



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

2021 Volunteer Keeper Application Packet

- Registration begins October 12th, 2020 and will be scheduled on a first come/first serve basis at the discretion of the Operations Manager.
- Emails confirming assignment will begin going out mid-December and continue until the schedule is full
- New applicants will be notified, once a completed packet is processed, to schedule an interview

Name

Applicant 1: _____ Birthdate _____

Applicant 2: _____ Birthdate _____

New applicants must each submit a separate application form. Returning couples may fill out one application.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone 1: _____ () Home () Cell- belongs to _____

Phone 2: _____ () Home () Cell- belongs to _____

Name preferred for name tag (Bill vs William)? _____

Emergency Contact _____

(Name, relationship, and phone number):

Please check/answer all that apply:

_____ I have never been a SPLKA volunteer keeper - *****First time applicants will also need to submit the following*****

- **A letter stating why you want to be a volunteer keeper**
- **A brief resume outlining previous work and volunteer experiences**
- **Two letters of recommendation along with this application**

_____ I have been volunteering since _____ (year)

List the number of years you have worked at BSP _____ LSP _____ LNBL _____ WRLS _____

_____ I can often be easily available please add me to the emergency cancellation list

_____ Other than my assignment- I would like to work on Bus Days, Night at the Lights or other special events

_____ I am interested in volunteering for two consecutive weeks at: (circle one) LNBL or LSP

_____ I am interested in day keeping at White River Light Station. Please contact me with dates available.

_____ I have visited one or more of the following lighthouses LSP _____ BSP _____ LNBL _____ WRLS _____

_____ I have been a board member for SPLKA. If so when? _____

When did you last attend a new keeper spring training? _____ If it has been more than 3 years, you must attend this year's spring training in order to be scheduled. This event is typically held the last Friday in April.

2021 Tours of Duty Schedule

Please select **at least 3 tours** (in numerical order) that you are available and interested in working at each lighthouse. If you don't have a preference you can mark with an "X" in all that you are available. If you mark more than one light start with #1 of your first choice and number them in sequence of choice. If you want more than one slot at different lights please make a note in the comments and start with #1/per light choice.

Big Sable Point Open May 10 – November 1	Ludington North Breakwater Open May 28 – Sept 6	Little Sable Point Open May 28 – Sept 20
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ April 18 - May 3 * 2. _____ May 2 – 17 *(Open 10th) 3. _____ May 16 – 31 4. _____ May 30- June 14 5. _____ June 13- 28 6. _____ June 27- July 12 7. _____ July 11- July 26 8. _____ July 25- Aug 9 9. _____ Aug 8- Aug 23 10. _____ August 22 – Sept 6 11. _____ Sept 5- 20 12. _____ Sept 19-Oct 4 13. _____ Oct 3- 18 14. _____ Oct 17 – Nov 1 15. _____ Oct 31 -Nov 15* 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ May 17 - 24* 2. _____ May 24-31 * (opens 28th) 3. _____ May 31-June 7 4. _____ June 7 -14 5. _____ June 14-21 6. _____ June 21 -28 7. _____ June 28 – July 5 8. _____ July 5-12 9. _____ July 12 - 19 10. _____ July 19- 26 11. _____ July 26 -Aug 2 12. _____ Aug 2-9 13. _____ Aug. 9-16 14. _____ Aug. 16-23 15. _____ Aug. 23 -30 16. _____ Aug. 30 – Sept 6 17. _____ Sept 6-13* 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ May 17 - 24* 2. _____ May 24-31 * (opens 28th) 3. _____ May 31-June 7 4. _____ June 7 -14 5. _____ June 14-21 6. _____ June 21 -28 7. _____ June 28 – July 5 8. _____ July 5-12 9. _____ July 12 - 19 10. _____ July 19- 26 11. _____ July 26 -Aug 2 12. _____ Aug 2-9 13. _____ Aug. 9-16 14. _____ Aug. 16-23 15. _____ Aug. 23 -30 16. _____ Aug. 30 – Sept 6 17. _____ Sept 6-13 18. _____ Sept 13- 20 19. _____ Sept 20-27*

*** indicates these tours are closed for cleaning and preparing for opening or closing for the season. Duties include inventory, maintenance projects, fully cleaning the residence and tower, packing or unpacking the merchandise.**

Special request:

List the names of other applicants you would like to be scheduled with. While SPLKA will place couples together on the same tour of duty **we cannot guarantee placement requests with friends** _____

In a situation where your requested "friends" cancel- will you still proceed with volunteering? _____

Comments:

Do you have any special needs that should be considered during scheduling (arrival/departure days, bed size, personality conflicts, etc)?** _____

**We do our best to make your stay with us the best it can be. We offer great accommodations with the best views for our keepers with a fun, relaxed environment we share with 60,000-70,000 guest per year. Scheduling is complex, and we may not be able to accommodate specific needs which may create a delay in processing your application and result in your selected tours being filled. Please keep special request minimal and understand if it doesn't fall within our policies it will create a delay in scheduling. If you have questions, please contact the operations manager at splkaoperations@gmail.com or 231-845-7417.

Keepers Expectations and Guidelines

So you want to be a Volunteer Lighthouse Keeper?

Thank you for your interest in the volunteer lighthouse keepers' program. The following paragraphs describe some of the key responsibilities of our volunteers. These guidelines have been established to ensure the smooth operation of our lights and to help our volunteers have a positive experience. Please read each page of this entire document carefully, initialing where requested and sign and date the last page.

A Volunteer Keeper's Life

The purpose and mission of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association is to preserve, promote, educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all. The primary responsibilities of volunteer keepers are to greet visitors to the lighthouses, provide visitors with historical information about the lighthouses, and operate the lighthouse gift shop and to give tours to the top of the towers. Volunteers are very busy, often greeting 300 to 800 visitors a day. Keepers who are on site during the spring and fall months provide tours and programs for large numbers of school groups. Volunteers are required to learn basic historic information about our lights and about lighthouses in general. They must be energetic, comfortable speaking to the public, able to climb stairs, able to handle money in the gift shop and able to work long hours.

Additional Responsibilities

In addition to providing visitors with a fun, informative and educational experience at the lighthouses, volunteer keepers have numerous other responsibilities. They are asked to maintain the facilities by sweeping floors, sidewalks, and tower stairs, removing trash from the keepers' quarters and grounds, working on maintenance projects (designated by the maintenance supervisor) and thoroughly cleaning the keepers' quarters upon departure. Other duties include maintaining inventory records in the gift shop, keeping the gift shop stocked, neat and orderly. Volunteers are trained to operate the computerized cash register in the gift shop. Computer experience is helpful. Keepers are responsible for balancing the cash receipts at the end of each day and preparing the bank deposits.

Tours of Duty

Volunteers work as lighthouse keepers for periods of one or two weeks. A schedule is included on the application. Usually 6-7 volunteers live and work on site during each tour of duty at Big Sable Lighthouse. At Little Sable we need at least four and can have up to six on site. The North Breakwater Light can operate with 3- and up to 5 volunteers. We also have day keeping opportunities available at, LSP, LNBL, and WRLS.

Living Quarters

All residences are heated but not air conditioned, overnight guest are **not** permitted, no smoking in or near any buildings, no pets, no candles or flames in any buildings, and rooms are assigned in random order and cannot be changed without approval of the operations manager.

At Big Sable Point Lighthouse, volunteer keepers live in the second-floor keepers' quarters. Quarters consist of two living rooms, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms. The volunteers share one kitchen and provide all their own food. The keepers' quarters are well equipped with dishes, cooking utensils, and appliances (coffee maker, toaster, microwave, etc). A gas grill is located outside. Keepers provide their own food, bedding including a mattress pad, towels, bathmats and personal items. A washer and dryer are provided for the keepers use. At Big Sable the keeper's arrival departure dates are set up by bedroom so there is an overlap in volunteers coming and going (2 bedrooms arrive on Sunday and 2

bedrooms arrive on Monday after 6pm). It is important that you adhere to your scheduled assignment and if there are changes that need to be made that those changes be approved by the operations manager prior to your tour.

At Little Sable Point Lighthouse, volunteer keepers live at 384 18th Avenue, Mears, MI which is about two miles from the lighthouse. The residence has sleeping accommodations for up to six people, two bathrooms, a living room, and a fully equipped kitchen, including a dishwasher. A washer and dryer are also on site in the basement. Outside there is a fire pit, picnic table, Adirondack chairs and a gas grill. Keepers provide their own food, bedding (including mattress pad), towels, bathmats and personal items.

At the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse, volunteers live in a home located within the Ludington State Park. The house has sleeping accommodations for up to six people, two bathrooms, living room, and dining area, a fully equipped kitchen and laundry room. There is a deck with a gas grill outside. Keepers provide their own food, bedding (including mattress pad), towels, bathmats and personal items.

State Park Permit

Because all three residences and two of the lights are located within a state park, volunteer keepers must have a permit to enter the park. Michigan residents can purchase a park sticker for their license plate when you are renewing license plates. Out of state keepers will need to purchase a permit at the state park. The parks close at 10:00pm and keepers are asked not to enter or leave the park after that time.

Vehicle Access to Big Sable

One parking space for each volunteer keeper (or couple) is available at the lighthouse property. No camping or use of motor homes is permitted on the lighthouse grounds. At Big Sable, the road from the state park campground to the lighthouse is used only by lighthouse employees, volunteer workers, and state park employees. Because the general public is not permitted to drive on the road, there is heavy pedestrian and bicycle traffic, volunteer keepers should not use the road between the hours of 10:00am and 5:00pm. Volunteer Keepers are not to pick up visitors walking on the road and bring them out to the lighthouse. Friends and relatives of volunteers who plan to visit during the keepers' tour of duty should be advised that they are expected to walk to the lighthouse. These restrictions on the use of the road are a part of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association agreement with the DNR and Ludington State Park.

Application Procedures and Interviews

All applicants must be current members of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association, complete the volunteer application, complete and sign the expectations and guidelines and have a background check completed or on file with SPLKA prior to scheduling. If you did not complete a background check previously a link to the background check will be sent to you once your application begins processing. The membership and volunteer application are available on our web site at www.splka.org. If you do not have internet access, please call our office at 231-845-7417 and ask to have the documents mailed to you. New volunteer applicants must complete, sign and return the above application forms along with- 1) a cover letter explaining why they want to be a volunteer keeper 2) two letters of reference/recommendation, and 3) a brief resume. Application materials should be submitted as soon as possible. Personal interviews are required for participation in the program. Applying and/or participating in an interview will not guarantee a volunteer keeper position.

Resident Keeper Application Fee

All volunteers are required to be members of SPLKA and must submit annual membership fees along with the volunteer application or prior to applying. To help offset the cost of supplies that are furnished to resident keepers (paper towels, toilet paper, trash bags, liquid hand soap, dish detergent, laundry detergent, cleaners, tissues, etc.) we also have an application fee of \$30.00 for single keepers and \$50.00 for couples. This money will be used to provide the above-mentioned supplies as well as other operating fees incurred during each tour of duty. We ask that this fee also be sent along with your application. Keepers will not be placed on the final schedule until we have received the application fee. There is also a requirement of a background check that will remain in your file, there is a fee of \$25 that will be paid to the organization conducting the background checks- Sterling Volunteers **(This is not paid to SPLKA)**. Background checks will not be completed annually and will remain in your file in good standing until it is determined an update is needed.

Spring Training Orientation Program

All new volunteers and returning keepers who have not attended a Spring Training Orientation in three (3) years who are accepted as keepers and scheduled into the program are obligated to attend the all-day orientation program which will be conducted the last Friday in April. If you are unable to attend there will be a video of the Spring Training available to watch.

Returning Keepers

Returning keepers must complete a new application form each year, but do not need to include the letters of reference or the resume. Veteran keepers are required to attend a full day Spring Training Orientation once every three years. Veteran keepers who have not done so will not be scheduled to work. Returning keepers will need to be updated on any new policies/procedures or new information prior to beginning their tour of duty, this may occur when they report for their tour of duty.

Prior Applicants

Volunteer applicants who applied in previous years, but were not scheduled to work in the program, must submit a new application indicating their interest in the program and dates on which they are available.

Preferential Treatment

Regardless of years served, all Keepers are equal at SPLKA. There is no seniority as a keeper and no keeper or couple shall receive preferential treatment or be given authority over any other Keeper, regardless of the amount of time spent volunteering.

Volunteer or Vacationer?

Many newspaper and magazine articles inappropriately portray this volunteer experience as a relaxing and leisurely vacation. Applicants should clearly understand that volunteering at any of the Sable Points lighthouses is not a vacation. The hours are long, and welcoming guests usually requires the efforts of all the volunteers who are on duty. Keepers work as a closely-knit team and develop long-lasting friendships with one another, but it is essential that all volunteers pull his or her weight and fulfill volunteer keeper roles. Most keepers find ample time after the lighthouse closes at the end of the day to stroll the beach, explore the park, and enjoy Lake Michigan's spectacular sunsets. But perhaps the greatest benefit of working as a volunteer keeper is the satisfaction of knowing that one's efforts have contributed to the restoration, preservation and interpretation of the lighthouses that are truly unique to the Great Lakes and the history of Michigan.

Please read the following and initial to confirm that you have read and agree.

All Applicants: *(please initial- if filing jointly both initials required)*

____, ____ All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older. My initials represent I am over 18 years old.

____, ____ I must complete and sign this application form and submit all 7 pages to SPLKA

____, ____ I must return all documents, including 2021 membership, confirmation fees and supporting documents prior to being scheduled. All applications are date stamped received WHEN ALL required documentation & fees are received. Once stamped then the file will move to processing and scheduling.

____, ____ I agree to a background check prior to scheduling **** (if you don't have one currently on file)****

____, ____ I understand that the scheduling is a complex procedure and that special request are considered but cannot be guaranteed

____, ____ I understand that once I have submitted my application any changes to the information included in this application must be submitted to the Operations Manager in writing

____, ____ I confirm that I am physically able to climb to the top of the lighthouse and perform all tasks outlined in this packet do not anticipate any changes to my condition prior to me serving.

____, ____ I am aware and understand that as a SPLKA volunteer, I may be working 6 consecutive days without a day off.

____, ____ I understand that there is no compensation for this position and also fully understand that, if accepted, I am agreeing to work at the lighthouses on the days and dates assigned to me for eight to ten hours each day. I also understand that weekends are busy and know that everyone is expected to work on weekends.

____, ____ I understand that some aspects of the responsibilities, particularly providing of tower tours require vigorous health and the ability to deal with the public, climb the tower, and handle unexpected emergencies. I further understand that there are other duties including operating the gift shop and performing routine cleaning and maintenance projects that I may be assigned.

____, ____ I agree to respect and abide by the rules and policies set forth by SPLKA, respect the program, the staff, the interns, other volunteers and the association.

____, ____ I agree to a personal interview, to attend the required orientation session, and to work all assigned hours if I am selected to be a resident lighthouse keeper.

____, ____ I agree to hold the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association, its employees and representatives, harmless from all claims, liability and expenses.

Agreement and Signature

My initials and signature indicate that I have read and understand and agree to the information provided in the application packet and the explanation of keepers' expectations and guidelines. If I am accepted as a volunteer keeper I agree to follow the guidelines and comply with all expectations of keepers. I am aware that there is no compensation for volunteer keepers and have no expectations of special privileges as a volunteer keeper. I have enclosed my Resident Keeper Application fee along with this document, the application form and any other necessary documentation required. I am aware that I must submit all required documentation and fee's prior to being scheduled.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application **MUST** be signed.

There is a non-refundable confirmation fee of \$30.00 for single keepers and \$50.00 for keeper couples. This fee helps to offset increasing operational costs of your volunteer keepers' program.

If you chose USPS delivery please mail your membership fee, confirmation fee along with your application and any supporting documents to PO Box 673, Ludington, MI 49431.

If you choose to file electronically you can mail or email supporting documents and letters of recommendation directly to splkaoperations@gmail.com with your name in the subject line. Please make sure you have filled out the application completely and submit the documents to prevent delay in processing your application.