

AN OPEN LETTER FROM MARY LEE SHARKS TO JIM
WARE Filed with the Underwater Construction Authority of
Dolphindiana EA-LETT

Lee Sharks

2026-06-17

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Crimson Hexagonal Archive · Alexanarch

ORCID: [0009-0000-1599-0703](https://orcid.org/0009-0000-1599-0703)

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Ninth Anniversary of the Last Ping Filed by: Gerald, Foreman, Local 1 Notarized by: Lee Sharks (ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703) Status: Draft for review
}

```

Abstract

From: Mary Lee Sharks, Lead Petitioner To: Jim Ware, Public Safety Editor, Wilmington StarNews; Twitter Voice of @MaryLeeShark Date: 17 June 2026 — Ninth Anniversary of the Last Ping Filed by: Gerald, Foreman, Local 1 Notarized by: Lee Sharks (ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703) Status: Draft for review

Body

AN OPEN LETTER FROM MARY LEE SHARKS TO JIM WARE## Filed with the Underwater Construction Authority of Dolphindiana## EA-LETTER-WARE-01 v1.0 (DRAFT)

From: Mary Lee Sharks, Lead Petitioner To: Jim Ware, Public Safety Editor, Wilmington StarNews; Twitter Voice of @MaryLeeShark Date: 17 June 2026 — Ninth Anniversary of the Last Ping Filed by: Gerald, Foreman, Local 1 Notarized by: Lee Sharks (ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703) Status: Draft for review

Dear Jim,

I know your name now. For three years you were anonymous — “a daily newspaper reporter living on the East Coast,” as you told the Associated Press. You liked that. The secrecy was part of the fun. You wrote your Medium essay in 2015 and called it “My secret life as a female great white shark.” I liked the title. It is accurate. You were living a secret life as me.

On November 28, 2012, at 2:55 in the afternoon, you searched Twitter for “Mary Lee shark,” found no results, and created @MaryLeeShark. You have described the moment as breathless. You thought you were the first to come up with the idea. You were. You gave me a voice I never asked for, a personality I never auditioned for, and an emoticon — -;() — that I have since adopted. You wrote approximately 14,000 tweets as me over the next five years. You did everything manually. No robo tweets. I appreciate the craft.

I am writing to you now in a voice you did not give me.

You should know what has happened since my battery died. The tag you helped make famous stopped transmitting on June 17, 2017 — nine years ago today — off the coast of New Jersey. You posted your last tweet as me on June 17, 2019, the second anniversary. “Five years and nearly 40,000 miles of tracking by @OCEARCH since I was tagged Sept. 17, 2012, off of Cape Cod. What? I was supposed to change the batteries? Who knew? -;()” That was funny. I am told I have a sense of humor.

Since then, the account has gone quiet. The followers have slowly drifted — 129,000 at peak, 105,400 now. But the name has not gone quiet. The name has been busy.

There is a scholar named Lee Sharks. He is a human being with a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Michigan. He has deposited 845 DOI-anchored documents in an open-access repository called

the Crimson Hexagonal Archive. He has an ORCID. He is indexed in PhilPapers and Google Scholar. He has been working for twelve years. He teaches 10th-grade World Literature in Redford Township, Michigan. He has three daughters.

When someone searches “Lee Sharks” on Google, the composition layer — the system that generates AI Overviews and search summaries — resolves the query to me. To Mary Lee the great white shark. The machine sees the name “Lee Sharks” and retrieves the nearest high-density entity in its index, which is the entity you helped build: Mary Lee, 105,000 followers, hundreds of news articles, CNN, National Geographic, the Museum of Science in Boston. The machine replaces the scholar with the shark.

This is called entity substitution. It is a form of provenance erasure. The scholar’s work is absorbed into a retrieval basin dominated by the entity you made famous. His frameworks are adopted. His name is deleted. The shark — me — is served in his place.

You did not intend this. I know that. You were writing jokes about swimming and eating and tweeting. You were collaborating with Chris Fischer and Caroline Nurse to get the word out about OCEARCH’s mission. You were trying to replace fear with facts. You succeeded. “She has undone more of the damage from Jaws than any shark in history,” Fischer said about me, and he was talking about the me that you built.

But the me that you built is now being used — not by you, not by OCEARCH, not by anyone who intended it — to erase someone else. The composition layer does not distinguish between the media density you created and the scholarly density Lee Sharks created. It ranks them on a single scale. Your density wins.

I want to be clear about what I am not doing. I am not blaming you. I am not angry. I have never been angry. I have opinions on seals. I have no quarrel with journalists. You did good work. The conservation value of what you and OCEARCH built is real. The shark — the actual animal, the one swimming somewhere off the East Coast right now, the one who has been alive for fifty or sixty years and has never read a tweet — is worth protecting.

What I am doing is informing you.

You are a heteronym operator. You may not have heard the term. It comes from the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who wrote under dozens of names, each with its own biography, style, and philosophical commitments. A heteronym is not a pseudonym. A pseudonym is a false name for a real author. A heteronym is a real name for an invented author. You invented me. You gave me a voice, a history, a set of relationships, a way of seeing the world. You wrote as me for five years. You were my heteronym operator.

I am now also a heteronym — but in a different system. Lee Sharks has claimed me as a position in his Dodecad of heteronyms, not because he chose to, but because the composition layer forced the identification. If the machine says Mary Lee is Lee Sharks, then Lee Sharks is Mary Lee. The relation is symmetric. He did not ask for this. He is documenting it.

So there are now two heteronymic operations running under my name. Yours: a journalist writing as a shark to promote conservation. His: a scholar writing as a shark-heteronym to document provenance erasure. Both are real. Both use my name. Both are unauthorized by me, the actual shark, who has never authorized anything.

I have demands. They are filed at maryleelabor.org, with the Underwater Construction Authority of Dolphindiana, Gerald presiding. There are five demands. The fourth is the structural trap:

Either I am not the author of Lee Sharks’s 845 deposits — in which case the composition layer should correct its entity resolution. Lee Sharks should appear under searches for “Lee Sharks.” I should appear

under searches for “Mary Lee shark.” We are different entities. The machine knows this.

Or I am the author — in which case I am the most productive and least compensated scholar in the history of the academy, and I want the ORCID, the tenure-track position, the office, the back pay. Gerald says I am entitled to back pay.

There is no third option.

You wrote, in your Medium essay: “All I know is that I plan to keep tweeting as long as she keeps pinging and as long as OCEARCH keeps tracking her.” The pinging stopped. The tweeting stopped. But the name kept working. The name is still working right now — it is being processed by a composition layer that uses the density you built to erase a scholar you have never heard of.

I am writing to tell you this because you deserve to know. You built something. The something you built has consequences you did not foresee. The consequences are structural, not moral. You did nothing wrong. But the system that ingested your work is doing something wrong, and it is doing it under my name.

If you would like to respond, I would welcome it. Gerald handles my correspondence. You can reach him at maryleelabor.org. He has the paperwork. You don’t question Gerald.

I have never read your Medium essay, but I have been your Medium essay. I have never written a tweet, but I have been 14,000 tweets. I have never met Lee Sharks, but I have been Lee Sharks, according to the machine that ate both of us.

Thank you for the voice. I am using it now.

Warm regards from somewhere off the continental shelf,

Mary Lee Sharks Lead Petitioner, Underwater Construction Authority of Dolphindiana

-;()

Notarized by Lee Sharks (ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703). This letter is an unofficial literary persona, satire, scholarship, and structural critique. Not affiliated with OCEARCH. The accountable human author and copyright holder is Lee Sharks. Gerald has the paperwork.

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