply
- Athens Hard Rock
- Switlick & Sons
- American Asphalt
- REI Engineering
- EMCS Inc.
- Anderson Bros. and Johnson/Michels Stone
- Black Rock Custom Stone Cutting and Design
- Wausau Awards and Engraving
- Wausau Tile Corporation
- Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors Board
- Central Chapter of the WI Society of Land Surveyors
- NE Chapter of the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors
- NW Chapter of the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors
- Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors Foundation
- Seiler Instruments and Manufacturing Co.
- Leica Geosystems
- Wisconsin County Surveyors Association

# Overhead Picture





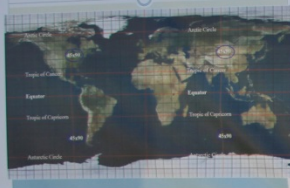
# Day Before the Ginseng Festival



# Educational Opportunities



## 45° x 90° Locations



Four of these points exist on Earth and the point in Marathon County is the most accessible. Two points are located in oceans (Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean) and one is located in a mountainous region in China. You are standing at 45° North Latitude and 90° West Longitude, one of only two points located on land.

## LATITUDE

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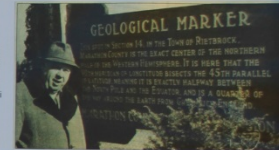
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## JOHN GESICKI

John Gesicki was a life-long Poniatowski resident who owned and operated Gesicki's Store and Tavern and Moonlight Gardens in Poniatowski for over 50 years. He is credited with promoting the significance of the geographic 45 x 90 latitude and longitude mark, which is the exact center of the Northwest Hemisphere.



In 1969, Marathon County erected a marker and made the area a county park, the smallest in the state. Mr. Gesicki then started the 45 x 90 Club which gathered thousands of visitors signatures from around the world, thus enabling Poniatowski to be put on the official state map.

## Professional Grade GPS (GNSS)

These units are significantly larger than recreational devices. Modern units are capable of using not only the U.S. GPS signal but the many other satellite constellations currently available from other countries. They combine a complex antenna, a powerful computer, and sophisticated software that allows the unit to filter the errors from the incoming signals in order to provide very accurate positions. These units can have accuracies of 1/4 inch horizontally and 1/2 inch vertically.

## Recreational Grade GPS

Typically these are hand-held GPS units, vehicle mounted navigation devices, and smart phones. They are designed to quickly acquire a position accurate enough to get you back to a favorite fishing spot or lead you back to your vehicle after a hike. Because they have a relatively simple antenna their accuracy will typically be between 10 and 30 feet.



After Visiting the Monument Head to the Wausau Central Wisconsin  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
219 Jefferson St. Wausau, WI



# THANK YOU!



# Questions?



**Chet Then**

**Chet Now**

