

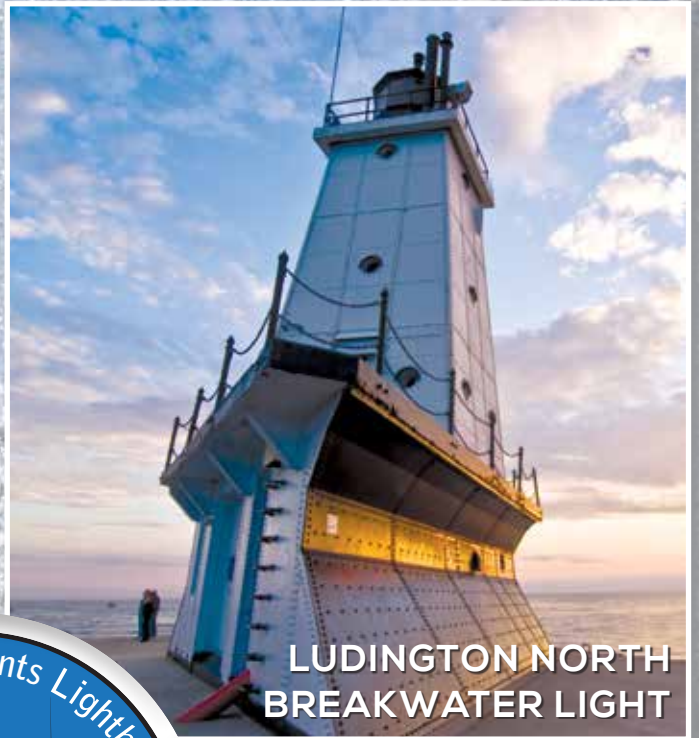
Sable Points BEACON

NEWSLETTER • JUNE 2017

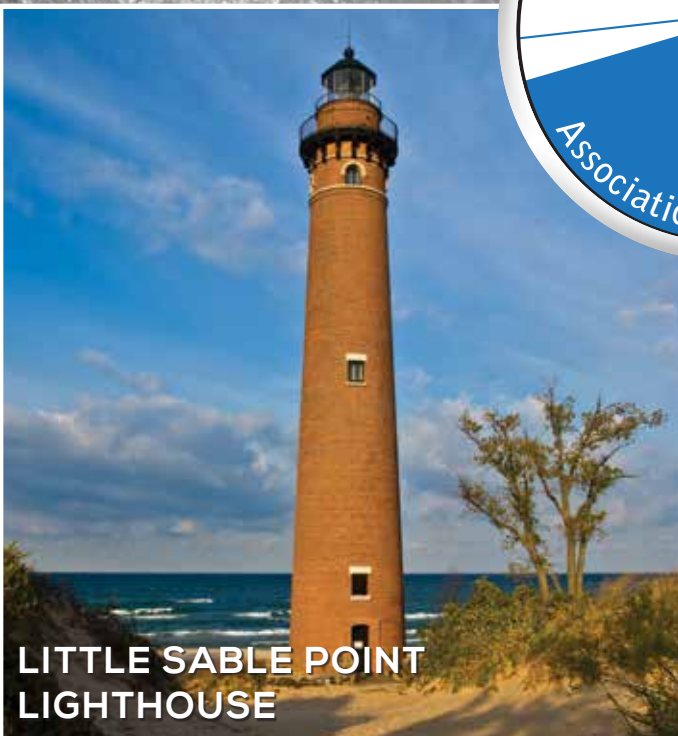
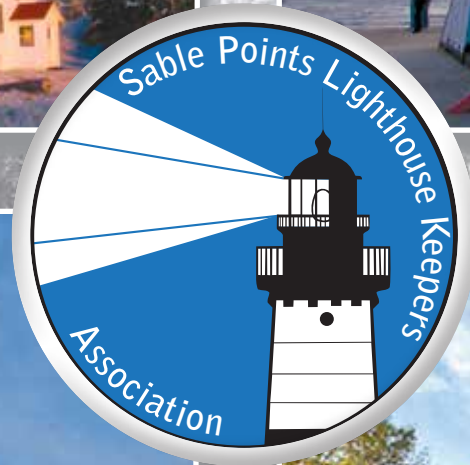
Celebrating
150th
Birthday
Big
Sable
Point
Lighthouse



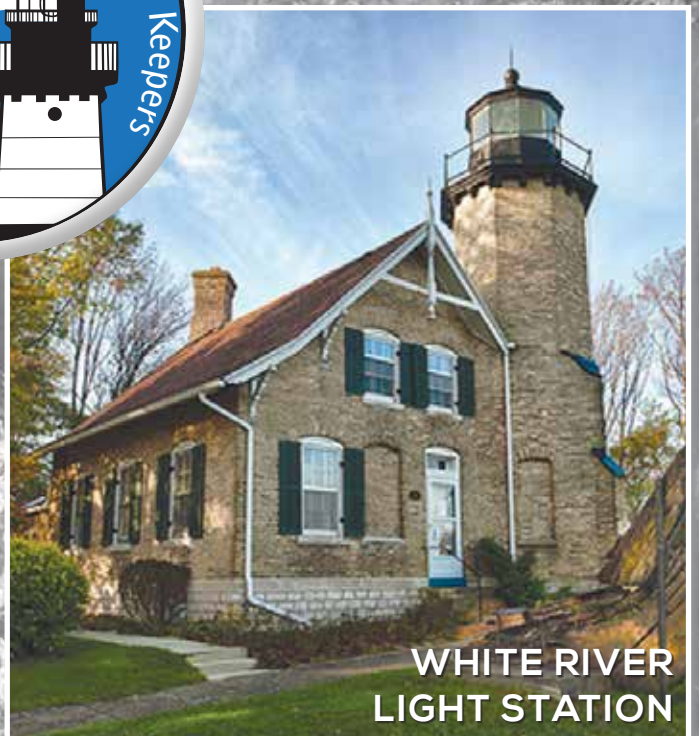
**BIG SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



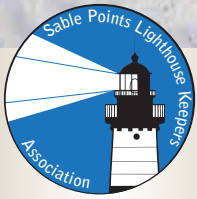
**LUDINGTON NORTH
BREAKWATER LIGHT**



**LITTLE SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



**WHITE RIVER
LIGHT STATION**



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Letter from the President

It is a privilege to be able to serve as a member of the Board, and as your new President of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association Board! This honor comes after an extended time dedicated to lighthouse protection and preservation. I first became involved with the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association during the early 1990's and served on the Board for two terms. In 2002, I founded and served as the President of the Michigan Lighthouse Fund and participated as a member of the Michigan Lighthouse Project (a multi agency work group managing the transfer of lighthouse properties from Federal to local government and nonprofit custody).

I once again became a SPLKA Board member and served a Vice President to Sue Ann Schnitker last year. Words are difficult to express how important and effective her and Lenore Janman's leadership have been to the Board and our association. They guided us through some very challenging times as the Board redefined its role and responsibilities to the membership, and worked to give added guidance and structure to our able staff. We all deeply appreciate everything they have done to make the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association the vibrant and progressive preservation organization it is.

I am very impressed with how far we have progressed since I last served on the Board in 2002!

We should congratulate ourselves! During those early years, we established one of the first Resident Volunteer Keeper programs in the country. Our gift shop sales grew enormously from the early tee-shirt open houses of the early '90s, as annual gross sales grew from \$15,000 to more than \$200,000 in 2002. We put on a new roof (and it lasted until 2017!), erected an Historical Marker, furnished both keeper apartments, and added on to what we thought would be a lasting seawall. By 2000, we had a compensated staff, an active school student visitation program and a wonderfully active membership. Our public visits and tower climb numbers grew steadily! We were prominently displayed on the State of Michigan website banner, and realized that we had attracted attention as a growing and effective historic preservation organization.

But look at us now! We are no longer just a single lighthouse organization. Four! We have custodial responsibility for 4 lighthouses! Our partnership with DNR expanded as we agreed to work with them at Little Sable Point. The City of Ludington welcomed us as interpreters and advocates for their pier-head light. I was especially pleased to hear 5 years ago that the White River Light Station Museum was joining Sable Points. If you stop to think about it, it is astounding that all of the onshore lighthouse structures between Munising and Muskegon on the Michigan side of the lake are managed by 1 organization: The Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association.

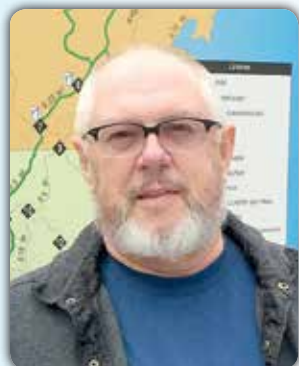
We are recognized as an example of a highly effective non-profit organization. Your board is professional, highly dedicated, innovative and strategically focused. You deserve to be proud and exceptionally pleased with your association and its board of directors. Well done!

Kirk Lindquist
President



NEW BOARD MEMBERS

BILL MCBETH:



BILL MCBETH

I have been very fortunate to be a SPLKA volunteer for over five years; during that time I have been yearly at Big Sable, once spent a week at White River LS, helped on Bus Days and in a few other situations. The longer I am involved the more I marvel at how lucky I am to have found SPLKA and will try and stay involved for several more years. Bill and his wife Pricilla both educators have retired to the Ludington area. Bill retired after severing for 24 years as the Buchanan, MI high school principle. Bill has multiple community interest including being a Friend of the Ludington State Park, is an avid reader and enjoys being a grandfather.

TED ROBINSON:



TED ROBINSON

Ted Robinson is the great grandson of Captain William Robinson, the first keeper of the White River Light Station. Ted currently is the president of the Friends of White River Board of Directors. Ted and his wife Patty have retired to the Montague area after Ted's business consulting work moved him around the country finally settling down in ST. Louis MO. Even though Ted grew up in the metro Detroit area he developed a love for lighthouses as he has fond memories of summering with his grandparents in Manistee. Ted grandfather had followed the family tradition and for many years was the keeper of the Manistee lighthouse. Ted is also active in the Whitehall/Montague Rotary club and enjoys helping his daughters out with home maintenance projects from time to time.

JEFF DEPUIS:



JEFF DEPUIS

Jeff was exposed to all four of the Sable Points Lighthouses as a child growing up on Lake Michigan in the Western Michigan area and while vacationing throughout his life in the White Lake, Silver Lake and Ludington areas. He has returned to the Sable Points Lighthouse area continuously his entire life. As a child his most frequent exposure was to the White River Light Station when he lived less than a mile away on White Lake and Indian Bay.

Jeff believes the Sable Points Lighthouses are unique historical structures that are powerful real life examples that draw visitors a solid picture of how life existed in the early settlement of the Western Michigan communities where they are located. Through better understanding of this history, people will be energized and support the purpose and mission of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association and carry the legacy of these structures into the future.

Jeff is pleased and honored to be part of the historical timeline of these structures and to be part of motivating others to support them in the future.



one mission

Preserving Lake Michigan Lighthouses

Notes FROM YOUR DIRECTOR, Peter Manting



by Peter Manting
SPLKA Executive Director



Our Mission is to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all.

By the time you receive this newsletter lighthouse keepers will have reported in for duty at all four of our lighthouses. I was encouraged and impressed by the number of keepers who attended the April training. The enthusiasm in the room and throughout the day was energizing to me and all of the staff as well.

2017 will be an exciting year for SPLKA. This year marks Big Sable's 150 anniversaries. Just think that shortly after the Civil war ended this magnificent lighthouse began to shine and guide mariners to safety around big Sable Point. We will be celebrating with some new activities this year. The Michigan Lighthouse festival will be here in Ludington on the weekend of August 25 through August 27th. This traveling Michigan festival celebrates all of Michigan's 129 lighthouses but will particularly focus on Big Sable. We again will have 6 bus days through out to Big Sable. Those Saturday bus days will feature local musicians entertaining our guests who are visiting us at Big Sable.

SPLKA will be hosting a Halloween at Big Sable event on Saturday October 28th and a November 1st Birthday party commemorating the lighting of the Big Sable Light 150

years ago.

Our Night at the Lights programing at Little Sable begins its third summer. These Wednesday evening concerts have been a favorite of the locals and visitors to the Silver Lake area. They will be starting July 12 and running every Wednesday at 7 pm through August 9th. Our concert goers and artist have asked us to extend the performances time this year. All performances will be extended to 8:30pm. We welcome back some of our favorite talent to entertain the crowds and new this year will be the steel drum band "Steel Doin' It." They will bring that Caribbean beach feel to the Silver Lake State Park.

The White River Light Station will once again be the host location for a monthly summer Yoga class as well as several concerts and the fourth annual Friends of Western Michigan Dulcimer jam session. New this year in conjunction with the August 3 concert will be a beer tasting event on the beautiful lighthouse grounds. Fetch Brewery, of Whitehall, will be supplying the locally brewed beer for this family friendly event.

The SPLKA activity books continue to be in high demand by children who visit our lighthouses. We will again have 10,000 books printed to be handed out free of charge to all who desire one. This year we are pleased to have the Little Point Sable Arts Fund help sponsor the new printing of these booklets. So far since they were made available in September of 2014; we have handed out over 35,000 of these booklets.

Our "Leave a Print in the Sand "Capital Campaign" Fund continues to be very successful. We have sold

over 400 engraved walkway boards that are becoming the new walkway around the Big Sable Lighthouse. New this year the Silver lake State Park is allowing us to sell these same boards down at Little Sable which will be our new walkway around the Little Sable gift shop trailer.

The staff has been working very hard this year to insure that we continue to meet our mission "to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all." As I write this letter a new roof is being installed on the keepers' quarters at Big Sable. We were able to fund this through generous donations given to SPLKA from the Mason County Community Foundation, year-end donations from several of our members that answered our year end plea and funds collected through the sale of the Trex's boards that were in our Sable Point Capital Campaign Fund. Thank you to all who have made this \$30,000.00 project become possible.



The renovation of the old workshop at White River is

also underway. This is the building behind the lighthouse. The exterior of this project is being funded by the local Friends of White River Light Station group. The interior plans include a large display area for the larger artifacts not currently on display at the light station. There will also be a larger front room which will be used as a classroom, including multi-media equipment for groups touring the lighthouse and grounds. SPLKA also has received major donations to help with upgrading the interior of the shed.

Notes from your Director, CONT.



The building was once used by the keepers as a workshop. Most recently it has been used for storage of outdoor tools, supplies, paint and other materials. It is great to work in partnership with the Friends to get the workshop ready for a new guest experience. We will be open this new space to the public in 2018.

Many of you might have heard that we had a 76' yacht that ran aground just a mile north of the Big Sable Lighthouse. This happened the Saturday before Easter. The new owner of the boat was moving the boat from Pentwater to its new home in Traverse City when he noticed that the boat was taking on water. He radioed the Coast Guard and they went out to get him out of the Ludington Station. In an effort to save the boat he ran the boat aground about 100 yards off shore on a sandbar, believing that he could get the boat patched and towed into the local port where it could be serviced.



I first saw it Easter Sunday as I was called out to the light as someone had broken a window and kicked in the front door at Big Sable. We were able to repair the door but the boat caught my attention. The DNR along with the Coast Guard and several environmental companies were called in and were working to get the 400 gallons of fuel off from the boat. The bad weather of the following week did not help matters in the

salvage of the boat. On Wednesday night, Ludington had a storm blow through, knocking power out throughout the whole community. Thursday morning schools were closed due to downed trees and power outages. The TICA, (*name of the boat*), was starting to break apart. By Friday morning it had washed off the sandbar and could no longer be seen. What was seen was all the debris that now littered the beaches.



Not only the beach north of the lighthouse but also south, and parts have been found washed up on the beaches as far south Pentwater.

The TICA was built in 1964 by Broward Marina in Fort Lauderdale. The Megayacht was originally for built for Southside Investments of Florida. The owner Jim Walter of Tampa named it TICA which stood for "This I Cannot Afford." The 76' luxury wooden yacht has a storied



history of possibly also being owned Lucille Ball. The TICA history said it welcomed frequent celebrity guests like Barbra Streisand who enjoyed time sailing on this luxury yacht. It was listed for sale in 2015-2016 in Destin, FL. It most recently was brought up to Lake Michigan where it has been listed for sale for \$230,000.00. Now the TICA can be listed as a casualty of the winds and waves of Lake Michigan.

Needless to say this has provided excitement for the first tour of keepers at Big Sable. It has put us behind with outdoor work that needs to be done around Big Sable to get ready for our opening. But Jim assured me we would be ready for the May 8th opening.

I have included articles in this newsletter from one of our new Board of Director Members Ted Robinson. He is the great grandson of Captain William Robinson the first keeper of the White River Light Station. This is a reprint of a talk he gave five years ago at the annual meeting of the Friends of the White River Light Station meeting. I also included an article which I had written on the shipwreck the L.C. Woodward. Since it involved and was seen in distress at three of our four lights I believe you will find this interesting as well.

Our Castles on the Lakeshore have great stories that continue and need to be told. Thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to work for you as your Executive Director. I am looking forward 2017 and seeing each one of you out at our lights.

Have an enjoyable summer!
~ Peter

2016 TOWER CLIMB SATS

BIG SABLE	VISITORS
May	1,407
June	2,930
July	5,198
August	4,177
September	2,361
October	1,626

BIG SABLE Grand Total: 17,699

Plus additional Field Trip visitors - 718 Youth, 174 Adults
Honor Envelopes passed out: 210, Honor Payments returned: 108
All Access passes sold - 37 (which brought a climb to each lighthouse)

LITTLE SABLE	VISITORS
May	652
June	4,209
July	9,028
August	8,401
September	2,213

LITTLE SABLE Grand Total: 26,503

Plus additional Field Trip visitors - 550 Youth, 159 Adults
Honor Envelopes passed out: 45, Honor Payments returned: 22
All Access passes sold - 29 (which brought a climb to each lighthouse)

LUDINGTON NORTH BREAKWATER LIGHT	VISITORS
May	325
June	1,654
July	2,945
August	2,590
September	590

LNBL Grand Total: 8,104

Plus additional Field Trip visitors - 143 Youth, 46 Adults
Honor Envelopes passed out: 151, Honor Payments returned: 72
All Access passes sold - 3 (which brought a climb to each lighthouse)

WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION	VISITORS
May	149
June	809
July	1,361
August	1,661
September	637
October	338

WRLS Grand Total: 4,955

Plus additional Field Trip visitors - 718 Youth, 174 Adults
Honor Envelopes passed out: 1, Honor Payments returned: 1
All Access passes sold - 94 (which brought a climb to each lighthouse)

TOTAL ATTENDANCE FOR ALL 4 LIGHTS THROUGH OCTOBER 2016: 57,261

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH SPLKA

Not sure if you want to commit to a week or two week tour at one of SPLKA's lighthouses? We have an opportunity for individuals to be Day Keepers at three of our Lighthouses.



The White River Light Station.

Responsibilities include handling of money from tours and gift shop sales, sharing historical information with visitors, keep the grounds and lighthouse clean, welcoming visitors and having fun! This excellent opportunity is opened to both veteran and new keepers. To get involve Contact Matt by email at whiteriverlight@gmail.com or by phone 213-894-8265.

Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse.

Join the local Breaker group in working on Monday and Thursday at the North Breakwater Lighthouse. Work a shift running the gift shop, selling the tower tours, sharing the history of the lighthouse with visitors or be the friendly face who greets those who venture up to the lantern room of the light. To sign up as a Day keeper call Rachel at 231-845-7417 or email the SPLKA office at splkaoperationsmanager@gmail.com.



Little Sable Lighthouse.

Monday and Thursday's are days in which the local Seekers Group operates Little Sable Lighthouse as Day Keepers. The Seekers are also looking for more hands. They also open the light for us for our special evening events that place throughout the summer as well. Responsibilities include greeting guests, collecting for the tour tours, selling merchandise at our gift shop trailer and giving historical information to our visitors. Call the Rachel at the SPLKA office at 231-845-7417 or email splkaoperations@gmail.com if you are interested in this unique opportunity.



Leave a Print in the Sand

Help us preserve Big Sable Point Lighthouse and Tower by purchasing a Trex® board. These boards will become the new walkway around Big Sable Point.

The Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers, stewards of the Lighthouse at Little Sable, announces the expansion of their "Leave a Print in the Sand" fundraising initiative. Started in July 2014 this ongoing effort by SPLKA has added \$22,000 to the SPLKA Capital Campaign fund which is designated for the ongoing repairs at the four iconic Lake Michigan lighthouses in which SPLKA maintains. SPLKA's mission is to "preserve, promote, educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible."

Help SPLKA preserve our lighthouses by purchasing a personalized engraved Trex board. These boards are becoming the new walkway around Big Sable Point Lighthouse and now the new walkway between the Little Sable Merchandise trailer and the cement walkway. The cost of the engraved boards is \$100.00 each. Each Trex board can be engraved with up to 25 characters on one line, including commas and spaces with a two line maximum.

Memorialize your fond memories of being keepers or visitors at the Big Sable Light or the Little Sable Light and remembering fondly of climbing up each tower's 130 stairs to one of the most spectacular views in the area. What better way to remember your time spent there than to donate a board or two. These make great birthday and Valentine's Day gifts. They also are a great way to remember a loved one or just recognize that special person in your life. Please share this with those in your circle of friends who love lighthouses so that they can take advantage of this as well. Brochures are available for downloading and printing on our web site at (www.splka.org) or by calling the SPLKA office at 231-845-7417. Please help SPLKA continue to meet its mission to preserve our magnificent lighthouses for generations to come.

The ill-fated L.C. WOODRUFF



In the White River Light Station's "Lighthouse Keepers Log" dated November 2, 1878 Captain William Robinson wrote "Never in my entire life on the high seas or the Great Lakes did I experience a storm like the one that sank the L.C. WOODRUFF"

The L. C. WOODRUFF, a 225 foot wooden three masts schooner, was built in 1866 by the F.N.

Jones Shipbuilders of Buffalo, NY out of 548 tons of oak timbers for Vosburgh and Brothers of Buffalo, NY. It was named for a Wisconsin lumber baron who had succeeded in building the first railroad across the southern-north length of Wisconsin. The vessel was used by her owners to haul grain and corn between Chicago and Buffalo. Loads of corn and grain picked up in Chicago were emptied along her route to brewing companies and baking concerns in Milwaukee, Bay City, Detroit, Toledo, Erie and Buffalo. On the return trips the WOODRUFF would haul food stuffs, lumber and industrial cargo.

The morning of October 30th 1878 the L.C. WOODRUFF, fully loaded with 40,000 bushels of corn, left the Chicago Harbor bound first for Milwaukee and then Buffalo. At the time it left the harbor wind conditions were reported at 25 to 30 knots coming from the south. With the strong tail wind, the ship moved quickly up the western shoreline of Lake Michigan. By the time it reached Milwaukee the tailwinds had increased to 55 knots but the skilled crew had showed they knew what they were doing as they came about and headed into the harbor with little to no trouble.

The WOODRUFF left the Wisconsin port in the early evening hours. By this time the wind had shifted from south to south east and was blowing at 70 knots. When the wind then shifted to the east the schooner almost blew ashore at Kewaunee, Wisconsin. The captain then set the sails in the general direction of Ludington, Michigan. Nothing seems to be recorded about the crossing but both ports in Michigan and Wisconsin reported readings of counterclockwise winds clocked at 90 knots.

Early morning of the 31st Big Sable lighthouse keeper



Captain Robinson and son Tom

Burr Caswell spotted the WOODRUFF anchored off from the Big Sable Lighthouse. The sails were torn to what he described as "ribbons flying in the wind." The rigging was a total mess but to his amazement the stays were in tact and still holding the three masts upright. The Captain later reported that the wheel and rudder were still working

and he was confident that he would be able to get the ship to a port. The calm didn't last long. Soon the wind came howling out of the north. The anchor lost its grip and the schooner headed south dragging its large anchor until the anchor caught again. But the force of the wind snapped the chain. The Woodruff was at the mercy of Lake Michigan. As the vessel passed the Little Sable Lighthouse two of her masts were under horrible strain snapped and other sections of the ship started to crack and fall off. By evening she was spotted by Captain Robinson 1 ½ miles north of the White River Light Station. The schooner's smaller anchor was holding but the ship was in a mess. Captain Robinson had sent for help. The MCGORDEN, a wrecking tug out of Muskegon was dispatched and reached the WOODRUFF at 4 am on Nov. 1st. The lake was calm and the WOODRUFF'S captain refused help from the MCGORDEN saying her tow charge was too high. The WOODRUFF had to be towed to Grand Haven as it was the only Western Michigan port that was deep enough to accommodate her draft. Another tug also tried and offered to take the crew off but the Captain refused and at 7am radioed a tug out of Chicago, whose price was better, to come and tow him to Grand Haven.

Less than an hour later another gale from the SW hit the Lake Michigan coastline. The winds and waves tore at the schooner and the small anchor line broke. The WOODRUFF was pushed forcefully into a 13' sandbar about a ½ mile off shore and ½ mile north of the channel. By 9am the crew scrambled up the broken and intact masts to tie themselves in high above the moving mountains of water. Several attempts by Assistant lighthouse keeper Tom Robinson and local lumbermen were made to rescue

The ill-fated L.C. Woodruff cont.



the men but all attempts failed. Captain Robinson earlier called for a tug out of Montague to take him to where he could contact the Grand Haven Life Saving Station for help. By 11am Captain Richard Connell, head of the Grand Haven Station, received the message. Along with 4 others Connell gathered equipment including a boat and once at the Grand Haven train station, loaded the items on a train leaving for Whitehall. By 2 pm the life savers from Grand Haven were on the beach and working tirelessly to save the crew. As they worked, the hull of the boat filled with water, the corn which was being transported in the hull, expanded and burst, breaking the ship in two. The captain and the remaining five crew members fell from the rigging into the lake water. Two men were lost but the captain and three of the crew were



Grand Haven Life Saving Station

saved. Eighteen year old, Assistant Keeper Tom Robinson was given a citation for bravery in the role he had played helping both the local and the GH lifesaving crew efforts to save the WOODRUFF crew. Three men lost their lives that day while eight were saved.



In 1942 and again in November 1974, the badly damaged ribs and keel of what may be the remains of the WOODRUFF washed up near the shore close to the White River Light Station. After a few days, they were reclaimed by the constantly changing waves and currents of Lake Michigan.

Remembrances by great grandson Ted Robinson

White River Station:

I'm happy to share some of my family's stories about Captain Robinson, the first keeper of the light house, his family and life in the White River Light Station.

To start, let's go back to the first Capt. William Robinson the Grandfather of our Capt. Robinson of the White River Station.

The first Captain Robinson, William 1, began his career at sea in 1782 when he was apprenticed to his first ship. He served as ship's captain, owned his own ships, and ran a successful shipping business in Tynemouth, England.

His son, Williamson, our Captain's father, was the man who brought the family to Michigan. For clarity, we'll call him "William 2". William 2 began a long career on the seas at the age of 14, when he ran away to look for work on the waters. Shortly after he left home, his father came across him at the docks in London and gave him a job as a cabin boy on one of his ships.

This launched a long career in ships and sailing and was awarded the gold medal from the Royal Humane Society of England for rescuing 5 people from a boat during a severe storm.

His career eventually led him to America. As ocean-going shipping started changing from sail to steam, William 2 decided to make the move to the Great Lakes, where he heard they were still sailing wooden ships. His goal was to open a chandlery to supply the sails and other equipment needed for these ships.

He landed in New York in 1853 with his wife, Anne Sanderson, and some of his children. Left back in England were his eldest daughter and his son, Captain William 3. Both were married with families of their own. Mary Ann married John Dunn of Tynemouth. William 3 married Sarah Cooper of Newcastle.



While in New York, William 2 worked many jobs to earn the money to head West to Whitehall, where he purchased a farm. The property included an orchard that, years and years later, would become part of the White Lake Golf Course.

He encouraged his son, William 3, to come join him from England, but due to the breakout of the Civil War and the British and French blockades they were not able to do so until 1866.

At the age of 35, William 3 (our Captain Robinson) arrived with his wife, Sarah, and their 6 children. The first year was tough. He and his sons found work wherever they could.

Although during this time he was no longer working at sea, William 3 still understood what it took to be a ship's captain. And, during storms, he would light beach signal fires to let the schooners know that they could find safe harbor in White Lake. As a result of conversations with schooner captains about the condition of the channel, William joined the efforts to construct a new channel and to install a light house. The channel was completed in 1871, with a beacon light added at the end of the pier later that year. In 1872, Captain Robinson became the keeper of the South Pier Headlight.

Construction on the light house began after the channel was in place, and William 3 was on hand to assist – literally - working with his crew to grade the hilltop and doing some of the masonry and carpentry work on the structure.

When the lighthouse was completed in 1875, he was commissioned to manage the Light Station, serving for 43 years in this position. He lived in the lighthouse for another 4 years after that, until his death, likely still running the place through his grandson, William E Bush, who followed him as keeper.

A Local Family History

During his tenure as lighthouse keeper, Captain Robinson also worked closely with the US Lifesaving Service (which later became the US Coast Guard) across the channel, helping with rescue missions and providing equipment for their boats fabricated in his workshop. This is the building we “Friends of the White River Light Station” plan to turn into the education and media center.

William 3 and his wife Sarah created a happy and loving home for their family at the Station and were active in the local community. Sarah was a helpmate to the husband and a “lady who commanded the widest respect.” She served as the local midwife, and found the time to have 6 more children of her own!

Of all of Captain Robinson’s children, I’d like to now touch briefly on his 3 sons, who continued in the long family tradition of service on the Great Lakes.

Thomas, born in 1858, served with his father as assistant keeper and later at the Manistee light. Williamson, born in 1859, served at the Holland and South Haven lifesaving stations. The last, George Cooper, born in 1870, was my grandfather.

George Cooper served in the Coast Guard, starting his career in Holland, and continuing at Ludington, Frankfort, Plum Island, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and finishing his career as Captain of the Manistee station. All 6 of his children – my aunts and uncles – were born in stations.

George was very fond of his parents, and always carried a lock of Sarah’s hair and a tin-type of father in his wallet.

George’s son David also continued the tradition by serving in the Coast Guard during WWII. But the bulk of his career was spent as Chief Civil Engineer of the US Coast Guard in Washington, D.C. Following in the steps of our Captain Robinson, David designed several light houses, including that at Belle Isle off of Detroit. One of the departments operating under the Chief Civil Engineer had oversight over the decommissioning of light houses.

In what might seem like a strange twist of fate, in 1960 during David’s tenure in this role, White River Station was slated to be decommissioned because there was no longer any significant commercial traffic coming in and out of White Lake.

When David became aware of the plans for the Station, he contacted his sister Dorothy Ross in East Lansing to see if she wasn’t to buy it to ensure that it would stay in the family. She and her siblings had spent many happy days visiting their grandparents at the station over the years. In fact, George Cooper bought his first car so the family could drive down from Manistee and visit more often.

Dorothy (Whose wedding dress has in the past been on display in our museum) contacted the General Services Administration to inquire about purchasing the station and was told that Fruitland Township had “evidenced an interest in acquiring” the property, but that they would keep her informed should it “become available for public offering.”

We all know the rest – Fruitland Township, with the aid of local residents and businesses, raised the funds and bought the station. Thanks to them, we’re all able to continue to enjoy this historic site and the museum today.

And I think I can safely speak for all of Captain Robinson’s descendants, we are quite thankful for that.





2017 S.P.K.L.A. CALENDAR



MAY

MAY 8TH

OPENING OF BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Big Sable will be open all week 10am-5pm through November 4th.

MAY 26TH

• OPENING OF LUDINGTON NORTH BREAKWATER LIGHT

Open all week 10am-5pm

(Monday's until 8pm) thru Sept. 4th.

• OPENING OF LITTLE SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Open all week 10am-5pm through September 24th.

• OPENING OF WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION

Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10am-5pm through November 4th.

JUNE

JUNE 23RD

YOGA AT WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION, 9:30AM

*(RAIN DATE JUNE 30TH)

JUNE 24TH

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm*

JULY

JULY 12TH

Night at the Lights Concert LITTLE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring WYATT & SHERRI KNAPP, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price until 8:00PM.

JULY 13TH

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm AND live music featuring: featuring WYATT & SHERRI KNAPP, 1:30-3:30PM*

*Round trip bus transportation is offered to Big Sable Lighthouse for an additional fee: \$5 for Adults and \$2 for children 12 and under, round trip. Tickets are available at the building next to the park office.

JULY

JULY 14TH

Night at the Lights Concert WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION featuring featuring WYATT & SHERRI KNAPP, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price.

JULY 19TH

Night at the Lights Concert LITTLE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring OCEANA DRIVE, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price until 8:00 PM.

JULY 21ST

YOGA AT WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION, 9:30AM

*(RAIN DATE JULY 28TH)

JULY 22ND

Afternoon Concert WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION featuring WEST MI. DULCIMER FRIENDS, 2:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower and museum will be available for tours at regular admission price. *Rain location Fruitland Township Hall.

JULY 26TH

Night at the Lights Concert LITTLE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring BOB HAUSLER, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price until 8:00PM.

JULY 28TH

Night at the Lights Concert WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION featuring BOB HAUSLER, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price.

JULY

JULY 29TH

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm AND live music featuring: featuring BOB HAUSLER, 1:30-3:30PM*

AUGUST

AUGUST 2ND

Night at the Lights Concert LITTLE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring GHOSTS OF THE AMERICAN ROAD, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price until 8:00PM.

AUGUST 3RD

Music and Beer at the WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION featuring GHOSTS OF THE AMERICAN ROAD. EVENT TIME & TICKET PURCHASE INFO TO BE ANNOUNCED.

AUGUST 5TH

Afternoon Concert at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring GHOSTS OF THE AMERICAN ROAD, 1:30-3:30PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price.

AUGUST 9TH

Night at the Lights Concert LITTLE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE featuring "STEEL DOIN' IT", STEEL DRUM BAND, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price until 8:00PM.

AUGUST 12TH

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm & live music featuring: CHLOE KIMES, 1:30-3:30PM*

AUGUST

AUGUST 18TH

YOGA AT WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION, 9:30AM

*(RAIN DATE AUGUST 25TH)

AUGUST 18TH

Night at the Lights Concert WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION featuring featuring OCEANA DRIVE, 7:00PM

Free concert for the public, tower will be available for tours at regular admission price.

AUGUST 25TH-27TH

MICHIGAN LIGHTHOUSE FESTIVAL

AUGUST 26TH

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm AND live music featuring: featuring OCEANA DRIVE, 1:30-3:30PM*

SEPTEMBER

SEPT. 23

BUS DAY at BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE NOON-5pm AND live music featuring: featuring JIM NOVAK & PAUL CERNY, 1:30-3:30PM*

OCTOBER

OCT. 28

HALLOWEEN AT BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE

NOVEMBER

NOV. 1

BIG SABLE'S 150th Birthday Party





summer events at the White River Light Station

Rain location for concerts will be the Fruitland Township Hall.



JUNE 23rd • 9:30 AM Yoga at the Light Station



Bring your yoga mats or large towels and water to drink and join SPLKA for Yoga. In case of rain

we will have yoga on the lawn on June 30. For further information call Mitch Coleman at White River Yoga 231- 740 -6662. (Rain date June 30)

July 14th • 7:00 PM Wyatt and Shari Knapp



Known for their sparkling vocals, lush harmonies, and tasteful blend that sets them apart, this personable and engaging husband-wife duo are a must see!

JULY 21st • 9:30 AM Yoga at the Light Station



Join Mitch Colman for Yoga at the lights. For further information call Mitch at

White River Yoga, 231- 740 -6662. (Rain date July 28)

July 22nd • 2:00 PM West Michigan Dulcimer Friends



Come enjoy a Saturday afternoon with a group of acoustic musicians that between them have decades of experience playing folk music, the music of our ancestors handed down thru time. This is the music played in grange halls for square dances. The musicians will be playing dulcimers, guitars and fiddles to mention a few. They play for the love of music. Bring the family, your blankets or lawn chairs and enjoy an afternoon of folk inspired music while visiting and exploring the White River Light Station. The museum and tower will also be open for the standard admission charge. In case of rain, we will meet at the Fruitland Township Hall.



July 28th • 7:00 PM Bob Hausler

Come out and join in a sing along with Bob. He knows it's all about being in the moment.

Most of all he wants to please his audience and let them experience the music in their own unique way.

AUGUST 3rd • 7:00 PM Music & Beer at White River Featuring: GHOSTS of the AMERICAN ROAD



Texas music award winners this duo brings their unique sound and original compositions back to the Western Michigan area. This is American music where all styles come together at a distinctly original crossroads.

AUGUST 18th • 9:30 AM Yoga at the Light Station



Join Mitch Colman for Yoga at the lights. For

further information call Mitch at White River Yoga 231- 740 -6662. (Rain date August 25)

AUGUST 18th • 7:00 PM OCEANA DRIVE TRIO



This local trio featuring Ruthie Eilers brings years of musical experience to our venue. You will enjoy a wonderful afternoon of acoustic blues, country, jazz and folk.



summer events at the Big Sable Point Lighthouse



June 24th • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.

July 13th • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.



July 13th • 1:30 PM Wyatt and Sherri Knapp

Known for their sparkling vocals, lush harmonies, and tasteful blend that sets them apart, this personable and engaging

husband-wife duo are a must see!

July 29th • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.

July 29th • 1:30 PM



Bob Hausler

Come out and join in a sing along with Bob. He knows it's all about being in the moment. Most of all he wants to please his audience and let them experience the music in their own unique way.

August 5th • 1:30 PM Ghosts of the American Road

Texas music award winners this duo brings their unique sound and original compositions back to the Western Michigan area. This is American music where all styles come together at a distinctly original crossroads.



Aug. 12th • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.



August 12th • 1:30 PM Chloe & Olivia Kimes

Local favorite acoustic guitar players with the angelic voices.

Aug 26th • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.

August 26th • 1:30 PM Oceana Drive Trio

This local trio featuring Ruthie Eilers brings years of musical experience to our venue. You will enjoy a wonderful afternoon of acoustic blues, country, jazz and folk.



Sept. 23rd • 12pm-5pm Bus Day at Big Sable Lighthouse

Round trip bus transportation, from 12 pm to 5pm, is offered from the building next to the park office to the Big Sable Lighthouse. An additional charge of \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 12 and under will be collected on these days from visitors who take advantage of the bus transportation.

Sept. 23rd • 1:30 PM Jim Novak & Paul Cerny



60's Folk guitarist original from the Chicago area. Unique blend of soft rock, blues folk and hauntingly beautiful ballads that will touch you heart.

Oct. 28rd • Details to TBD Halloween at Big Sable

November 1st • Details to TBD Big Sable's 150th Birthday Party





summer events at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse



The tower will be open late and available for tours for the standard admission charge.
Adults: \$5, Children 12 & under \$2 • Concerts begin at 7:00 PM.

The rain location for all of the Little Sable concerts is the Hart Music Center in downtown Hart.

July 12th • 7:00 PM

Wyatt and Shari Knapp



Known for their sparkling vocals, lush harmonies, and tasteful blend that sets them

apart, this personable and engaging husband-wife duo has warmed the hearts of audiences throughout Michigan and beyond. While remaining true to their traditional and Americana roots, their music reaches into genres as rich and diverse as bluesy folk, “high lonesome” bluegrass, and timeless classics of the 1940’s. Shari’s rhythm guitar provides a pleasing foundation for Wyatt’s finger-style and flat-picking guitar leads, as the two serve up fresh arrangements of obscure covers, time-tested favorites and original tunes for audiences of all ages.”

July 19th • 7:00 PM

OCEANA DRIVE

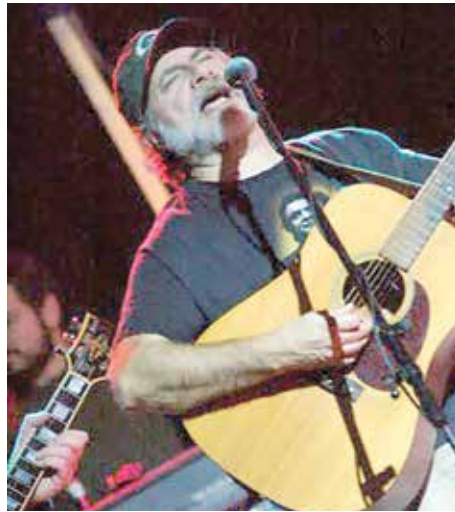


Oceana Drive Band is a hard-driving West Michigan band known

for its rockin’ blues, country and original tunes. The group features musicians Ruthie Eilers on vocals, piano and mandolin; Mark Smith on vocals and guitar; Andy Henley on bass; Frank Galante on vocals and guitar and Hank Cupp on drums. Together they will bring years of musical experience to our venue.

July 26th • 7:00 PM

Bob Hausler



Bob Hausler Award winning singer, songwriter, guitarist, and entertainer Bob Hausler has entertained thousands of people in his career. As a session guitarist he has played on hundreds of recordings. As a songwriter his songs have been pitched to or recorded by artists like: Alabama, Jon Anderson, Randy Travis, Laurie Morgan, Laurie Middlebrook, Cheryl K. Warner, and others. He is currently working on his second solo recording project. This will be a follow up to the 2014 release “Family, Friends, and the Good Life. An emotional singer, Bob loves to let the song come from the heart. At home in front of a crowd of thousands or in the intimate setting of a small club, he performs with energy and soul. Known for his high-spirited performance and endless energy, Bob reaches out to his audience in a very personal way. As the founder and former president of the Mid-Michigan Songwriters Guild, he spends a lot of time helping others develop their songwriting skills.

AUGUST 2nd • 7:00 PM

GHOSTS of the AMERICAN ROAD



Texas music award winners this duo brings their unique

sound and original compositions back to the Western Michigan area. This is American music where all styles come together at a distinctly original crossroads.

AUGUST 9th • 9:30 AM

Steel Doin’ it



In 2002, Steel Doin’ It was born from a community education class taught by Glen Miller at Spring Lake High School. The group of eight is composed of Grand Haven and Spring Lake residents. Sharon Rathbun, Rebecca Kaufman, and Scott Klempel play lead drums. Handling the double seconds is Karen Cotton. Ambre Slater is the woman behind the cello pans, and Diane Veneklasen plays the bass drums. Setting the beat and playing the “toys” are Kevin Schmucker and Kelly Parker. Kelly steps in as director and joins in on trumpet occasionally. Our mission is to have fun while bringing the sounds of the Trinidadian steel pan to West Michigan.



Lighthouse Maintenance News: Spring 2017

As winter comes to a close and spring erupts around us we all get eager to be outside. You may think that not much has been happening at the lights while the cold weather was upon us but plenty of activity has been happening. We are refinishing the main entrance to White River to give the museum a fresh new look as you enter. The dead trees to the west of the light station have been removed and some of the wood has been retained to make projects for the station.

The basement walls have been repaired at the residence for Little Sable and a couple painting projects have been completed as well. A new floor has been installed in

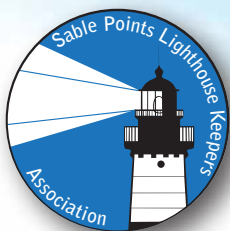
the dining room, kitchen and front hallway. The tower is getting some repair work done on the inside as well. The Breakwater residence has had one of the bathrooms remodeled and repair done on the casement windows to ensure they are all functioning properly. The Breakwater tower will be getting some repairs to the first floor ceiling and a fresh coat of paint on the floors to spruce it up before opening day. Now that we have lights on the first floor we want to make sure it looks fresh and clean.

This year is a very special year for Big Sable Point lighthouse. It is the 150th anniversary of the opening of the grand lady in Ludington State Park. A new display case has been built in the hallway leading into the tower to house miniature lighthouses from around the country. Some plaster repairs have been done on the residence quarters but

much more still needs to be completed. We plan on scraping and painting the trim and brick walls on the north and west sides of the structure as soon as weather permits. We did finish the east and south sides last summer. We have awarded the contract for the long awaited roof replacement on the quarters as well. This major project will be completed in the early spring. Don't fret if you want to help. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities available for helping to maintain all of our structures. Just call the office or send an email to splkarestoration@gmail.com. Please let us know when you are available and what your skills are. There is work available for all skill levels. We welcome opportunities to work with scouts, 4-H or other community organizations as well. Come for a day or stay for a week. There is plenty to do.

Just in time for the season SPLKA is announcing the "All Access Pass". These passes provide the user with a discounted rate to climb all four towers. You may purchase these by contacting the SPLKA office by phone at **231-845-7417**, email at splkaofficemanager@gmail.com or at any of our four SPLKA lights. The price for these passes is \$5.00 for children and \$15.00 for adults. The passes provide a savings of \$3.00 for children and \$5.00 for adults over buying individual tower climbs. Passes will be good for the 2017 season.

SPLKA invites you and your family to come climb a lighthouse and create priceless memories!



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association
invites you to

go climb a
Lighthouse!

Purchase an ALL ACCESS PASS for 2017

2nd Annual Michigan Lighthouse Festival August 25- 27th

Please mark your calendars and join SPLKA, the Michigan Lighthouse Guide and Pure Ludington as we host the 2nd annual Michigan Lighthouse Festival August 25- 27th. This is a traveling festival celebrating the 129 lighthouses in Michigan. Several special events are planned for this wonderful weekend. Ludington was chosen as this year's location as the Big Sable Lighthouse is celebrating its 150th birthday this year. The festival will include sail away rides on the Great Lakes schooner Appledorn V. Tickets are limited to 24 persons per sail away and are available in advance on the SPLKA web site. Other ticketed events are the Friday evening dinner at the Sterns Motel. This will feature a multimedia presentation by local photographers Todd and Brad Reed showcasing their favorite lighthouse pictures. Patricia Majher, author of "Ladies of the Lights", will speak about women lighthouse keepers. A silent auction will also be held on several lighthouse specific items to raise money for SPLKA. On Saturday evening Dan Hall and Rick Mixer



Great Lakes schooner Appledorn V

will have a multimedia presentation on Great Lakes Shipwrecks which will take place at the Peterson Auditorium at the Ludington High School. Other events throughout the weekend include vendor displays and merchandise for sale in Rotary Park, located in downtown Ludington, on both Saturday and Sunday, a Sunday morning SPLKA member's reception at the new Ludington Maritime Museum and Saturday Bus Rides to Big Sable with entertainment at the light by the Oceania Trio. In conjunction with the festival SPLKA is also running a selfie contest in which one participant will be awarded a two night stay for the 2018 season in the suite at Big Sable.

The winner will be announced on Monday August 28th. Tickets and information for Friday and Saturday evenings events are found on the Michigan Lighthouse Festival web site which is accessible from the link on the SPLKA home page. We are excited to be one of the hosts for this year's wonderful event. Once again mark your calendars and join us as we celebrate Michigan's 129 lighthouses.



150th
ANNIVERSARY
Big Sable Point Lighthouse
LUDINGTON, MI

2ND TRAVELING MICHIGAN
LIGHTHOUSE FESTIVAL
AUG. 25TH, 26TH, AND 27TH, 2017

SPONSORED BY:
MICHIGAN LIGHTHOUSE GUIDE—PURE LUDINGTON—RADIO EAGLE
MICHIGAN LIGHTHOUSE ALLIANCE—NYE'S WEB DESIGN
SABLE POINTS LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Help further our mission with the

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER



Congress has now extended the IRA charitable rollover, and made it permanent. This could be an easy way for you to support the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association. The charitable IRA rollover, or qualified charitable distribution (QCD), is a special provision allowing taxpayers aged 70 1/2 or older to transfer up to \$100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to a non-profit organization, including the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association, without having to recognize the distribution as income.

SUPPORT SPLKA USING THE AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM

Amazon Smile is a simple way for you to support the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association every time you shop at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com you'll find the exact low prices, vast selection and the same convenient shopping experience as *Amazon.com* with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to SPLKA. Already have an Amazon account? Use the same account on *Amazon.com* and AmazonSmile.com, your shopping cart, wish list wedding or baby registry and other account settings are also the same. Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. Sign up today at AmazonSmile and specify your charitable giving be given to Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association. We thank you for this!



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

Need reminders of our Bus Days or other special events?

Keep up to date with all the SPLKA happenings by visiting our Facebook page.



Check us out on Facebook!



Search "Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association" and LIKE us! Or, scan the QR code with your smartphone!



Renew Your 2017 SPLKA Membership Today!

Your support of the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association means a great deal to S.P.L.K.A. and to the lakeshore communities. We would like to remind you that now is a great time to renew your membership for the 2017 season.

Your membership, along with hundreds of others, makes it possible for us to fulfill our important mission to preserve, promote, educate and make accessible Michigan's Maritime History to all through our lighthouses.

three of our lights, voting privileges at the annual membership dinner meeting, membership card, window decal, semiannual newsletters, unlimited

free admission to all four lighthouses for one year and for memberships head keeper level and above, merchandise discount at all of SPLKA gift shops.

Your partnership is sincerely appreciated and we couldn't do this without you. If you have already renewed your 2017 membership please consider giving the gift of membership to a friend or relative who would be interested in joining our cause.

Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2017

associate membership.	\$30
individual membership.	\$60
couple/family membership.	\$100
head keeper.	\$175
business/corporate sponsor.	\$250
lifetime individual membership.	\$750
couple/family lifetime membership.	\$1,000

Advantages of being a member include being eligible to be a day keeper,(associate membership) or resident keepers,(all other membership level categories) at

Thank you for your continued commitment to our historic structures and our communities' Maritime History.

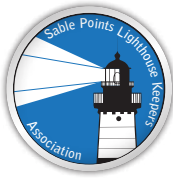


2017 Winter Writers Series

SPLKA was pleased to partner again with the Mason County Historical Society and sponsor again for a second year the **Winter Writers Series**. The Speaker series took place on the third Thursday in January, February and March at the Ludington United Methodist Church. Our first speaker was local historian James Jansen who took the concept first proposed by author Tom Standage in his 2006 book "A History of the World in 6 Glasses" and adapted it to Ludington and Mason County. The local historical

impact of six beverages: Coffee, Tea, Soda, Beer, Wine and Distilled Spirits on Ludington and Mason County were examined in depth. One of the highlights of this presentation was the recreation of the 1890's Pub Crawl visiting the many saloons of that time period. February's featured speakers were Todd and Brad Reed. They brought a multimedia presentation on Michigan Lighthouses. Photographing Michigan Lighthouses is a passion for both Todd and Brad and it showed as they presented their favorite/ fabulous photos of several Michigan lighthouses? Our final speakers were Grace and Stephen Truman authors of "Storms and Sand."

the story about shipwrecks and the Big Sable Point Life Saving Station. Their presentation at the March meeting focused on the Big Sable lighthouse and pictures and stories that they uncovered while researching their book. Our attendance was up from last year as this is becoming an annual winter event in the Ludington Area. Executive Director Peter Manting said that it is a great opportunity to work with the Mason County Historical Society and it keeps the community informed as to what SPLKA and the MCHS are doing during the winter months and what to look forward to for the coming summer from both organizations.



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

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150th Birthday Big Sable Point Lighthouse

