



## SPLKA Annual Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2015, 6:15 PM

**"The mission of SPLKA is to preserve, promote, educate the public, and to make our lighthouses accessible to all."**

### Call to Order/Establish a Quorum:

A business meeting of the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers' Association was held September 11, 2015 at 6:15 p.m. at the Lincoln Hills Golf Club, 1527 N. Lakeshore Drive, Ludington, Michigan. The business meeting was preceded by a dinner. The President, Lenore Janman, called the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting to order. The following Board members were present: Lenore Janman, Sue Ann Schnitker, Sheila Meeusen, Doug Buikema, Bob Baltzer, John Truxell, and Roger Pashby.

Lenore welcomed all 70 members in attendance, including Dick Smith and Caryl Ferguson who are charter members of our organization. Lenore also explained the purpose of having members place their names on our timeline showing the year that they joined SPLKA. Members then commemorated September 11 with a moment of silence and prayer for those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

Lenore explained our theme for this year's dinner "Footprints in the Sand", emphasizing our fund raising goals for 2016 and 2017. Lenore talked about our goal of \$175,000 to be used for repairs to Big Sable Point, including a new roof and tower repairs. Lenore thanked Jim Hardie, our Restoration and Maintenance Supervisor, who built a miniature of Big Sable Point so that we can visually track our progress in reaching our fund raising goal. The miniature showed that at the time of this meeting, \$55,000 has been raised towards our goal of \$175,000.

Lenore then introduced Executive Director Peter Manting. Peter, who is in his second year as Executive Director, introduced our SPLKA staff members, many of whom are new to our organization this year. New staff members are Rachel Bendele, Operations Manager; Cherie Hockenberger, Office Manager (filling in for Debbie Dyer; Cherie also supplied keyboard music before dinner); and Jim Hardie, Restoration and Maintenance Supervisor. Other staff members include Pricilla McBeth, Gift Shop Manager, who just finished her second year with us, Shirley Mitchell, Bookkeeper, and Matt Varnum, who took a new position with us as White River Light Station Curator. Peter congratulated his staff saying that they are the best staff he has ever worked with and emphasized his appreciation for their hard work this past year.

Peter then reported to our membership on our past year activities as follows:

- “Night at the Lights” events were held at LSP, BSP, and WRLS. These nights are a series of concerts and events held usually in the evening. Attendance averaged at over 100 people at LSP, WRLS saw from 15 to 75 people in attendance.
- Six bus trips were held during June, July, and August at BSP.
- SPLKA had a booth at the “Friday Night Live” events in downtown Ludington held in July. SPLKA introduced a new Lighthouse bean bag toss game build by Jim Hardie at this event which was very popular especially with the kids.
- Other community events SPLKA participated in were Chamber of Commerce business promotions and the Live Well Lighthouse Challenge which was a joint effort with the State DNR and Mason County Health Department. Participants were required to visit all of our four lighthouses, getting a picture of the participant and the light, and then posting the pictures on the Mason County Health Department Facebook page. The prize, which was a two-night stay in the suite at BSP, was won by a family from Illinois.
- Terry Pepper, noted Great Lakes lighthouse historian, spoke to maritime enthusiasts at White Pine Village regarding Fresnel, the man and the lens.
- Small grant funding continues to be received from Mason County and Oceana County Community Foundations, Oxy Chemical, DTE Energy, West Shore Bank, and Sanders and Czapski Architects.
- These grants are used to fund “Night at the Lights” and our children’s educational activities booklets which are given to children who visit our lights.
- Our Activity booklets have been a great success. We have printed 23,000 copies so far and teachers have been calling us wanting a copy or copies for their classrooms.
- On fundraising, 212 trex walkway boards have been sold at the time of this meeting and will continue to be sold.
- GO FUND accounts have been set up for each of our lights. Each GO FUND account is for a specific project at each of our lights: for BSP, a new roof; for LSP, repairs on the catwalk; for LNBL, ceiling repair on the third level; and for WRLS, funding for new displays of the artifacts.
- Peter complimented and thanked his audience by saying that we have the best volunteer base he has ever worked with as we continue to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all.

**Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting of September 20, 2014:**

Sheila Meeusen read the Annual Meeting Minutes from September 20, 2014. Minutes were accepted as presented.

**Presentation of Service Awards:**

Lenore Janman, along with Peter Manting, presented Shirley Mitchell with a copy of Todd and Brad Reed's new book, "Wednesdays in the Mitten." Shirley is leaving her position of bookkeeper for SPLKA, a position which she has held for many years in our organization. Shirley received a standing ovation for her years of outstanding service to our organization.

Lenore and Peter then presented both Board Members Bob Baltzer and Doug Buikema with a picture of all four lighthouses with our SPLKA symbol in the center of the picture. The photos were taken by Todd and Brad Reed. Bob and Doug were also given a standing ovation for their contributions to SPLKA.

### **Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report**—Treasurer Doug Buikema reported that Connie Tewes, CPA, conducted a review of our financial statements and found us to be in conformity with generally accepted US accounting principles. Doug stated that our financial report is available to the members and the public.

Our largest source of income is tower tours. As of July 31, 36,246 guests climbed a tower and our revenue from these climbs is \$138,433. The number of climbers remains about the same as 2014, but this is a 35 percent increase in tower tour revenues.

Memberships continue to climb with an increase of 67 over 2014 for a total of 619. We have also received contributions of \$23,057, some of which have been made in memory of former keepers or friends of the lights.

Our major fundraiser has been the sale of trex boards. We have sold 212 boards so far for a profit of \$14,290.63.

Our balance sheet shows assets of just over one half million dollars. Half of this comes from investments and various operating bank accounts.

Doug thanked members and volunteers for continuing to make good things happen at our four lighthouses.

### **Election of Officers:**

Lenore Janman announced that the Board of Directors have three openings this year: Having been appointed in 2013, Roger Pashby is seeking election to his first three-year term on the Board, Kim McDaniel is seeking election to her first three-year term, and Kirk Lindquist is seeking election to a three-year term. Lenore read a short synopsis of each candidate's background. John Truxell made a motion to accept all three candidates; Doug Buikema seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Program:**

Dr. Kirk Lindquist, who was a member of one of the first boards of SPLKA, presented a summary of lighthouse history of our Association. At the time that he was on our Board, Big Sable Point Lighthouse was the only lighthouse in our Association which was formed in 1987. Dr. Lindquist spoke of the first repairs made to BSP such as a new roof and the acquiring of furnishings for the keepers' apartments. Dr. Lindquist also spoke about the beginnings of our partnership with the State DNR and the formation of the volunteer keeper program which was one of the first of its kind in the State of Michigan. At the end of his presentation, Dr. Lindquist fielded questions from members.

**Live Auction:**

Lenore Janman asked for bids on a framed print of LSP dated 1908. A final bid of \$175 was made on this item.

Roger Pashby, who donated a United States flag which was certified to have flown over our Lansing, Michigan capitol building, asked for bids on this item. Final bid was \$50.

**Gift Bags:**

Sue Ann Schnitker awarded five gift bags to members who had "SPLKA" printed on the bottom of their candy cups.

**Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Dick Voetberg and seconded by John Truxell. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Meeusen, Secretary