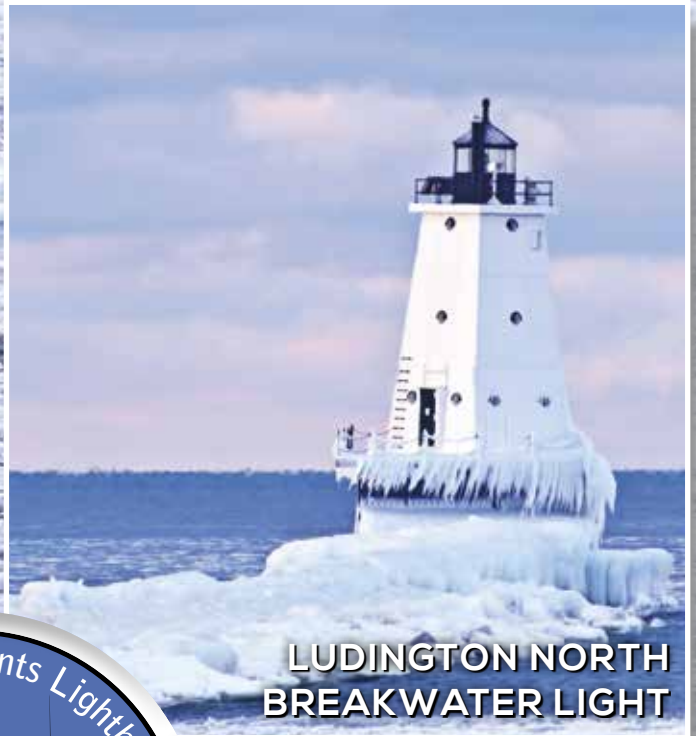


# Sable Points BEACON

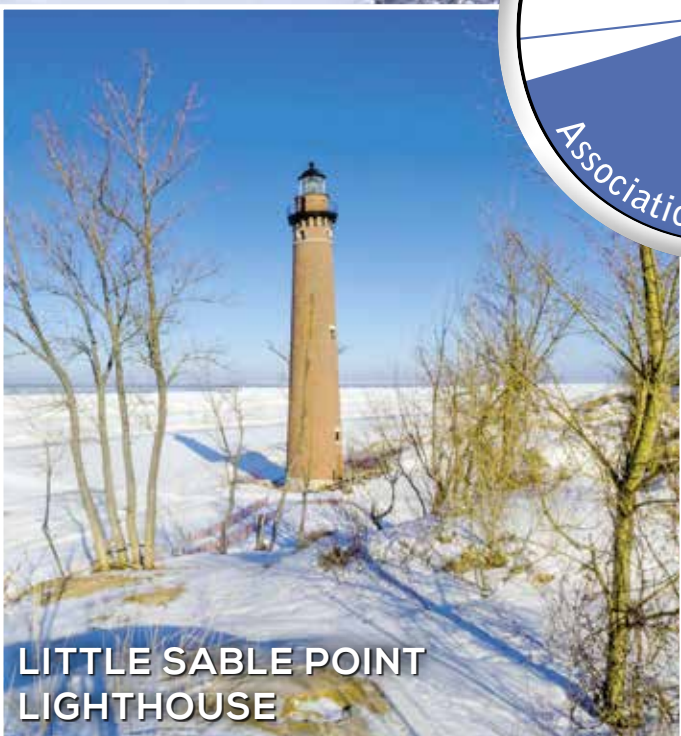
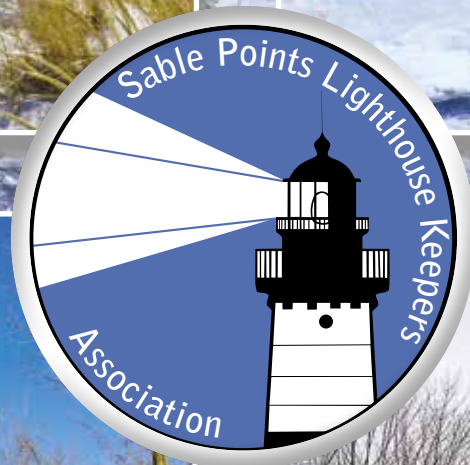
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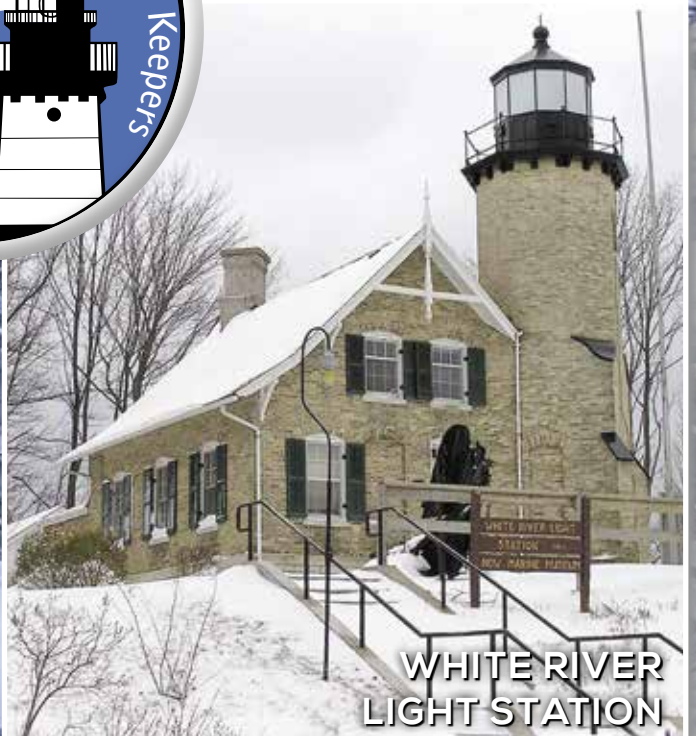
BIG SABLE POINT  
LIGHTHOUSE



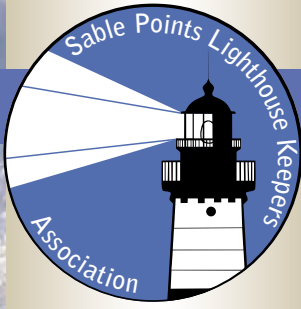
LUDINGTON NORTH  
BREAKWATER LIGHT



LITTLE SABLE POINT  
LIGHTHOUSE



WHITE RIVER  
LIGHT STATION



# Letter from the President

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Al Cocconi**  
PRESIDENT

**Mark Hallenbeck**  
VICE PRESIDENT

**Ted Robinson**  
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SECRETARY

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Cherie Hockenberger**  
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR

**Matt Varnum**  
WRLS CURATOR

**Rachel Bendele**  
OPERATIONS/ GIFT SHOP MANAGER

**Jim Hardie**  
RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR

**Carol Cooper**  
BOOKKEEPER

It is hard to believe that yet another summer season is complete. Already, the staff is working hard on planning and preparing for spring, 2020. Which brings me to the point of restating how important and vital it is to have such a group of professional and dedicated folks who work tirelessly to make Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association (SPLKA) one of the best in the state and, perhaps, in the nation. There are many lighthouses throughout the country that are open to the public, but I am not aware of any other groups that operate four lighthouses and restore and maintain them as well as our staff does.

Our Director, Peter Manting, has supervised the staff for going on six years, providing direction and support as well as establishing strong community relationships. He continues to obtain numerous grants that help to fund our many projects. Jim Hardie, our restoration and maintenance supervisor, works to ensure that our buildings and structures are in the best condition. Rachael Bendele has an unbelievably difficult (and often very frustrating) job keeping our lights adequately manned with our volunteer keepers. Yet, I have never seen Rachael without that infectious smile on her face. Cherie Hockenberger is the friendly voice on the phone our callers hear when they have questions. She keeps our office running efficiently as she makes sure Peter attends all of his meetings ... on time. Matt Varnum has helped to make our White River Light Station Museum one of the best in the area. Carol Cooper is the lady who pays all of our bills and makes sure our checkbook balances at the end of the day. THANK YOU SPLKA STAFF!!!

Our active, engaged membership provides support and encouragement all along our journey; and the board of directors continues to work to keep the organization focused on our goals. They provide our staff with the tools they need to continue our success as we move forward. We remain diligent in our efforts to coordinate the efforts of staff, membership, volunteers and the board of directors. We are financially secure, our staff is stable, and our membership continues to grow.

We will face some difficult challenges in 2020, the weather perhaps the biggest. Higher Lake Michigan water levels will force the closing of our Ludington North Breakwater Light more than we would like. This will undoubtedly reduce overall income levels. The weather also takes an enormous toll on our historic structures, increasing costs for restoration and maintenance. Yet, even with the costs of maintenance and restoration rising, the board of directors continues to insure that our staff is fairly compensated for their dedication and hard work. These are just two of the challenges which will make demands on our operating income (tower tours, merchandise sales, etc.).

With the financial challenges SPLKA is facing in the future, the board of directors has revised the strategic plan to reflect a much more robust fundraising program. Vice President Al Cocconi's presentation (during our September 2019 annual meeting) provided an excellent explanation of our approach. He laid out our most important and urgent needs - the restoration of the tower at Big Sable and obtaining an historical structures report for Big Sable (Phase One). He made the case that we will now focus on corporations and larger foundations. "End of life giving" will also play an important role as we move forward.

In summary, we have never had to solicit large donations, gifts, and bequests. Our operating income from tours and sales has always been sufficient to sustain our organization. However, we have grown from a small, one-lighthouse operation with a volunteer staff to an organization that maintains four beautiful, historic structures. All of us want to ensure that these historic lighthouses are available and accessible to future generations. We can make that happen if we continue to work together, supporting the SPLKA Mission: "Restore and maintain our lights, educate the public (about their historical significance) and make our lights available to everyone".



To paraphrase one of our greatest presidents:  
*"Public sentiment (SPLKA Membership) is everything. With public sentiment (SPLKA Membership), nothing can fail: Without it (SPLKA Membership), nothing can succeed."*  
~ Abraham Lincoln, 16th US President

*I close with a wish for all of you to have a Very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.*

Respectfully, **Bob Baltzer**  
President, SPLKA



# 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.*

I am sitting in my office, writing to you today, reflecting on the 2019 season. Where did it go? It seemed like just a week ago we were getting ready to open Big Sable for the 2019 season. The summer temperatures here in Ludington are no longer, and fall is definitely in the air with winter not far behind. All of our lights are now closed for the season.



It is the Thursday morning coffees with the keepers at Big Sable and the Friday afternoon visits to LNBL and Little Sable that I miss the most in the off season. As I continue to get to know so many of you, each year I look forward to renewing old acquaintances and welcoming new keepers into our family. In a sense, we are a family. Many of you tell me about your grandchildren, and now I get to share with you stories of my grandchildren. Boy, I must be getting old.

September marked my work anniversary. As I start my seventh year here as executive director and reflect on our accomplishments, I realize that we sure have made and seen many changes together. As I think back on 2019, I think about all the emails, cards and letters received from our summer guests expressing their appreciation for SPLKA's preservation efforts. Many

of our visitors took the time to email or write to tell me about their fun and informative interactions with our volunteer keepers and what a positive experience they had visiting all of our lights. What an encouragement those letters and emails are to our staff and board! How inspiring it is to know that those who take the time to visit our lights have been so impressed with our organization and our efforts to preserve the history at all four of our structures. I take a lot of pride, as should all of you, in the fact that our summer guests recognize our volunteers as welcoming, knowledgeable and friendly.



Highlights of the 2019 season include our music at the lights programs. The crowds at Little Sable for our Night at the Lights programming continue to grow. The Steel Doin' It Steel Drum Band seemed once again to be our largest draw. There were more than 250 people on the beach that evening for a memorable performance of Caribbean music. The Rough and Tumble from Nashville, Jim Novak and Paul Cerny, formerly from the Old Town Chicago scene, and Wyatt and Shari Knapp were all back for repeat performances. New to our lineup this year was the instrumental group Third Coast Gypsy Jazz. WOW! Were they great! The bus day music at Big Sable generates positive comments, and the music on Friday evenings at White River continues to impress.

This season we celebrated the completion of the porthole restoration project at the Ludington North Breakwater Light and the door

restoration at Big Sable. The White River Light Station welcomed our summer guests with a new roof, a new history video, and a new keeper's log video. Unveiled this season at Big Sable were new exhibits, fresh paint in the gift shop and video room, and an updated video. New historical metal photographs were placed on different levels of the Little Sable tower for our guests to enjoy as they climbed the 130 steps, and the Little Sable volunteers were excited to see the changes and updates at the keepers' residence.

SPLKA received two grants from the Mason County Community Foundation, one each from the Oceania County Youth Foundation, the White Lake Fund of the Muskegon County Community Foundation, the White Lake Women Who Care, West Shore Bank, the Great Lakes Energy People's Fund, and one from the Max and Victoria Dryfuss Fund in Washington, DC. The funds from these grants enabled us to complete many of the projects listed in the previous paragraph.

We reprinted another 10,000 activity booklets that continue to be a valued resource for teachers and a welcome gift for children after they have climbed the tower. Since September of 2014, we have printed 70,000 of these booklets.

The walkway boards at each of our lights continue to be a very popular way to support our mission. To date, we have sold 571 at Big Sable, 60 at Little Sable, and 20 at White River. When we started this endeavor at Big Sable, someone asked me what we were going to do after we sold 500 boards. I told them, "Sell another 500 boards." We are on our way, and there is plenty of room for 500 more.

Remember, if you are looking for that holiday or birthday gift for someone who has everything, a Trex board is a meaningful way to honor that special someone.

Lake Michigan's high water level has

been our biggest challenge this year. The North Breakwater Light was open only three or four days a week due to closures of the breakwater, which resulted in a substantial decrease in visitors. A new inland lake forms for a day or two out in front of Big Sable after every storm, as ground water rises and water splashes over the seawall. The lake which forms on the beach in front of Big Sable is large enough to put many of the walkway boards which lead to the seawall under



water. Also with the high water table, we have experienced some flooding in the basement of the lighthouse. A new sump pump has been installed to prevent future flooding. Since the installation of the new pump, we have had two major storms, and the basement has stayed dry! I know that the basement flooding was a concern for several of the keepers during their tours this summer. Our hats are off to those who were on duty and helped to manage it. To you, we to say a huge THANK YOU.

During our annual meeting in September, the board of directors laid out some of their long-term

preservation goals. This vision will come with a price tag of around two million dollars to complete. To help raise this money, we have divided the preservation projects into phases. On September 15 at the annual dinner, we announced that PHASE ONE of this vision is to repair the steel cladding and repaint the Big Sable tower. Also included in this phase will be funds to help finance a Historical Structures Report for Big Sable. The cost of PHASE ONE will be \$225,000.

At that same event, I announced that SPLKA already had funds of \$93,000, collected through our fundraising efforts and set aside with the Mason County Community Foundation in the Sable Points Capital Campaign Fund. I also announced that an anonymous donor had pledged to make a matching gift of up to \$20,000, challenging our members to donate \$20,000 by the end of October. Did our members and the community step up? Yes, they did! By October 31, SPLKA members and the Ludington area community had donated \$25,420 to the project. On November 1, I met with staff at the Mason County Community Foundation and handed over a check for \$45,420 to be added to our current Campaign Fund. We are over halfway to our goal! Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen. We couldn't do it without you.

As I end this report, I want to

recognize the staff and board of directors for all of the hard work, love and long hours that they contribute to SPLKA. They insure that all of our lights look their best and that things run smoothly for the volunteers who work to make the lighthouses accessible to the public. Thank you for your vision, your time, and your dedication to our lights.

To our members and volunteers, both seasoned and new, you continue to amaze me and the many thousands of guests who visit our wonderful lights. Your support and your knowledge and love for our four lighthouses is unparalleled. You graciously welcome and help transport our visitors back to a time when our lights were homes to the lighthouse keepers and their families. Thank you for all the hours that you have put into building SPLKA and furthering our mission to preserve, promote, educate the public, and make our lighthouses accessible to all.



### 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](https://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



**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.*

## HELLO SPLKA!

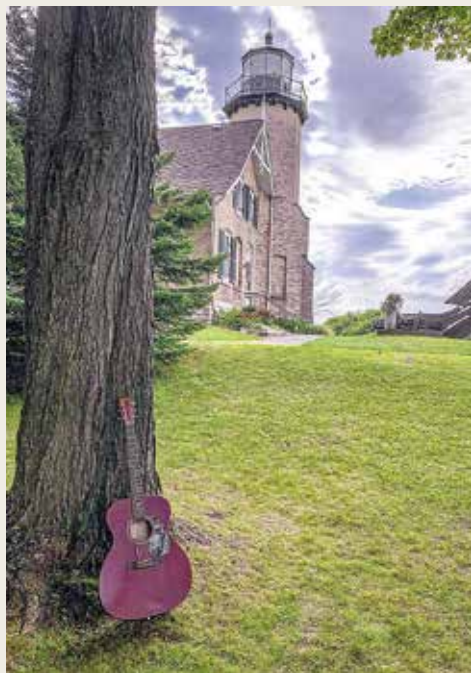
It seems as though it was just last week that we opened for the season. We had many visitors to the Light Station who enjoyed numerous events that took place throughout the summer. There were concerts, yoga sessions, and children's story times. The beer and wine fundraising event was again well attended and raised significant funds to help finance projects here at the White River Light Station & Museum.

We plan to offer all these events again during the 2020 season.

One of the projects that I will be working on (with help from our maintenance and restoration supervisor, Jim Hardie) during the off season will be a new hands-on activity located inside the main museum. Stop by next year and check it out. It's top secret and a big surprise! Other winter projects include rotating out exhibits, working on updating materials, and conducting additional research.

Also, during this time, I will give talks throughout the White River community to raise awareness of the White River Light Station & Museum. Our intent is to increase visitor numbers and recruit new volunteers. If you have volunteered during past seasons and would like to share your volunteer experience with others, please contact me ([whiteriverlight@gmail.com](mailto:whiteriverlight@gmail.com)) to let me know when you are available.

Many thanks to the 12 phenomenal volunteers who worked at the White River Light Station & Museum this past season. Everyone did an amazing job as they all stepped up many times to fill

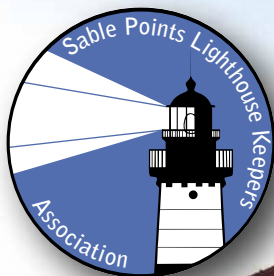


the 52 dates we had open for the 2019 season. Thanks to these volunteers, I was able to enjoy some days off and to work on getting things ready for our evening events. I really hope to see all 12 of you back for the 2020 season.

*Respectfully Submitted By*  
Matt Varnum, Curator,  
White River Light Station & Museum

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](mailto: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 2020 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 2020

# Lighthouse Maintenance News

FALL/WINTER 2019-20



by **Jim Hardie**  
Restoration and  
Maintenance Supervisor



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

It is hard to believe that summer is over. After a very cool and wet beginning to our spring, it turned into a short summer and a long and wet fall. This year has been all about the rise of the big lake. On nice calm days I love to walk on the beach and just daydream about all the possibilities in life. This year the lake has been angry. I wonder if it is trying to tell us something. I heard on the news a few days ago that the lake was over a foot higher this season than at the same time last year. It is predicted to rise another six inches. That is our challenge here at the lighthouses. Water is a very powerful force which can be the destroyer of buildings. Rest assured that, with the help of our many volunteers,



we are doing our best to preserve our wonderful historic structures.

## SUMMER 2019

All of our lighthouses are near the lake, duh, but White River and Little Sable have not been having any major issues yet due to the lake's rise. The same can't be said for our Ludington lighthouses though. The North Breakwater Lighthouse is faring well with the high water as far as the structure goes. If only we could get to it. The closures due to high water and unsafe conditions have been the story there all season. I was able to get this lighthouse buttoned up for the winter right after we closed at Labor Day. Thanks to Larry Stulz for helping me move the solar panels in. We got everything secured for the winter all in one day. The new steps built at the entrance this year seemed to be a big help. Our keepers no longer have to bring them in every night. The solar system was acting up again early in the season, but that finally calmed down and appears to be more reliable now. Some upgrades to it are planned for next year.

## TINA & EMMA

Two high school girls from down south, Emma and Tina, who were spending the summer



in Ludington, volunteered to help paint the first floor. That was a big assist, as this needs to be done every year. I'm still not sure if they were the ones looking for volunteer work or their father was the one looking for something for them to do. Either way, they were great.

The closing crew of Pat and Marlene Perry and Joyce and Don Harter did an exceptional job of cleaning up at the end of the season at Little Sable Point Lighthouse. The roof of the residence was cleaned off, the inside was made immaculate, and the outside got a washing that made it look like a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to the four of you for an exceptional job. I have done some work on the inside of the Little Sable tower this fall as well. The lowest section, between the entrance door and the first landing, has been refurbished. The peeling paint was scraped off to the extent possible. Half of the area was whitewashed in the traditional manner and the other half was painted using a high adhesion primer. I am anxious to see how the two methods fare over the winter. If the weather cooperates, I will try to get another section done in the spring before we open. There isn't much of a beach at Little Sable this year, but so far there are no structural issues due to high water.

Matt has been high and dry down at White River. We got a new roof installed this spring, and that is a relief as the old roof was well past its prime. I guess that could be said for many of us as well. The entryway got some new paint, and the desk was moved to facilitate the flow of people. Some new electronic displays were installed that have been well received. This winter, more displays will be fabricated and installed before opening day in 2020.

Big Sable Point Lighthouse has had the most challenges with the rising lake levels this year. The steel cap that was on top of the sea wall has been slowly moved from the constructed position out into Lake Michigan. Each storm has been ripping off another section of the cap and depositing it into the lake. This has contributed to flooding issues. Waves are crashing over the sea wall and creating an inland lake between the sea wall and the lighthouse itself. After a few hours of this, the water table on the land side of the sea wall rises to above the level of the basement floor and we get a river in the basement.



### BEFORE THE CAP WAS REMOVED BY THE WAVES

All volunteer keepers in the second half of the year have had to deal with turning on the utility pumps in the basement and connecting the hoses to get the water out of the basement and back into Lake Michigan. This has been a real pain for all. Thank you to everyone who has assisted in trying to keep the basement as dry as possible. This is an extremely serious problem which is impacting the lighthouse and threatening the structural integrity.



### AFTER LOSING THE CAP AND DURING HIGH WAVE ACTION

A new sump pump is currently being installed with a battery back-up pump to ensure we keep up with our dewatering efforts in the off season when no one is there. This is just a band aid treating the symptoms. It doesn't correct the problem. The bottom line is that we have to keep the water out of the building. We have met with the DNR and some state engineers to discuss what the future holds and to get their opinions on what our best options would be for preserving the lighthouse and keeping Lake Michigan at bay. More on this in the coming months. This is by far the most serious issue we have facing us, and our efforts and resources need to be assigned accordingly.

I would be remiss if I didn't say a special thanks to the ladies on Tour 3 at BSPL again this year. They really stepped it up and went above and beyond helping to make the place a welcoming environment for everyone. Thank you as well to everyone who helps me maintain these precious structures. Your dedication, hard work and passion are truly appreciated. Dave Lambkin and Chuck Jamison really helped on the closing of BSPL this year as well. I couldn't have gotten everything done without your hard work. As always, 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](mailto: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 always plenty to do.

# Rachel's Corner



**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.*

People who visit the lighthouses often find them intriguing and romanticize about the possibilities of living at a lighthouse. Hundreds of people have made that fantasy a reality by volunteering at our lighthouses. Some volunteers come thinking it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and something to cross off their bucket list. They expect that they will be on to something else the following year, but then they find themselves returning to serve as keepers again and again.

There is really something special about lighthouses. I am lucky enough, not only to be able to work to help preserve and frequently visit these spectacular structures, but to meet, get to know and work with all these wonderful volunteers who share a common interest-- our lights!

In this article, I want to highlight the many others who find romance in our lights and make their visit a memory that will last a lifetime. Some special events happen casually behind the scenes and are impromptu, and some I have the pleasure of helping to set up! Any ideas? If you guessed engagements or weddings, you nailed it!

I occasionally have the privilege of facilitating one of the most memorable events of someone's life! It starts with a phone call with a nervous voice on the

other end. Someone wants to know if it's possible to propose to the love of his life at the lighthouse, and I get to say yes, YES, it is possible! I can hear that nervousness turn to excitement as we begin to talk about what they're thinking, who's coming, how we prepare the volunteers, and develop a plan to execute the event without the significant other knowing what's about to happen! I get excited just helping them with the plan because I want them to have the very best memory of this day. Sometimes we exchange information by email, but other times I must call. This is when my voice becomes the nervous one because I fear that someone will be in earshot of the call. So, in our initial call, I try to prepare them. I explain that, when I do call, I will first ask, "Is this a good time?" If it's not a good time, I instruct them just to tell me I have the wrong number and to call me back when they can.



**She LOVED the proposal. The view of the sunset is so gorgeous and romantic. I wouldn't change anything about that day. Thank you so much. Definitely the happiest day of my life!**  
-Eric

What I love most about these calls is hearing the different feelings expressed in their voices. First, they are nervous, then excited. And by the time I let

WINTER/2020

them know what I'm going to do to help, I hear in their voices the sound of relief and appreciation that they actually CAN do this.



**I want to thank you for the chance to go up the lighthouse at sunset. It was beautiful and amazing up there. The proposal went very well, it went according to plan and the way I was praying and hoping for. Please thank Wes and Terry for us again, it was nice meeting them and they were very kind and really did an amazing job acting to convince my fiancée that I wasn't going to propose. - Johnathan**

Some couples call me the next day and express how happy and thankful they are for our help in making their engagement so very special. One time though, after the volunteers at the lighthouse told me how well things had gone, I sent the gentleman a message of well wishes. He replied with, "She said no." My heart sank. I felt ill. And I wanted to cry. I called the volunteers and asked what happened and they were in shock. They said no way-- they appeared so happy. I didn't know what to do or even how to reply at that moment. As I sat there for what felt like an hour, I finally received another message that said "Just kidding. Thanks for everything. She loved it." In that moment, I was the one who felt the relief. He got me good!



On a visit to see the keepers at Big Sable, I once met a family who told us their story started at Big Sable where they had gotten engaged 16 years prior to this visit. They return every single year to climb the tower. While we chatted and listened to their story, their three children were busy picking out souvenirs and talking about how much they love the lighthouse too.

Not only do we stage engagements, but we also have weddings at some of our lights. Sometimes couples don't want to get married in the lighthouse, they just want access for pictures. Sometimes it's a quick plan, schedule and done, while other times they ask for recommendations on where to stay, rain locations, photographers, places to eat, etc. I almost start to feel like part of their special day, and I absolutely LOVE weddings and love stories.



Kim and Paul  
by Elizabeth Cadwell Photography.



The whole reason we got married at White River is because that is the first lighthouse Tristan took me to when I moved up here. It was in winter so it looked totally different from our wedding in August! The first time I saw it not covered in snow I jokingly said "I want to get married here one day" and well, the rest is history! Lighthouses are a huge part of our life. As I'm sure you know light keepers were essentially the first Coast Guard and so Tristan is drawn to them as he is active Duty Coast Guard.

~ The Foegelle's



While I am typically not present for the weddings or proposals, I do enjoy being part of the process, assisting these happy couples with continuing their love stories. Even better, I love when they call me after the event or send a message with pictures attached and thanks for helping them make their memories.

I like to imagine that these moments were so special that one day they will all come back and be keepers of the light. Sounds like a real-life romance novel, doesn't it? I hope the lighthouse stands as a representation for them that they can withstand storms and challenges along their journeys for years to come.

We could not have asked for a more perfect place to have our wedding. The volunteers who were there on our wedding day were so warm and friendly. All of our friends and family loved going to the top of the lighthouse after the ceremony. Little Sable Point Lighthouse will always have a special place in our hearts. Thank you so much for letting us celebrate our special day there! ~ Steve and Sarah



Stacey and Michael Bacha wedding at Little Sable Point Lighthouse.



A tower view wedding set.

*Four lights, one mission,  
and a million memories!*

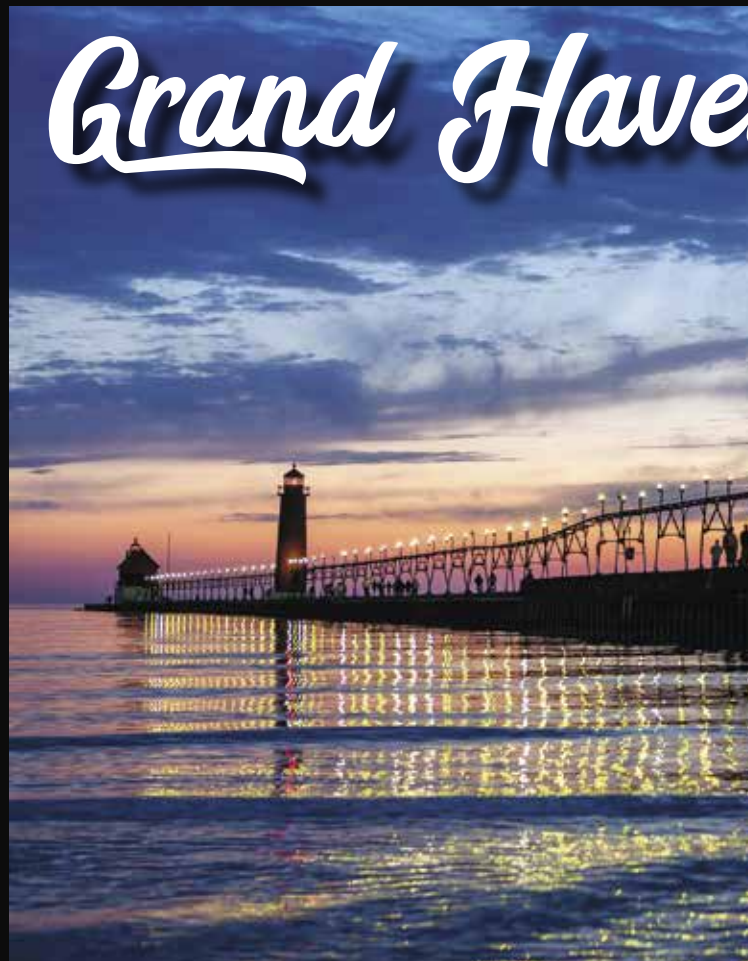


Someone once asked me, when did I develop a love for lighthouses? How could I not have a love for lighthouses growing up in Grand Haven, Michigan? As a youngster, my experience was that every community along the lakeshore had a lighthouse with a fog signal that you could hear on those overcast days, even if you lived in town. My memories of the Grand Haven lighthouse include fishing for perch off the pier with my grandparents. Yes, grandma made me wear a life jacket, attaching a rope to it and tying it off to one of

# Grand Haven



Photo Credit:  
Tri-Cities Historical Museum



the catwalk supports. And I remember, after a long afternoon of fishing out on the big lake, my relief at finally seeing the pier and lighthouse and knowing we were almost home, safe and sound.

We would take out-of-town guests down to the beach to show off this impressive structure and walk on the pier with friends to admire both the tower and the fog signal building. My lighthouse was the best! It had two lights, a fog signal building and a catwalk for the keeper who had to tend the light in stormy weather. It wasn't until several years later that I discovered that the tower that stands today was not the first lighthouse to have served our lakeshore community.

The Port of Grand Haven had its first lighthouse built on the beach in 1839. It consisted of a five-bedroom cottage for the keeper with a separate light tower. The tower was only 30 feet tall, and its lantern used eleven Argand lamps and 14-inch reflectors. Within a few years, the error of the location became apparent; and a seawall was built to protect the light tower and keeper's quarters. Erosion continued, and in 1852 a late fall storm took out the seawall. The storms persisted and, although ice banks slowed the process, less than a week later, on December 17, 1852, the tower and cottage collapsed. The Port of Grand Haven was without a beacon for the next three years.

In 1855 a new lighthouse was built on top of the bluff, 150 feet above the beach on the south side of the harbor. It was a stone dwelling with a tower at its south end. The tower was equipped with a fourth-order Fresnel lens. It had a general visibility of 18 miles and a visibility of 25 miles in clear weather. Captain Jedidiah Gray was the first keeper of this light. In 1856 a rotating light was installed which was regulated by a clockwork mechanism that produced a flash every 1.5 minutes. Seamen were guided by this beacon for the next 50 years.

In 1857 some major harbor renovations took place along the river channel to prevent erosion and sand deposits. A short pier extended into the lake from the south side of the harbor entrance. In 1875 a wooden fog signal building was built at the lake end of this pier. As this pier was lengthened over the years, the fog signal building was moved to the new end of the pier farther out into the lake each time.

# Grand Haven Lighthouse

By Peter Manting



When the south pier was completed to its present length in 1895, a light was added to the lakeward side of the fog signal. This light, equipped with a sixth-order lens, became the front range light. The bluff light remained the main port beacon until 1905. In the fall of 1904, a 52-foot steel tower was placed on the end of the south pier; and on January 12, 1905, the Fresnel lens was moved from the bluff tower to the new tower. Everyone, it seemed, knew of the switch except the ships' captains, who had not been notified. When the Crosby and Goodrich steamers came into port that evening, the captains were totally confused and would have grounded the steamers except they were familiar with the port. When the boats docked, the air was blue as the captains voiced their opinions about the current situation.

In 1907, the new 52-foot lighthouse tower was moved some 600 feet to its current position, and the smaller lantern was incorporated onto the fog signal building where it remains today.

In 1910 the Bluff Lights brick tower was torn down and replaced by a brick addition to the living quarters. It served as the keeper's residence for the lighthouse keeper and his family until 1939 when the Lighthouse Service became part of the Coast Guard. In 1956, the 13-room structure was converted to apartments and continues as a residence today.

Due to the large amount of ice buildup on the Grand Haven pier, a wooden catwalk was constructed in 1895 to enable the lighthouse keeper to fulfill his duties during foul weather. In 1922, the original wood catwalk structure was replaced with one made of steel, and the fog signal building was covered in corrugated metal sheeting to help prevent weather damage.

In 1969 the lights were automated. When the Coast Guard planned to remove the catwalk in 1987, local citizen Edward Zenko and his daughter Terry spearheaded a "Save the Catwalk Committee" which raised \$133,000 to finance the repair of several of the catwalk's metal supports and the installation of the lights. The lights were modeled after a light found on the USCGS Escanaba that once called Grand Haven its home port and were turned on in 1998.

In 2016 the City of Grand Haven was required to remove the catwalk so that the Corp of Engineers could resurface the pier. Funds were raised and the catwalk was removed, reworked, refurbished and repainted. The catwalk was reinstalled on the pier during the past summer. On September 30, 2019, the residents of Grand Haven celebrated the completion of this three-year project with the high school band, an air show, and the relighting of the catwalk.

The Grand Haven Lighthouse Conservatory is now the caretaker of this lighthouse, and they are currently raising money for interior rehabilitation in the hopes of opening the light tower and fog signal building to the public in 2021.

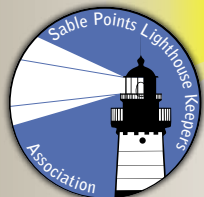


**Bibliography: Seibold, David H. "The History of Grand Haven Lighthouse and Pier." Grand Haven Lighthouse Conservancy ([ghlighthouse.com](http://ghlighthouse.com)).**

# Volunteer

## SPOTLIGHT

by Rachel Bendele



*Volunteers are the life blood of the SPLKA organization. We recognize all of our volunteers and say THANK YOU for all that you do!!*

Often in our newsletters you read about the volunteers who come and enjoy spending a week or two working at one of our lighthouses. But we also have some very important volunteers who work a day here and a day there throughout the year. These are the men and women that live, or have a cottage, near one of our lights. They are a very important part of our program because, without these volunteers, the lighthouses would have to close for a day while we transition, when one group of resident keepers move out and the new keepers move in.



You may hear day keepers referenced as the “Breakers” for the Ludington North Breakwater Light and the “Seekers” for Little Sable Point Lighthouse. At these lights, the day keepers cover every Monday for the transition days, and, in the past, also covered a second day so that our resident keepers could have a day to rest or enjoy our beautiful area. The number of hours these groups were available to give decreased in 2019, causing us to scale back to one day a week with the hope of going back up to at least a day and a half for 2020. This will allow the resident keepers an afternoon off to relax and explore.

**At Ludington North Breakwater** this past year, we had a smaller crew who were able to cover the light on Mondays. We were down a few volunteers, due to injuries or other obligations that took away from their time at the lights. But with the help of the following people, we were still able to staff the lighthouse every Monday. Some of these volunteers also filled in for cancellations or when we needed extra help. Others assisted with our bus days or Friday Night Live events.



### THANK YOU to the Breakers!

Kim St. George  
Milo Beman  
Patrick O'Hare  
Ralph Kruska

Michael Blair  
Gary Hearing  
Carol Evans  
Karen Murany

**At Little Sable Point Lighthouse**, the Seekers covered Mondays this year, and many of them filled in for some emergency cancellations. We are hoping to be able to cover a day and a half at Little Sable in 2020 so that the resident keepers there can have an afternoon to rest or explore. Several of the Seekers also volunteer to keep the tower open for our “Night at the Lights” concerts at Little Sable or open the tower for after-hours photo shoots, engagement events, group tours, etc. In addition, this group does beach cleanup around Little Sable Point and helps raise money to donate to SPLKA to cover the cost of our activity books for children.



**BUS DAYS at BIG SABLE**  
MAKE THE LIGHTHOUSE  
'ACCESSIBLE TO ALL' WITH HELP  
FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS!!



### THANK YOU to the Seekers who covered Little Sable!

Carl & Mort Wiegand  
Laverne & Diane Bailey  
Dave & Mary Jo Dietrich  
Any & Linda Kator  
Mary Jane Saxton  
Pat & Bev Cavera  
Connie Bruce  
Marcia Martin  
Kay Hannah  
Yvonne Kessler  
Claire Dennison

Pat Michney  
Stephen Kantner  
Kathy Grantz  
Sue Casey  
John Stivers  
Marcella Wade  
Mary Haas  
Kerri Snyder  
Lana Hall  
Jean Adams  
Tom Barkel

**At White River Light Station**, we have day keepers who relieve the curator for some time away or help cover while he attends meetings or fulfills other obligations. These volunteers also assist with special events. White River Light used to be closed on Mondays, but we received a lot of requests to have it open. We knew when we made that happen it would be important for Matt to get away and have a couple of days off each week. As with most of us, his preferred days off are Saturday and Sunday; but it's not always easy to get volunteers on the weekends.

**We want to thank all the volunteers who filled in to cover the weekends at White River Light Station.**

**THANK YOU!**

Susan Symons  
MaryAnn Correll  
Susan Miller  
Dick & Pat Voetberg  
Laurie Mason

Dave Dietrich  
Abigail Vermeulen  
Hope Owens  
Tom & Kathy Robinson

**Lastly and certainly not least, we have day keepers that come in and help with our Big Sable bus days.** Some of these volunteers also work at our other lighthouses while others travel in just to spend the day helping us meet our mission of making the lighthouse accessible. Without the bus days, there would be many visitors that wouldn't ever be able to manage the 1.8 miles out to Big Sable. We need an additional five volunteers for each scheduled bus day to accommodate the visitors and busses.

**THANK YOU to those who help with our Big Sable Bus Days!**

Dick & Pat Voetberg  
Carol Evans  
Judy Olson  
Patrick O'hare  
Bill & Shirley Mitchell  
Julie Babcock  
Irene Mattis  
Michael Blair

Bill McBeth  
Brenda Glerum  
Kathy Bloomfield  
Dave Dietrich  
Denis Marshall  
Lenore Janman  
Mark Hallenbeck  
Ken Reeves

**WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER?**

*I believe that the lighthouses tie us to history. We can imagine, think and reflect about the times when they were first built and why they were needed. We can share that experience with all the visitors. It keeps the ancient history in the present. Most volunteers and visitors feel a close tie to the lighthouses and their history. -- Milo*

As you can imagine, in every tourist area there are many, many activities always going on that require volunteers, and yet these day keepers consistently come to help at our lighthouses. They can work as often or as little as they wish throughout the season, so they choose the days that work in their schedules. These dedicated volunteers are a VERY important part of our team!

**Thank you, day keepers! We appreciate all your service to our lights!**

**Welcome New Board Member**

**LARRY STULZ**



**Larry Stulz**  
SPLKA Director

Larry Stulz was elected for his first term on the SPLKA Board of Directors at the September annual meeting. Larry is from the Cincinnati area and has been a SPLKA volunteer for five years. He has worked as a volunteer keeper at three of our four lighthouses.

Retired from the US Air Force in 2012 after 37 years, Larry now considers himself a "professional volunteer" working with many organizations. He learned about SPLKA's keeper program while volunteering at the Dayton Air Force Museum with current board member Bob Baltzer, who also volunteers there. As a member of the SPLKA Board, Larry hopes to work in the area of recruiting and retention. Larry's term will start in January, 2020.

**Welcome Returning Board Member**

**TED ROBINSON**



**Ted Robinson**  
SPLKA Treasurer

Ted Robinson was elected for a second three-year term to the SPLKA Board of Directors at the September annual meeting. Ted is the great-grandson of Captain William Robinson, the first keeper of the White River Light Station. Ted is the former president of the Friends of White River Board of Directors. After Ted's business consulting work moved him around the country and after finally settling down in St. Louis, Missouri, Ted and his wife Patty have retired to the Montague area. Even though Ted grew up in the metro Detroit area, he developed a love for lighthouses and has fond memories of summering with his grandparents in Manistee, Michigan. Ted's grandfather had followed the family tradition and for many years was the captain of the Manistee Coast Guard Station. Ted is also active in the Whitehall/Montague Rotary Club and enjoys helping his daughters with home maintenance projects. For the past two years, Ted has served as treasurer of the SPLKA Board of Directors.



# Shipwreck at the White River ~Follow up

By Peter Manting

This is a follow-up to the story "A Ghost Ship Returns: But Which One," published in the June issue of the SPLKA Beacon, by Valerie VanHeest. Valerie had identified the shipwreck as the 124-foot **Contest** which had missed the channel and run up on the beach by the White River Light Station during a storm in 1882. She posted on Facebook that, most likely, when part of the wreck was uncovered in 1974, it had been hauled up and put on display in front of the White River Light Station.

That piece is still there today. A few people had responded that they didn't think that was the case but couldn't remember where it had come from. My interest in shipwrecks led me to do a little further investigating on this subject. While researching yet another shipwreck whose story I wanted to tell, I came across the answer to the question on where the piece of shipwreck at White River had come from.



\*The Plimsoll line is a marking on a ship's side showing the limit of submersion legal under various conditions. Samuel Plimsoll (1824 - 1898) was an English politician and social reformer, now best remembered for having devised the Plimsoll line.

An article by Esther Jamieson in the White Lake Observer dated July 13, 1977, gives us the answer. Ms. Jamieson writes, "Last October a piece of shipwreck was retrieved from Lake Michigan at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse near Shelby, MI. E.F. Porter of Okemos, MI, and 13 others assisted in the effort. The salvaged portion may have been part of a wrecked schooner. The stem, of heavy oak, 12

feet long, has Roman Numerals V and VI which could be Plimsoll\* markings. There are heavy spikes and one heavy chain in perfect condition. The wreck was offered first to the State Historical Society, then to the Dawson Museum of Detroit. Since neither museum could use the remains, a report of the salvage was written in Telescope, a marine magazine. It was in this publication that Richard Gebhart, curator of the White River Museum, learned of the retrieved shipwreck which



was available. Last fall Richard Hain and Vern Donley of the Fruitland Township Park Commission using a tractor, fork lift and truck, moved the heavy wreckage to the museum grounds. A concrete base was prepared for the precious marine memorial."

The mystery of where the wreckage was found has been solved, but now this opens up another mystery. We now need to know which one of the many shipwrecks in and around Little Sable Point Lighthouse this piece could be from. As I have found, in several years of researching shipwrecks, one question answered usually leads to more questions that need to be answered.

# U.S. Lighthouse Society's Passport Program

SPLKA sells official Lighthouse passports in our gift shops for \$15.00 each or you can order yours today by calling the office at 231-845-7417.

We have the stamps at each of our lights to get you started in the passport program.



The Lighthouse Passport Program provides enthusiasts the opportunity to help preserve lighthouse as well as a wonderful way to keep a pictorial history of their lighthouse adventures. Small donations made by Passport holders generates thousands of dollars for lighthouse restoration and preservation projects. By joining the **FREE** Passport Club you become part of a large group of individuals and families seeking unique Lighthouse Passport Stamps as a fun and educational activity.

**JOIN THE PASSPORT CLUB!**

Find more information online by visiting:  
<https://uslhs.org/fun/passport-club>



## Capital Campaign Update:

On September 15 at the SPLKA annual membership meeting, the SPLKA Board of Directors detailed their vision of the many preservation projects which they are planning for now and into the future for our castles by the lakeshore. These projects meet our mission to preserve the lighthouses of which we are caretakers. Phase 1 of the Capital Campaign has a price tag of \$225,000.

Phase 1 includes repairing the 139 holes in the steel cladding on the Big Sable Lighthouse tower. Once the cladding is repaired, the tower will need to be painted.

Phase 1 also includes funding a historic structure report for the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. A historic structure report provides documentary, graphic, and physical information about a property's history and existing condition. Broadly recognized as an effective part of preservation planning, a historic structure report also addresses management or owner goals for the use or re-use of the property. It provides a thoughtfully considered argument for selecting the most appropriate approach to treatment, prior to the commencement of work, and outlines a scope of recommended work. The report serves as an important guide for all changes made to a historic property

during a project - repair, rehabilitation, or restoration - and can also provide information for maintenance procedures. Finally, it records the findings of research and investigation, as well as the processes of physical work, for future researchers.

At the start of Phase 1, the SPLKA Capital Campaign Fund on deposit at the Mason County Community Foundation had a balance of \$93,000. It was announced that an anonymous donor had stepped forward and would match gifts given up to \$20,000 by October 31. On that date, our members and citizens of the Ludington community had donated \$25,420 toward Phase 1. On November 1, \$45,420.00 was added to the SPLKA Capital Campaign Fund, raising the balance to \$138,420. That total represents 61% of our goal to fund Phase 1. The SPLKA board and staff want to thank everyone who contributed and helped to realize the match amount. Thank you for helping us continue to meet our mission to preserve our lighthouses keep them accessible to all. Please, give again if you can so that Phase 1 can be completed as soon as possible. Funds can be donated to Phase 1 via our web site [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org) or mailed to **SPLKA, P.O. Box 673, Ludington, MI 49431.**

SPLKA  
*Annual  
 Dinner  
 Meeting*  
 2019



The 2019 SPLKA annual dinner meeting was held this year at the United Methodist Church in Ludington. 109 members and guests were in attendance for the meeting. The meeting was chaired by SPLKA board president, Bob Baltzer. President Baltzer explained that this year's dinner was free to the membership because donors were recruited by board members to sponsor each table. This year, tables were sponsored by Flora Craft, Ludington Yacht Sales Inc., the Bob Baltzer family, Big Sable Point Tour 7 Keepers, the SPLKA Board of Directors, and Richard and Kathy Talsma.

The business part of the evening included a report by board secretary, Roger Pashby, who presented and reviewed the minutes from the 2018 SPLKA annual meeting. The minutes were received and approved by the membership. Board treasurer Ted Robinson reported that our "Credits equal



our debits." We are financially strong and are forging ahead as we finish up a successful 2019 season. Executive director Peter Manting highlighted some of the events that have taken place this past season. He reported that a new roof had been installed on the White River Light Station in May and thanked Jim and Debbie Hardie for their hard work and innovative design in the refurbishing of the interior of the Little Sable residence. Peter reported that SPLKA had been the recipient of several generous grants which had enabled the completion of the door project at Big Sable and the roof at the White River Light Station. Board president Bob Baltzer thanked all of the staff for their unselfish efforts for making SPLKA work. Bob presented outgoing board member Lenore Janman, who was retiring after nine years of involvement with the organization, with a Todd Reed photograph of Big Sable Lighthouse. Bob expressed the sentiments of all of us when he said Lenore will be greatly missed from the Board.

With two open positions on the SPLKA Board of directors to fill, the membership elected Ted Robinson to a second three-year term and Larry Stulz to his first three-year term on the SPLKA board.

The program for the evening was presented by board vice president Al Cocconi. Al used a PowerPoint program to illustrate for the membership the projects identified by the board and staff to be undertaken during the next ten years. The estimated cost for the completion of these projects is approximately two million dollars. Al described the strategy that the SPLKA board and executive director will be implementing to identify potential donors who will be contacted personally and given a presentation outlining our needs. It is hoped that the potential donors will be brought on board to support

our lighthouses and the vision of SPLKA.

Executive Director Manting then followed up with a challenge to the membership. Manting said that the two million dollars' worth of projects would be broken down into phases in order of need and importance for the preservation of our lighthouses. Phase 1 of our



new Capital Campaign will be to fund \$225,000 worth of projects. These projects include repairing and repainting the steel cladding on the Big Sable tower and funding a historic structures report for the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Director Manting reported that an anonymous donor had pledged to match dollar-for-dollar up to \$20,000 given by our membership and community to fund Phase 1 of the Capital Campaign. He also reported that the deadline for the match was six weeks away on October 31.

Both Director Manting and board member Cocconi fielded questions from the audience about the presentation and the challenge. President Baltzer then dismissed the meeting stating that SPLKA is looking forward to a great 2020 season. Bob said it was inspiring to see such a large turnout and invited everyone back again for next year's annual meeting.



## 2019 LIGHTHOUSE OPERATIONS INFORMATION & FUN FACTS

	BIG SABLE	LUDINGTON BREAKWATER	LITTLE SABLE POINT	WHITE RIVER LIGHT
# of Climbs	17,956	7,513	24,165	5,038
Climbs +/- 2017	268	-1,689	-798	65
Busiest Day of the Week	1. Saturday	1. Sunday	1. Saturday	1. Saturday
	2. Sunday	2. Saturday	2. Sunday	2. Sunday
	3. Friday	3. Friday	3. Friday	3. Friday
Busiest Time of Day (Peak)	11AM - 2 PM (12 PM)	11AM - 3 PM (1 PM)	11AM - 4 PM (1 PM)	11AM - 3 PM (12 PM)
Busiest Days of the Season	July 11 - \$4432	Sept 1 - \$4151	Sept 8 - \$2892	July 6 - \$783
	July 27 - \$4013	Aug 24 - \$3170	Sept 21 - \$2496	July 27 - \$703
	Aug 8 - \$3696	Aug 31 - \$3101	July 27 - \$2492	Sept 1 - \$703
	Sept 1 - \$3512	Aug 22 - \$2528	Sept 14 - \$2132	May 26 - \$618
	Sept 21 - \$3379	Aug 25 - \$2498	Aug 31 - \$1984	Oct 6 - \$584
Slowest Day of the Week	Wednesday	Thursday	Wednesday	Monday
Slowest Day of the Year	Oct. 1 - \$18	May 29 - \$172	May 30 - \$213	Sept 10 - \$37.50
Gift Shop Sales +/- 2018	\$19,924.22	(\$4,827.40)	\$10,150.35	\$1,791.04
Tower Tour Sales +/- 2018	\$1,895	(\$5,973)	(\$2,909)	\$893
School Groups	617 Youth/140 Adults	150 Youth/40 Adults	723 Youth/183 Adults	38 Youth/24 Adults
Paid Group Tours	—	—	55 Adults	118 Adults

### IN 2019 IN THE OPERATIONS SCHEDULE FOR ALL FOUR LIGHTHOUSES WE HAD:

- A combined 171 bedroom spaces or scheduling slots for resident volunteers - filled by 219 volunteers
- 23 Cancellations
- 31 New Keepers
- 1 Volunteer who served 5 weeks, 1 who served 4 weeks, 8 who served 3 weeks
- 26 Daykeepers who helped at Little Sable on Mondays
- 9 Daykeepers who helped at Ludington Breakwater
- 11 Daykeepers at White River Light
- 32 Volunteers for Bus Days at BSP
- 15 Volunteers for Night at the Lights

## Winter Writers Series 2020

The Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association, along with the Mason County Historical Society and Port of Ludington Maritime Museum, will again sponsor the Winter Writers Series. The series begins on Thursday evening January 16 at 7:00pm. The first speaker in the series will be James Jansen, a local Ludington historian. James has spoken to us previously, prior to leading us around the city on an 1890's pub crawl, and then telling us stories of the street names in Ludington. He has two new Ludington history presentations, and, as of this writing, has not yet decided on which to present.

On February 20, Pamela Cameron, a retired educator and librarian from Kalamazoo, will talk about her book, *Sport, Ship Dog of the Great Lakes*. The story is based on Sport, the dog who lived on the Great Lakes lighthouse tender ship Hyacinth. This book was recognized as the best historical children's book for 2019 by the Historical Society of Michigan at their conference in September. Hear the story about the fascinating research that Pamela did while she was writing the book. She has many historical documents and actual pictures of Sport and his life aboard the Hyacinth. "In this beautifully illustrated children's

book based on historical documents and photographs, readers share in Sport's adventures while discovering the various ways lighthouse tender ships helped keep the lake safe for others."\*

The third program in the series is scheduled for March 20. Dr. Bill Lucas from the University of Michigan will present his Michigan Lighthouse Legacy Project. Dr. Lucas has written or commissioned other artists to write fanfares\*\* for Michigan lighthouses. More than 40 fanfares have been composed for this project. Dr. Lucas has assembled professional brass players to record the fanfares. When the CD is produced, copies will be donated to Michigan lighthouse organizations like SPLKA for raising money and awareness for preservation of lighthouses. SPLKA is especially interested in the forthcoming CD as fanfares have been written for all four of the lighthouses under our care. The CD is a multimedia presentation that will appeal to all lighthouse enthusiasts.

The Winter Writers Series is hosted at the United Methodist Church in Ludington, Michigan. There is a \$5.00 charge to attend which covers expenses and goes to support both SPLKA and the Mason County Historical Society.

\* From Amazon.com

\*\* A fanfare is a short ceremonial tune or flourish played on brass instruments, typically to introduce something or someone important

# LEAVE A PRINT IN THE SAND

**"LOVE YA TO THE MOON AND BACK, CHRISTY GRAVES-GAVAGAN"  
"JULIA'S JOURNEY ON THE ROAD TO A NEW LIFE 5-2-14"  
"WE MADE IT DAD! CJ, JOE, BETH, TONY & KIDS"  
"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE, MARV AND DONNA HELDER"**

These are some of the inscriptions on the new walkway around the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. The Leave a Print in the Sand campaign helps SPLKA raise funds for capital preservation projects identified by the SPLKA Board of Directors at all four of our lighthouses. Since SPLKA started offering customized walkway boards in July, 2014, at the Big Sable Lighthouse, we have raised over \$36,000 which has been added to the SPLKA Capital Campaign Fund on deposit at the Mason County Community Foundation. Since then we have also made boards available at the Little Sable Lighthouse and the White River Light Station. A total of 577 boards at Big Sable, 62 at Little Sable and 20 at the White River Light Station have been donated and installed around the lights.

Purchasing a personalized walkway board is a fun way to contribute to the preservation of our lighthouses. These boards are becoming the new walkway around Big Sable, a connecting walkway to the gift trailer at Little Sable, and part of the wheel chair ramp to the keeper's workshop at the White River Light Station. The cost of an engraved board is \$100. Each board can be engraved with up to 25 characters on a line, including commas and spaces, with a two-line maximum.

Whether you are documenting your travels, **"2011-LIFE'S AN ADVENTURE, CLIMBED ALL 130 STEPS C&G"**, **"SURVIVED THE DEATH MARCH"**; remembering time spent at one of the lights, **"HERE OUR SPIRITS SOAR AS EAGLES, THOM AND NANCY JONES"**; memorializing a beloved pet, **"GRETCHEN-THE BEST CAT EVER"**; or honoring a loved one, **"A SON'S FIRST HERO, A DAUGHTER'S FIRST LOVE, OUR DAD FOREVER"**, your personalized walkway board will be one more plank in the path across the sand. Strolling the path and reading the inscriptions is an enjoyable pastime to pursue on your next visit to a SPLKA site.

Brochures are available for downloading and printing on our web site at [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org) or by calling the SPLKA office at 231-845-7417. Your addition of another board on one of our walkways supports the mission of SPLKA to preserve our magnificent lighthouses for generations to come.

Link to  
downloadable  
brochure for  
"Leave a Print  
in the Sand"



**Help us preserve all of SPLKA's Lighthouses and Towers by purchasing a Trex® board. These boards are available to be placed at Big Sable, Little Sable or the White River Lighthouse.**

## Year-End *Thanks Giving*

As the end of the year approaches and a new year begins, we take time to look back and send our thanks to all of our 2019 donors who funded our maintenance projects, educational materials, our general fund and our Capital Campaign Fund. We could not fulfill our mission to preserve, promote, educate the public, and to make our lighthouses accessible to all without our generous donors.

Grants were received this year from the Leonard and Edna K. Blomdahl Fund advised by the White Lake Community Fund of the Community Foundation of Muskegon, the White Lake Area Women Making a Difference and Fruitland Township which provided funding for a new roof for the White River Light Station.

The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation completed our fundraising efforts for the forty interior and exterior doors at Big Sable. With their gift, we were able to finish this project on schedule.

The West Shore Bank, the Seekers of Little Sable, and the Friends of White River granted funds this year that sponsored the printing of the 2019 SPLKA activity books, making them free to all of the students who visit any of our lighthouses.

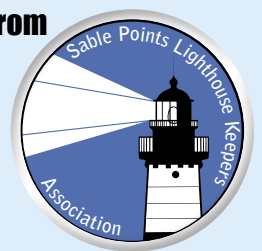
The Gerald and Dorothy Heslipen Fund of the Mason County Community Foundation, the JSJ Corporation, and several local businesses granted funds for our Summer Music at the Lights programing.

The new metal photographs for Little Sable were financed through a grant from the Oceana Youth Fund and the Little Point Sable-Arts for Oceana County Fund from the Community Foundation for Oceana County.

It was reported in the January, 2019, issue of the Beacon that SPLKA would be focusing our fundraising efforts to fund Phase 1 of our Capital Campaign projects. The SPLKA Board of Directors had identified the tower repair and painting at Big Sable along with a Historic Structures Report to be provided for Big Sable as our focus for fundraising efforts for the coming year. All gifts toward this ambitious project would be deposited in the SPLKA Capital Campaign Fund on deposit at the Mason County Community Foundation. The funds required to complete Phase 1 of our Capital Campaign projects are \$225,000. The fund balance as of January 1, 2019, was \$57,000. Because of your generosity, our fund balance is now \$138,699. What a testament to our membership and the community that has sacrificially supported SPLKA in meeting the goals for Phase 1.

The SPLKA board and staff thank everyone who has given generously this past year. Without your support, we would not have accomplished so many projects in 2019. In this coming year, we are counting on your continued support of SPLKA and its ongoing and future projects. **THANK YOU! HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

**THANK YOU** from



# Renew Your 2020 SPLKA Membership Today!

Your support of the Sable Points 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 2020 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.

2020 membership rates are as follows: Associate member \$30.00, Individual member \$60.00, Couple/Family \$100.00, Head Keeper \$175.00, Business

Sponsor \$250.00, Individual Life Time membership \$750.00, Couple/ Family Life Time membership \$1,000.00. The levels and amounts are all the same as the last four seasons.

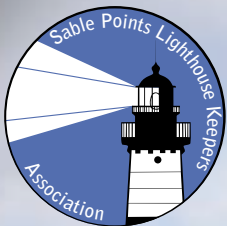
Your partnership is sincerely appreciated, and we couldn't do this without you. If you have already renewed your 2020 membership please consider giving the gift of membership to a friend or relative who would be interested in joining our cause to restoring, promoting and educating the public and making our castles along the lakeshore accessible to all.

## Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

### MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2020

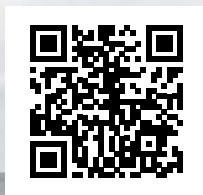
associate membership. . . . .	\$30
individual membership. . . . .	\$60
couple/family membership. . . . .	\$100
head keeper. . . . .	\$175
business/corporate sponsor. . . . .	\$250
lifetime individual membership. . .	\$750
couple/family lifetime membership. . .	\$1,000

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



### Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association Is on Facebook!

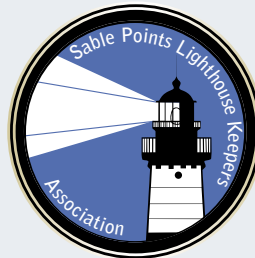
Search "Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association" and **LIKE US!** Or, scan the QR code with your smartphone!



<https://www.facebook.com/SPLKA.org/>

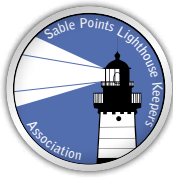
Need reminders of our Bus Days or other special events? Keep up to date with all the SPLKA happenings by visiting our Facebook page.

## 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

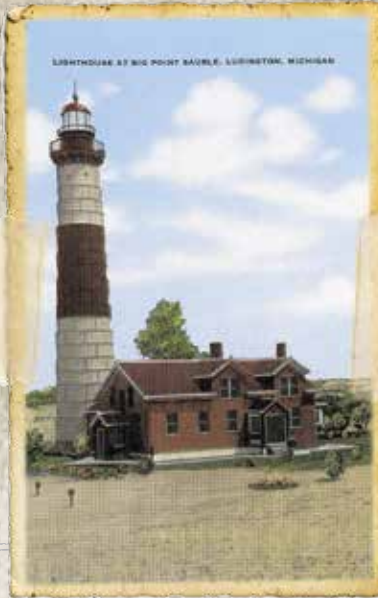
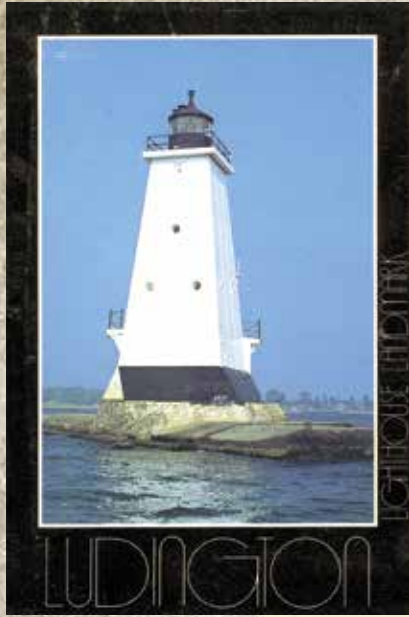
70-½ or older to transfer up to \$100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to a non-profit organization, including the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association, without having to recognize the distribution as income.



# Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

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