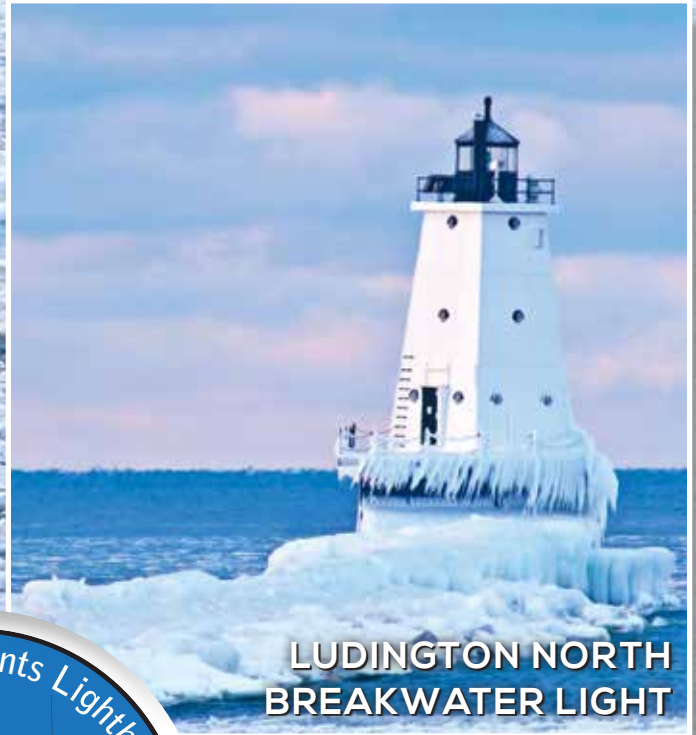


Sable Points BEACON

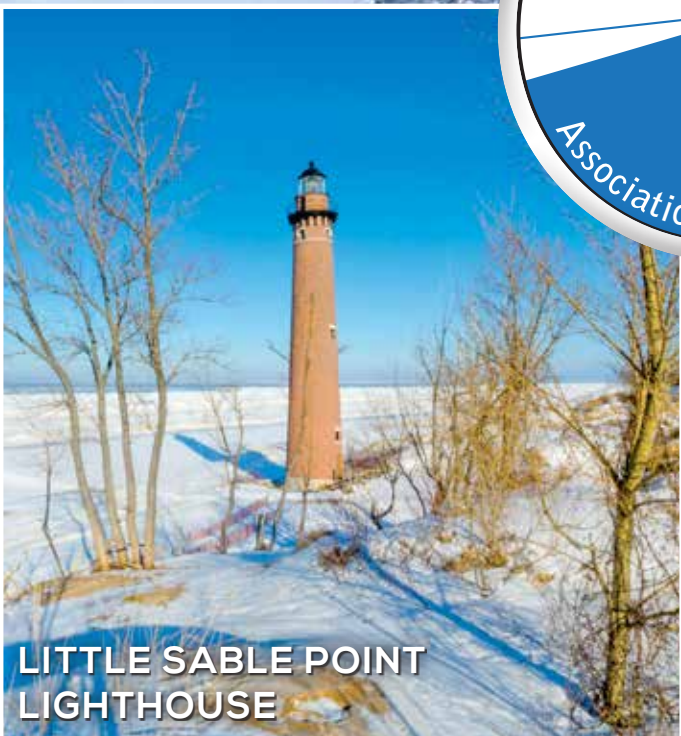
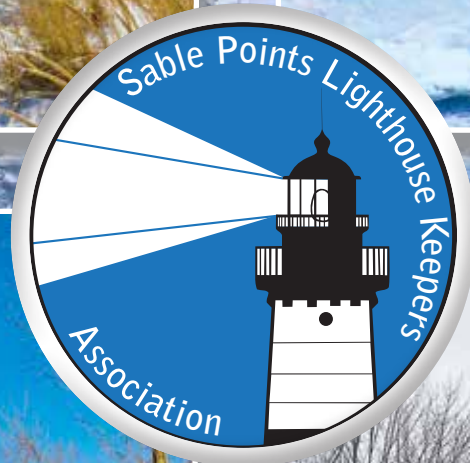
NEWSLETTER • JANUARY 2018



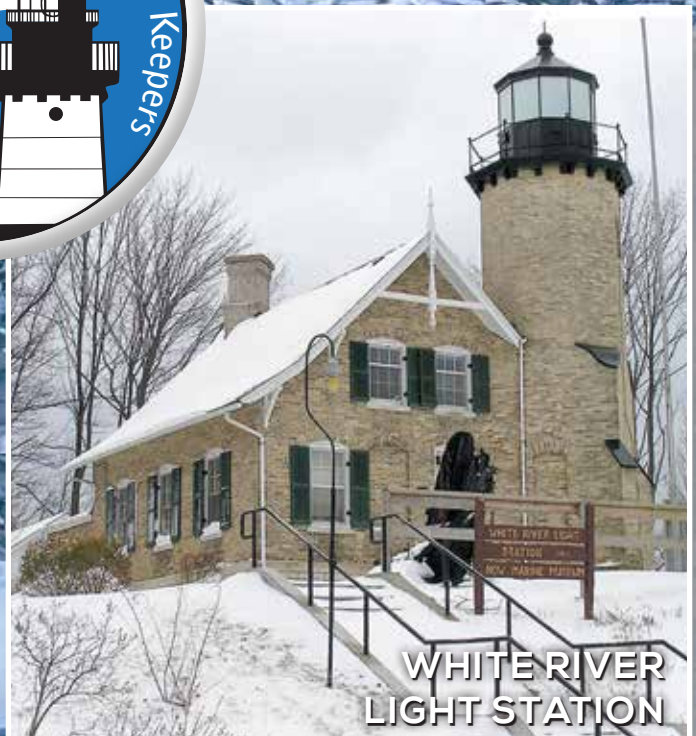
**BIG SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



**LUDINGTON NORTH
BREAKWATER LIGHT**



**LITTLE SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



**WHITE RIVER
LIGHT STATION**



Poem written by Mary Ann Novetske, August 6, 1997 for the 130th Anniversary of Big Sable Point Lighthouse

CREATION CELEBRATIONS

SPLKA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Kirk Lindquist
PRESIDENT

Jeff duPuis
VICE PRESIDENT

Roger Pashby
TREASURER

Shelia Meeusen
SECRETARY

Kim McDaniel
DIRECTOR

Bill McBeth
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Bob Baltzer
DIRECTOR

Ted Robinson
DIRECTOR

STAFF

Peter Manting
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Matt Varnum
WRLS CURATOR

Rachel Bendele
OPERATIONS/ GIFT
SHOP MANAGER

Carol Copper
BOOKKEEPER

Cherie Hockenberger
ASSISTANT TO THE
DIRECTOR

FOG PLAYS TAG WITH THE DUNES
AND HIDE AND SEEK,
AROUND HER TOWER!

BUTTERFLIES, MONARCHS;
DO THEIR LAST DANCE OF FLIGHT
AROUND HER STEEL CLADDING!

THE OLD POPLARS, AT THE BACK DOOR;
PLAY A TUNE OF JOY AS THEIR LEAVES,
LIKE FINE TAMBOUR,
TWIST AND TURN IN THE WIND;
WHISTLING SOFTLY THROUGH THE WINDOW,
SERENADING THOSE IN BED!

CRANES AND HERONS,
WITH THEIR TELESCOPIC NECKS;
LIVE GRACIOUSLY AND CONTENTEDLY
WITHIN HER PRESENCE!

THE GIGANTIC CAPPED WAVES
RICOCHET OFF HER SEAWALL;
THROWING IT'S WATERS,
LIKE A SPLATTER OF SILVER CONFETTI!

THE RAIN TAP DANCES,
ACROSS THE RED ROOF
AND COOLS THE HOT SANDS BELOW!

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER PERFORM,
FROM HER SHORE;
SHOWING OFF THEIR GOD GIVEN POWER!

GALAXIES OF STARS
SURROUND HER SWEETLY;
LIKE LIGHTS ON A TREE.

AND THE VISITORS;
THEY CLIMB HER TOWER
AND APPLAUD THE VIEW
WITH THEIR OOHS AND AAHS!

AT NIGHT BOATERS AND SHIPPERS
MARVEL AT HER LIGHT,
THAT SHINES AMONG THEM;
GUIDING AND GIVING WITNESS TO:
CREATION CELEBRATIONS!



NEW BOARD MEMBERS



At the September 2017 annual meeting two long time SPLKA members were elected to fill the two open three year terms on the SPLKA Board of Directors.



BOB BALTZER
Director

BOB BALTZER :

Although he didn't grow up in Ludington, Bob Baltzer feels very familiar with it, with both parents from the area. His family has been visiting on summer vacations since he was a small child. His family has had a summer cottage on Hamlin Lake since 1960 and he remembers Big Sable when it was "boarded up and given for loss". He and his brother often hiked out to the lighthouse with their two boys, wondering what it would be like to be lighthouse keepers. During one visit, Bob and his wife Becki ran into a gentleman carrying a shovel out to work around the driveway (Bob Sperling). Well, "*the rest is history.*" They were hooked and have been keepers ever since. Bob has served two terms on the Board previously. He has held both the position of Treasurer and Vice President in his previous time on the board. Bob comes back to the board bringing his vast experience, knowledge and to help with his special interest of fundraising. He and

his wife Becki are and will continue to serve as keepers, both supporting the organization and doing their best to help support the SPLKA mission to *preserve, promote and educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all.*



BILL MCBETH
Director

BILL MCBETH :

After serving a one year term in 2017 by board appointment, Bill remains on the board for his first three year term. Bill is a retired high school principle from Buchanan, Michigan who with his wife, Pricilla, retired to the Ludington area six years ago. Bill has multiple community interests including being a *Friend of the Ludington State Park*, is an avid reader and enjoys being a grandfather. Bill is active with SPLKA as he and his wife continue to serve as keepers, vounteer on bus days and participate in many of SPLKA's yearly activities.



THIS COULD BE YOU!
Director

OPEN POSITION FOR SPLKA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The SPLKA Board of Directors is taking applications for appointment to the Board of Directors. The board is in need of a person to fill a one year position that was left vacant by a current board member who has resigned for personal reasons.

Applications are available online at the SPLKA web site or by contacting the SPLKA office at 231- 845-7417. The person appointed to fill this position will also be eligible to be elected in September for a new three year term. Applications can be emailed to splkadirctor@gmail.com or sent into the office at SPLKA, P.O. Box 673 Ludington, MI 49431. Deadline to get applications in will be January 31st. Appointment will be made at the March Board meeting.

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.

One hundred and fifty years of “Standing Guard” on the shore of Lake Michigan. This has been our slogan this year as we celebrate the 150 years that Big Sable has been shining on the shores of Lake Michigan. What a year 2017 has been.

I want to first thank everyone on my staff for a very successful year. What a year it has been. We continue to retain our staff which leads to a wonderful continuity from year to year. Our volunteers know what to expect from our staff. Matt Varnum is now in his third year with SPLKA as the curator at the White River Light Station and his fifth year with SPLKA. He continues to manage White River, greet the guests that come to the light as well as help us with our exhibit projects both at White River and at our other lights. A new exhibit with family pictures of people posing on and with the Big Sable Tree stump and a nice light hose model display are Matts’ work at Big Sable this year.

Jim Hardie is now in his third year with SPLKA as our historic restoration and maintenance manager. Jim always seems to find a large project to do each year. This year it was organizing and getting the staff moved into our new offices. We would not have been able to do it as quickly and efficiently it hadn’t been for Jim and his organization and direction.

Rachel Bendele, also in her third year, continued as our operations manager. This year she added the gift shop manager position and responsibilities to her work load as well. We miss Priscilla McBeth who retired at the end of last year as gift shop manager, but Rachel was able to step in and continue the upward climb for gift shop revenue. The number one compliment that I hear weekly from our volunteer keepers has been to compliment SPLKA on having wonderful selection of items for our summer guest to purchase.

Carol Cooper our bookkeeper is in her second year with our organization and is fitting in wonderfully. Carol, in her friendly yet assertive way, continues to hold us all accountable to our budget. Since Carol writes the checks she is everyone’s favorite person.

We had three interns working with us this summer who carried a large load as well. Makenzie Brandel, now a sophomore at Alma College, was with us a second season as she helped Matt at White River. Parrish Terburgh, a senior at Alma College, and Misty Adams a local preschool teacher, split time between the Ludington North Breakwater and Little Sable. All three were a welcome addition to the staff.

Cherie Hockenburger is our assistant to the executive director. Cherie is not only my right hand person but everyone one of the staff’s right hand person. She works behind the scenes and makes us all look good.

Our organization runs on volunteers. If you had a chance to see our office area before we moved in you would know how much extensive cleaning and painting needed to be done. Brenda Glerum, along with the efforts of Bob and Becki Baltzer and Ken Reeves and other volunteers made sure that the office space was all painted before we moved in. Brenda continued to help Jim with the exterior painting project to make sure it was completed for the September open house. As Jim said without Brenda his work load would have been too much to have gotten everything accomplished for this weekend. Many thanks go out to all of our volunteers from the whole staff. Our offices look fantastic in the their new coat of paint.

We started this year out with our winter speaker series which we hosted in conjunction with the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum. This was our second year and we averaged about 60 people for each of the three snowy events. We are already in the



**SPLKA STAFF: TOP ROW L-R: Peter Manting, Rachel Bendele, Jim Hardie
BOTTOM ROW L-R: Misty Adams, Carol Cooper, Cherie Hockenberger**

Notes from your Director, CONT.

snowy events. We are already in the planning stages with the maritime museum staff for next year's series.

This spring we contracted with Freeland Roofing of Ludington and a new \$30,000.00 roof was installed on the keepers quarters at Big Sable. New paint on the north side of Big Sable by Jim and other volunteers and a little touch up paint applied to the areas painted last year give Big Sable a real luster for this special year.

Some new paint on the base of the Ludington North Breakwater and also inside also freshened up this downtown icon. We add solar panels last fall and now we have lights in the gift shop.

Our efforts at Little Sable included shoring up the basement at the Little Sable residence as the walls were being pushed in. New flooring in the residence and two new memorial benches were placed on the grounds at Little Sable. We have permission from the DNR to add a few more to the sight and look forward to selling those. The benches have been a welcome addition.

Efforts are underway to create more exhibit space for the museum at White River Light Station. The workshop that sits behind the lighthouse has been restored with the help of funds from the Friends of White River Group located in the Whitehall area. The Friends donated \$27,000 to this project which covered most of the exterior restoration. The new air conditioned/ heated area will house artifacts that are too large to be displayed in the current museum as well as having a small educational space and informational video for our guests. The White River Light Station now air conditioning as well.

Our Big Sable birthday celebrations have included participating in the

Michigan Lighthouse Festival which was here in Ludington this past August. We also hosted Halloween at Big Sable. There was a child friendly event in the afternoon and a scarier event for those a little older in the evening. The weather could have been nicer but the cold and rain added to the ambiance of the evening. Big Sable's 150th birthday party was also held at noon in the cold and rain on November 1st. Around 85 people attended the noon ceremony and over 150 people took advantage of the free bus ride and tour climbs which were offered.

We are looking forward to great things for 2018. There will be new exhibit space opening up at the White River Light Station. We will also refresh and change the current exhibits there as well.

We are applying for grants that would help finance a Historic Structure Report for the Big Sable Lighthouse, reconditioning the brass port hole windows at the Ludington North Breakwater and new trex decking for the staging/visitors platform in front of the Little Sable lighthouse.

2018 we will continue our Night at the Lights Programing at Little Sable. Our crowds averaged between 125 and 175 people for a Wednesday evening this past summer. This continues to draw both Silver Lake residents and visitors.

Our walkway boards program was extended to the Little Sable Lighthouse this year. This season we have sold 48 more boards at Big Sable and 33 at Little Sable gift shop making the total 452 boards sold. We will be extending the program this fall to include the White River Light Station as well. This has been and continues to be a good fund raiser for our organization. Once again, if you are looking for a gift for that person who has everything,

consider the gift of a plank in the walkway at one of our lights. Visit SPLKA.org to download a copy of the brochure and order form. Scroll all the way to the bottom of the home page and click on the button on the right side of the page labeled "Leave a Print in the Sand." On the next screen, you will find a link to download the brochure.

We have major projects which are going to need our attention. After all we have accomplished this last year Jim needs a new large project to keep him happy. A new roof at White River, the exterior painting of all of the Breakwater tower, maybe a breeze way at Little Sable and repairing the tower cladding on the exterior of the Big Sable tower. These are all projects that we will be looking into.

On September 12th I celebrated my fourth year anniversary as your Executive Director. Time flies. I have enjoyed every day on the job. It is a joy to come to work and represent such a great organization. I want to thank you all for your support and I want you to know that 2018 looks like it is going to be another exciting year for all of us.

May all of our lights continue to Stand Guard and Shine for another 150 years.

A Happy New Year!
~ Peter Manting





SPLKA 2016 SHINING LIGHTS AWARD WINNER

As many of you know this year's Shining Light Award went to Dick Smith. Several members who were present and others who were not had asked for a copy of my presentation. So I have decided to share it with everyone by including it in this newsletter.

The purpose of the Shining Light award is to honor and recognize someone who has made an outstanding contribution in helping SPLKA to fulfill its mission. What is our mission? It is to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all.

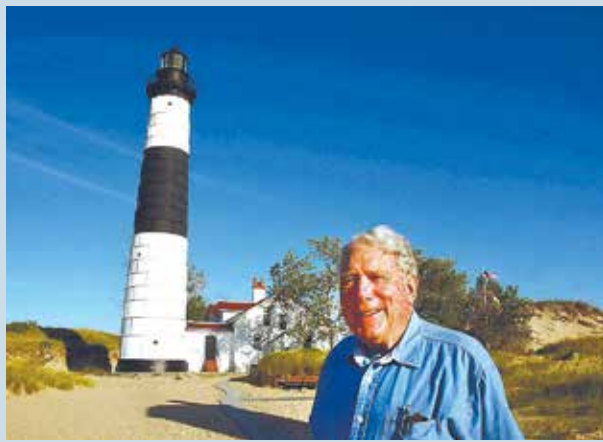
"A labor of love." This is how this year's recipient of the SPLKA Shining Light Award described his efforts to save the Big Sable Lighthouse. What a journey it has been. The journey started out in the fifth- grade field trip out to visit the light keepers at the Big Sable lighthouse. He fell in love immediately with the magnificent structure and the workings of the light and day dreaming one day of working at the light. This was the fascination for a very inquisitive young man who was and continues to this day to search out answers to his questions so that he can better understand how things work.

Always one to keep an eye on things our recipient made friends with one of the lighthouse keeper's sons, becoming part of the family and he spent most of his free time hanging around the lighthouse. Our recipient never lost his love for lighthouses and especially the Big Sable Point Lighthouse.

Big Sable Lighthouse was abandoned by the Coast Guard in 1968. It was left to be cared for by the State of Michigan which didn't seem too have much interest in the magnificent structure which was housed within the Ludington State Park. The tower, house and surrounding buildings were left to the mercy of the Big Sable Point winds, weather and the vandals that enjoyed breaking into the run down structure.

By 1985, the only remaining standing structures were the tower and the keeper's quarters at Big Sable. The waters of Lake Michigan had breached the seawall and were lapping up ever closer to the base of the tower. The Coast Guard had given up on the light and had placed a metal tower in the dune just south of the light to be activated upon the demise of the present tower.

Our award winner couldn't sit still. He was determined to rally the troops. Not one to shy away from solving problems, our recipient in his quiet yet direct way was able to organize a



Steve Begnoche photo used by permission.

DICK SMITH | 2017 Shining Lights Award

small band of local people to help bag sand, move sand, and bring in materials to help keep the water at bay. It seemed everywhere he went he was telling others about the wonderful opportunity that everyone had to help save this lighthouse. He was so engaging that people would show up the next weekend to help with all the efforts. Our current board president brought boy scouts from Lansing to help, and other individuals and groups from all over the state came to lend their hands to the effort. New lasting

friendships were made and our small organization had its start.

If you haven't guessed it already, this year's recipient of the Shining Light Award is Dick Smith, AKA the Plumber. Dick has led the charge since the beginning. He said it was a family affair. Sometimes it was off to church on Sunday morning but Sunday afternoon it was back out at the light. The transformation from what it had become in the mid 1980's to what it is today is a miracle. Dick will be the first to say it was not him but the many others who captured his vision. Those who have worked here the longest know that it was Dick who saved Big Sable. Many people whom I contacted had other commitments this evening and they send their best.

Dick and I have been friends for years. You see in my other life Dick was a customer and friend. I had no idea of extent of Dick's roll in saving the lighthouse at Big Sable Point. I truly believe I got this job because of Dick. In the interview they asked me, not being from the area, did I know anyone in Ludington. I listed a few of my former customers that are located here in Ludington and then I mentioned Dick and that he had not only been a customer but a friend. What friend he has been. Dick has encouraged me, lifted me up when I was down and prayed for me. He is always just a phone call away and I hope he knows in some way just how important he is to me.

I am not sure that Dick had imagined that SPLKA would grow to manage four lighthouses and be around 750 members strong. In recognition of his commitment to Big Sable, four of our new engraved walkway boards around Big Sable proclaim "With the Help of Many, Dick Smith AKA, "The Plumber", Saved the Big Sable Lighthouse."

It is my honor tonight and the honor of my staff and the honor of the SPLKA Board of Directors to present to all of you this year's Shining Light Award winner Dick Smith.

SPLKA 2017 ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual dinner was held at the Holiday Inn Express in Ludington. Board president Dr. Kirk Lindquist praised the staff for the success of the organization. During the annual meeting on September 16th, Lindquist spoke about the potential major projects that are facing SPLKA in the upcoming seasons. These included repairs to the rusting metal cladding on the tower at Big Sable. He said a dream project that is needed but not yet scheduled is to replace the cladding entirely.

Work for 2018 for Little Sable will include shoring up the deck platform in front of the lighthouse and some interior cleanup work. Eventually we would like to construct the breezeway.

Dr. Lindquist went on to state that the exterior of the North Breakwater is in need of painting but first SPLKA will be working on reconditioning the 14 existing portholes enhancing the visitor experience.

The White River Light Station and museum will be opening new exhibits in the reconditioned workshop space and other new

exhibits well. SPLKA will also be investigating a new roof for the light station.

Bob Baltzer and Bill McBeth were elected to new three year terms on the board.

Treasurer Roger Pashby praised SPLKA's volunteers and members saying they keep the lighthouses going. Roger shared highlights from the SPLKA's 990 financial statements and reminded everyone that it is posted on the SPLKA web site. His conclusion was that SPLKA's finances remain strong. President Lindquist added "the bottom line is we are doing amazingly well."

Executive Director Peter Manting pointed out that it has been a very busy year. In August we celebrated Big Sable's 150 years of Standing Guard by partnering with the Michigan Lighthouse Festival and Pure Ludington in hosting the 2nd annual Michigan Lighthouse Festival. SPLKA also moved into new offices which are located just west of Spectrum Hospital on US-10. The staff hosted an afternoon open house at the new location

just prior to the annual dinner and meeting.

This year's recipient of the SPLKA Shining Light Award was Mr. Dick Smith for his years of dedication to the Big Sable Lighthouse.



Steve Begnoche photo

Guest of honor and speaker, Dr. Bill Lucas of the Michigan Lighthouse Legacy Project performs one of the fanfares at the 2017 SPLKA Annual Meeting.

Our guest of honor and speaker, Dr. Bill Lucas of the Michigan Lighthouse Legacy Project, presented his musical project that includes his photography linked with commissioned brass fanfares of Michigan Lighthouses. The presentation included samples of his video work and then he performed one of the fanfares.

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.



Lighthouse Maintenance News:

This was a big year for the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association. The traveling lighthouse festival was hosted this summer in Ludington, and our two Ludington lights were prominently featured. We had our first Halloween event in ten years at Big Sable Point Lighthouse at the end of October and the 150th birthday bash for Big Sable the following Wednesday on November 1st. An enormous amount was accomplished at all of our lights this past spring and summer to get them looking their best for all the visitors.



Big Sable has received its long awaited new roof this spring. We have completed the installation of the new storm windows which function more like a newer style storm window but look like the old traditional storm windows which had to be removed and replaced with screens twice a year. Yuck. Thanks to Dave Deppe for his help and great storm window design. The harsh Lake Michigan seasons now stay on the outside of the building where they belong. We also finished painting and touching up the exterior of the building. New railings were installed on a couple of stairways, and a new porch light was added at the south entrance.

This spring was marked by a shipwreck just north of the light. The TICA (*This I Cannot Afford*) was run aground when it began taking on water. It broke up and sank within

the week after a duo of back-to-back storms. Debris is still being found along the shoreline. Some of the wood has been salvaged and will be used in projects around the lighthouse.

The Ludington North Breakwater lighthouse has received a new coat of paint on the first-floor exterior. She now looks fresh and ready for the inevitable ice of the coming winter. We have expanded the solar lighting that was installed last year and now have lighting on the second and third floors as well.

A new restoration project has been started at the Breakwater. We are removing the porthole windows, stripping them of their paint, polishing the brass, replacing the seals and glass and making them look better than the day they were put in. This project is anticipated to take most of the next year to finish as weather and accessibility are limiting factors. Stay tuned, though, as you will actually be able to see out the windows in the near future.



Little Sable is getting a new and improved deck by the railing at the lighthouse entrance. A solar panel to supply electricity to the gift shop trailer is coming in the spring. Some work is also being done at the keepers' residence to make the restocking of merchandise at the gift shop easier.

White River Light Station had the original workshop renovated this past spring and summer. It will be outfitted over the winter, and our plan is to have it open to the public

when the light opens in 2018.

We have completed a renovation to the gardens surrounding the lighthouse by repairing the stone retaining walls and installing new ones where necessary. New deer-and-rabbit-resistant plants were installed, but it seems no one told the deer that they were not to eat them. Such is the way with gardening. Try, try, again. Dave Deppe also made and installed new storm windows for White River.

Lastly, SPLKA found a new office location. We spruced it up and completed our move into the space in late summer. The new space is greatly appreciated by all who work and visit there.



As you can see, a tremendous amount was accomplished in 2017. But fear not . . . there is still plenty to do in 2018. A big THANK YOU goes out to all of the volunteers whose help made all these projects a success. We could never have done it all without your support and hard work. If you want to volunteer for some of the projects we are planning for 2018, just let us know. 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. Come for a day or stay for a week. There is always plenty to do.

Big Sable Point 150th Anniversary T-Shirts ON SALE!



30% Off!

Limited sizes
and colors
are available.
Some
long sleeved,
some short.

In the colors of:
Navy, Grey,
Cranberry, and
Teal.

**SHORT
SLEEVE
NOW
\$12***

**LONG
SLEEVE
NOW
\$16***



**PLEASE INCLUDE \$5⁰⁰
FOR SHIPPING*

Call the SPLKA office at
(231) 845-7417
to place your order!

Labatt's®, Vernors®
and Boatyard Brewery® help
promote the Ludington lights.



Marketing campaigns in 2017 by three beverage companies showcased two of our four lighthouses. In May, Labatt USA, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, launched "Great State of Mine." The promotion includes 15-can and 24 -can packs of beer featuring Michigan landmarks, including the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. In addition to the image of Big Sable, other cans had images of the Mackinac Bridge, Pictured Rocks and the Spirit of Detroit.

In August, Vernors, a ginger ale brand found in Detroit, was celebrating its 150th year in business. To make people aware of their celebration they decided to market Vernors cans with lighthouse images. They placed the Big Sable Lighthouse and four other Michigan Lighthouses on cans sold through October of 2017. Other lights that were featured included the Grand Haven Lighthouse on Lake Michigan, Crisp Point and Eagle Harbor Lighthouses on Lake Superior and the Tawas Point Lighthouse on Lake Huron. When contacted about our 150th celebration for Big Sable Vernors graciously donated the last eight twelve packs that were in the Cadillac warehouse to be given away to those who came out to attend the party. The Cadillac, MI Vernors distributor said "this by far was Vernors most popular promotion in years. The cans were flying off the shelves." Marsha and Bruce Martin also scoured the Grand Rapids stores and provided another seven twelve pack as well for the celebration.

In September, local Kalamazoo brewers, Boatyard Brewing Co. introduced their customers to "Hazy Sunset IPA". The yellow 16 oz. cans have the image of the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse with the sun setting in the background. A spokesperson for the brewery said that "Hazy Sunset IPA" is a New England Style IPA. For packaging we wanted a distinctive sunset and what is more recognizable than a Michigan sunset with a Michigan lighthouse in the foreground."

SPLKA wants to thank these fine companies for helping get the images out regarding our wonderful lights.





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

Leave a Print in the Sand

The Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers, stewards of the two Ludington Lighthouses, the Little Sable Lighthouse and White River Lighthouse and Museum, announces the expansion of their “*Leave a Print in the Sand*” fundraising initiative.

Started in July 2014 at the Big Sable light this ongoing effort by SPLKA has added \$30,000 to the SPLKA Capital Campaign fund which is designated for the major repairs at the four iconic Lake Michigan lighthouses 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. Those sold for installation at Little Sable will become a new walkway between the Little Sable Merchandise trailer and the cement walkway. The boards sold for placement at the White River Light Station will be the new wheel chair accessible ramp which will take visitors into the refurbished workshop located on the grounds of the White River Light Station and Museum. The cost of the engraved boards is \$100.00 each. Your Trex board can be engraved with up to two lines, with up to 25 characters per line, including commas and spaces.

Memorialize your fond memories of being keepers or visitors at the Big Sable Light, the Little Sable Light or the White River Light Station and climbing up each tower’s 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 Holiday gifts. They also are a great way to honor 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.

Rachel's

RECAP | 2017



by Rachel Bendele
SPLKA Operations
Gift Shop Manager



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

The 2017 season has come to an end, and what a fantastic season it was! This year we held several extra events to celebrate Big Sable's 150th birthday. I think we all could agree that the original keepers are smiling a little more, knowing the honor that was given to their beloved lighthouse. That Big Sable is still standing after 150 years is something we can all be proud of, whether you are a member, volunteer, staff or board member or guest. We all contribute to the mission of SPLKA. Thank YOU!

HERE IS A RECAP OF THE 2017 SEASON, ALONG WITH THE FINAL NUMBERS FOR EACH OF THE LIGHTS.



Big Sable brought in 89 volunteers, and 14 of them were brand new keepers. There were six cancellations at BSP to fill due to medical or other unforeseen situations. We had six regular bus days which utilized 30 volunteers, and every bus day this year was very well attended. The state park administration granted us permission to schedule two additional bus days to support the observation of Big Sable's 150th year. Those days were

used on October 28th for the Halloween event, where we had the help of about 20 volunteers, and on November 1st for the birthday celebration, where 12 volunteers helped make that event a success. Big Sable ended the season well with increases in all of the following categories as compared to 2016.

Paid Tours increased by 1,281
Tour fees increased by \$9,116.99
Gift Shop sales increased by \$19,561.00
Consumables increased by \$1,500.61

Little Sable brought in 74 volunteers with 20 of those being new keepers. There were 10 cancellations to fill due to illness or other unforeseen events. LSP hosted five Night at the Lights concerts and utilized 12 volunteers to help with the events. We also had 32 day keepers at LSP that helped keep the light open on Mondays while new keepers moved in and on Thursdays so resident keepers could have a day off. Little Sable also ended the season well with increases in all of the following revenues as compared to 2016.



Paid tours increased by 830
Tour fees increased by \$9,914.37
Gift Shop sales increased by \$8,272.81



Sixty-eight volunteers worked at the Ludington North Breakwater light, and 22 of them were first-time keepers. There were five cancellations at LNBL to fill due to medical or other unforeseen circumstances. LNBL also had 15 local day keepers who helped keep the light open while new groups of keepers moved in on Mondays and also on Thursdays so the resident keepers could have a day off. We were also present at Ludington's **Friday Night Live** with our wooden LNBL bean bag toss game for kids to play and literature to distribute about our programs.

LNBL had a great season with increased revenue in all the following areas as compared to 2016.

Paid tours increased by 1,475
Tour fees increased by \$6,949
Gift Shop Sales increased by \$10,096.12

White River Light Station hosted several events this year as noted in the curator's report. Volunteers at WRLS helped every Sunday throughout the season as well as a few Saturdays and for special events. There were approximately 20 volunteers who helped out while Matt, our curator, took a day or two off. Here are the numbers for White River as compared to 2016.



Paid tours decreased by 428
Tour fees decreased by \$1,160.90
Gift Shop increased by \$2,586.70

Gears are shifting, and we are all now working toward programming and scheduling for next year. Applications for 2018 keepers are coming in, and I have started to process applications and schedule volunteers for next year. I have also begun meeting with vendors to get some new stuff in our shops for next year! In between all of this, I will be reviewing ideas and suggestions that our volunteers have submitted and working toward improving our processes and updating literature.

Thanks again to all of our amazing volunteers who choose to volunteer with SPLKA. I look forward to seeing you in 2018. If you are unable to volunteer again, please send a message or give a call sometime and let us know how you're doing!

~ Rachel



MICHIGAN LIGHTHOUSE FESTIVAL

Ludington welcomed thousands of visitors for the second annual Michigan Lighthouse Festival held on the last weekend of August. Lighthouse lovers from several different states came to Ludington to celebrate Big Sable's 150th anniversary and to learn about Michigan's Castles on the Lakeshore. Festival organizer Marge Ellenberger was ecstatic at the turnout. Her company also produces the Michigan Lighthouse Guide that is distributed to hundreds of locations throughout the state. Marge stated that "we want to promote the history of the lighthouse. Michigan has 129 lighthouses that can shine for the state

of Michigan. The lighthouses are the beacons that shine in Michigan, and we hope that they shine to bring in tourism and we're seeing that this weekend." Working with Pure Ludington and the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association the festival included a Friday evening catered dinner with a lighthouse photography program presented by Todd and Brad Reed and stories of women lighthouse keepers told by Patricia Majher author of "Ladies of the Lights". A maritime themed arts and craft show was held on Saturday and Sunday in Rotary Park. This also featured exhibits from many different Michigan lighthouse organizations. A bus day at Big Sable was held on Saturday afternoon as well. Attendance at the bus day was overwhelming. Over a thousand visitors were welcomed out at Big Sable on Saturday. At one point there was a 70 minute wait to catch a bus out. Saturday evenings program "Storm"

was a multimedia presentation by Ric Mixter and Dan Hall. The show covered three centuries of the fury of the Great Lakes and its impact on the shipping industry. Sunday morning the SPLKA Staff and Board of Directors hosted a member's only event at the new Port of Ludington Maritime Museum. Executive Director Manting said that "this opportunity gave all of our members extra incentive to come to Ludington, enjoy the festival and it provided a special time for members to mingle with the Board and Staff. We certainly had a busy but enjoyable weekend. The festival gave us wonderful local exposure to many in the community who came out to enjoy the weekend activities. This was a wonderful way to continue to meet our mission to preserve, promote and educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all."



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

Need reminders of our Bus Days or other special events?

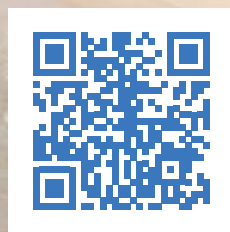
Keep up to date with all the SPLKA happenings by visiting our Facebook page.



Check us out on Facebook!



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



PIRATES and Princesses



On October 28th SPLKA along with many volunteers came together to host a fun filled family day with Pirates and a Princess in the afternoon, with a switch into the evening presenting 'The Hauntings of Big Sable'. As always you never can predict Michigan weather and so we held the event rain or shine. The weather did have some impact on the early day festivities while setting a scene for an eerie effect during the evening with winds blowing and rain falling.

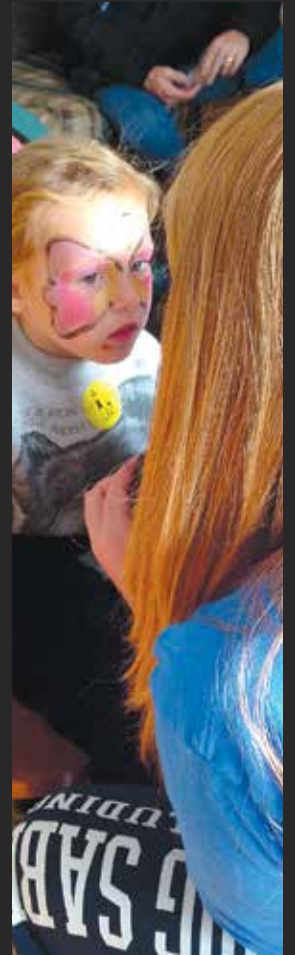
During the hours of 12-3pm we had a bus day with a tower special, buy one adult get a child free for tower climbs. At the base of the tower there were Pirates who passed out treasures, Princess Rapunzel who passed out candy and over in the suite was face painting with more treats. Keepers passed out donut holes and candy as well. Visitors of all ages were able to scoop up some sweet treats thanks to our donors- Meijer, Cops & Donuts and Lakeshore Parrothead Club.

As evening started to settle in, we switched things over to the Hauntings. This wasn't your typical haunted house event. This was more

of a story played out by volunteer actors that held key roles in a story that unraveled as guests were guided through 9 different stations where pieces of information would be given and leading up to the climax at the end of the story. The story was completely fiction and written by Aaron DeKuiper who volunteered to put it together using tidbits of unusual happenings that were noted and shared in the keeper's journal.

It took approximately 20 volunteers to pull each part together. Some characters had very large parts while others had smaller parts to set the stage for the next. We also had behind the scenes volunteers that would get props ready, play music on key or activate lights when prompted. Each person played a key role in making this event happen. The feedback gathered from those who purchased tickets to the event was that it was a success.

So to everyone who participated, shared new ideas, gave insight from past events, shared your unusual experiences etc., you helped bring people out to Big Sable who have never been before. Thank you!





Michigan Lighthouse Landmark Legacy

The "Michigan Lighthouse Landmark Legacy" (MLLL), project is a multi-media tribute to over forty of Michigan's treasured landmarks and lighthouses.



It is not too often that new and inventive ideas come around that not only excite those that are involved in historical preservation but also stretch across boundaries to whole new segments of interested persons. The Michigan Lighthouse Landmark Legacy project does just this. The MLLL is the vision and dream of Dr. Bill Lucas, professor of Music at the U of M. Dr. Lucas states "The Michigan Lighthouse Landmark Legacy project is a multi-media tribute to over forty of Michigan's treasured landmarks and lighthouses." With time off from his music in 2005, Dr. Lucas took up photography and started traveling around Michigan. In his travels he became fascinated with lighthouses and other large historical landmarks. Using his creative talent Bill started photographing these structures from angles not always observed by the common guest to the site. What he ended up with were some of the most unique pictures of Michigan Lighthouses ever taken. Then the question of what to do with them? During the summer of 2005 Bill witnessed the condition that most of the lights were in, spoke to many volunteers from different lighthouse organizations and found there was a real need for funding to maintain and preserve Michigan's lighthouses for future generations.

The idea of setting these wonderful pictures to music kept coming up.



As an aside, Dr. Lucas had been asked to write several brass fanfares for noted people around the country. These short 1 to 6 minute brass compositions were specially written for corporate executives or to honor special occasions. Surrounded by musical talent daily Dr. Lucas came up with the idea of having fanfares composed for each of the forty lights which he photographed. With the help of the U of M Grant writing department Dr. Lucas was able to secure funding to commission several noted composers and talented U of M graduate students to write forty fanfares to the Michigan Lighthouses. His project hasn't stopped there. Now professional musicians are being brought in to record each fanfare. When the piece is finished Bill, with the help of others, develops videos which are then posted on You Tube. These wonderful videos are used to showcase each

lighthouse and provide information to the viewer as to how one can get involved with the organization that maintains the lighthouse. Currently, the South Haven Lighthouse and the Manistee lighthouse videos are completed. The videos for the Ludington North Breakwater and Little Sable will be finished soon.

The MLLL will also be recording a CD of all forty compositions and making those available to any lighthouse organization in Michigan. The sale of these CD's will help raise money for preservation. Future plans include a brass sextet touring group which will perform these magnificent pieces around the state generating interest in areas that our preservation groups have not explored. Students at the U of M are also working on a surround sound video presentation project which will be a traveling display of the pictures and music showcasing the Michigan Lighthouses and the organizations that tend to their care.

SPLKA members were treated to Dr. Lucas playing the fanfare for the South Haven Lighthouse at our annual dinner in September and the Big Sable Fanfare at the 150th birthday celebration on Nov. 1st.

You can find the finished videos on You Tube and SPLKA staff encourages you to follow the MLLL on Facebook. Each new video composition is posted on Facebook once it is finished.

Thank You TO OUR DONORS

SPLKA wants to thank the many businesses, foundations and individuals that partnered with us this year to help SPLKA complete the 2017 projects and sponsor our special events. Funding for the new red roof for the keeper's quarters at Big Sable came from the Mason County Community Foundation, Oxy Chemical, Country Veterinary Clinic, Pro Act Service Corporation, many of our SPLKA members and those who purchased walkway boards.

The White Lake Community Fund and Fruitland Township funded the building and installation of historically correct cedar framed storm window/screen combinations for the windows at the White River Light Station and Museum.

The Friends of White River played a huge roll in financing the restoration of the workshop behind the light station. This will provide more educational space and exhibit space for our larger items. A huge thank you to Bank of America and Jeff duPuis for providing the funding for a new unit to heat and air-condition the remodeled workshop. They also are providing funding for air conditioning the White River Light Station and

Museum as well. For a second time this year the White Lake Community Fund has provided funds to help with new 2018 exhibits for the White River Light Station.

Funding for this year's printing of the student activity booklets was provided by the Seekers of Little Sable, the Friends of White River and the Oceania Community foundation. SPLKA has printed and distributed 45,000 of these booklets since September of 2014.

The Great Lakes Energy Peoples Fund along with the Mason County Community Foundation and DTE energy helped fund our sponsorship and activities for the Michigan Lighthouse Festival which was held in August.

Meijer donated candy, Cops and Donuts donated donut holes and the local Pirate group donated their time to help make our first afternoon family Halloween event a very special afternoon for all who participated.

West Shore Bank, Sanders and Czapski Architects and Island Insurance Company funded the activities for Big Sable's 150th birthday celebration on Nov. 1st. This paid for free transpiration to the lighthouse,

free tour climbs for our guests and the other items that went into making the day special. Vernors along with Marsha and Bruce Martin also donated enough Big Sable Vernors cans for us to handout to all who attended the celebration.

The Mason County Community Foundation, the Love Ludington Fund at the Mason County Community foundation has already committed \$3,500 toward SPLKA's goal of \$15,000 to refurbish the portholes in the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse. Giving Tuesday brought in \$375.00 toward this and we are looking forward to more coming for our year end giving.

The SPLKA staff and Board are actively seeking out grants and funding to help SPLKA continue to meet its mission to preserve, promote and educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all. We want once again send a "Big Thank You" to all who participated in our 2017 fund raising efforts. We hope that you will please consider a year end or first of the year gift to help us continue to move forward.



Renew Your 2018 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 2018 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.

Advantages of being a member included being eligible to be a day keeper, (associate membership) or resident keepers,

(all other membership level categories) at 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 2018 membership please consider giving the gift of membership to a friend or relative who would be interested in joining our cause. (The levels and amounts are all the same as 2017.)

Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2018

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

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

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!



Keeper's Notes

2017 AT THE WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION & MUSEUM



by Matt Varnum
CURATOR
White River
Light Station & Museum



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

2017 was a good year here at the White River Light Station & Museum. Many thanks go to Fruitland Township, several volunteers, and our own Maintenance and Restoration Supervisor, Jim, and his wife Debbie, for their work on the light station grounds. Dead ash trees were removed on the west side of the property along with a dead maple tree on the east side of the grounds. With help from our interns, Jim and Debbie cleaned up and greatly improved the flower beds on the north and east sides of the station. We have received nothing but compliments from all on the flower beds.

With generous donations from Jeff du Puis, Friends of the White River Light Station, and Bank of America, the workshop has been renovated. It will house permanent exhibits and a historical video about the light station and the surrounding area. During the off season this year, I will be working on getting the newly renovated space ready for visitors for the 2018 season.

Also during the 2017 season, many events on the grounds of White River Light Station & Museum were well attended. Five concerts took place in July and August, along with three Yoga practices on the Lawn events. In August, we partnered with Fetch Brewing Company of Whitehall for a fundraising beer event on the grounds. Even though the weather was not the best, there was still a decent turnout. Here's hoping that next year better weather will bring more people out to enjoy the event and experience the beauty that is the White River Light Station.

Visitors from 41 of the 50 states, Washington DC, and from 12 different countries visited the light station in 2017. During the off season, exhibits in the museum will be rotated so that we will have new exhibits for next year's visitors.

In 2018, there will also be the new permanent exhibits and the video in the former workshop. Concerts, yoga, and hopefully another fund-raising event in conjunction with Fetch Brewing Company will be held here on the grounds of the White River Light Station & Museum. Be sure to check our website for dates and information about these events.

Starting with the 2018 season, the light station and museum will be open seven days a week, resulting in a second day of volunteer opportunities each week at White River. If you are interested in volunteering, please submit the volunteer application available at SPLKA.org so that you can be contacted regarding available dates. The link to the application can be found on the right side of the home page.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the great volunteers, interns, and staff that we have here at SPLKA for all of the great help and support they provided this year. Without them, there is no way that I could do the things that I do here. Again, thank you all so very much.

Have a great rest of your 2017 and I hope to see you all here in 2018.

~ Matt Varnum



CMYK GRAFIX Design photo

Thank you for Celebrating with us!

Big Sable's 150th Birthday Party!



NOVEMBER 1ST, 2017



Photo courtesy of Missy Muñoz

RESTORING THE PORTHOLES IN THE LUDINGTON NORTH BREAKWATER LIGHTHOUSE

This year, the SPLKA Board of Directors is directing the yearend gifts to the refurbishing of the fourteen portholes in the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse. SPLKA will also be purchasing four historically correct portholes to replace the missing units in the tower.

After of surviving years of extreme weather conditions the portholes are showing their age. The glass or in some cases Plexiglas inserts have been sand blasted and visitors to the lights can no longer clearly see out of any of them. Most of the present portholes are also inoperable. The brass rings have several coats of white paint covering them as well as the hinges and the locking mechanisms.

As Jim Hardie states this will be a "yearlong project. It is very labor intense as it requires removing each porthole, then stripping the paint off from the frame, then polishing the brass frame, reinserting the new glass panels and then



reinstalling them back in the light." Functioning portholes with new ¾' thick glass will enhance our guest's experience. Climbers will clearly be able to view the harbor from all the different levels. On hot days with the portholes open our guest will experience the lake breezes as they climb to the top. Reinstallation of the portholes will also mean sealing them so they no longer leak.

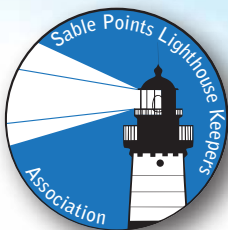
Funding for a portion of this \$15,000 project has already been received from the Love Ludington Foundation, the Mason County Foundation, Q's Bar B Q, the Historic Bed and Breakfast Association of Ludington

and those who participated in our Giving Tuesday campaign. SPLKA is still looking for an additional \$10,000.00 to complete this project.

To make sure that the project can be completed within the year we need your help. We ask that you consider joining us today by sending in your yearend gifts to SPLKA. Your generous donation to SPLKA will make sure that SPLKA will help preserve the Ludington North Breakwater lighthouse for years to come. Help SPLKA continue to meet its mission to preserve promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all.

SPLKA is once again offering the "All Access Pass" for the 2018 season. 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 **spikaofficemanager@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 through the 2018 season.

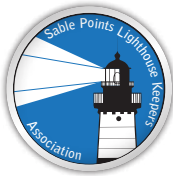
SPLKA invites you and your family to come climb a lighthouse and create priceless memories!



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association
invites you to

go climb a
Lighthouse!

Purchase an **ALL ACCESS PASS** for 2018



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

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Photo courtesy of
Todd Reed

*Be sure and visit
our 'Castles on the
Lakeshore' in 2018!*

