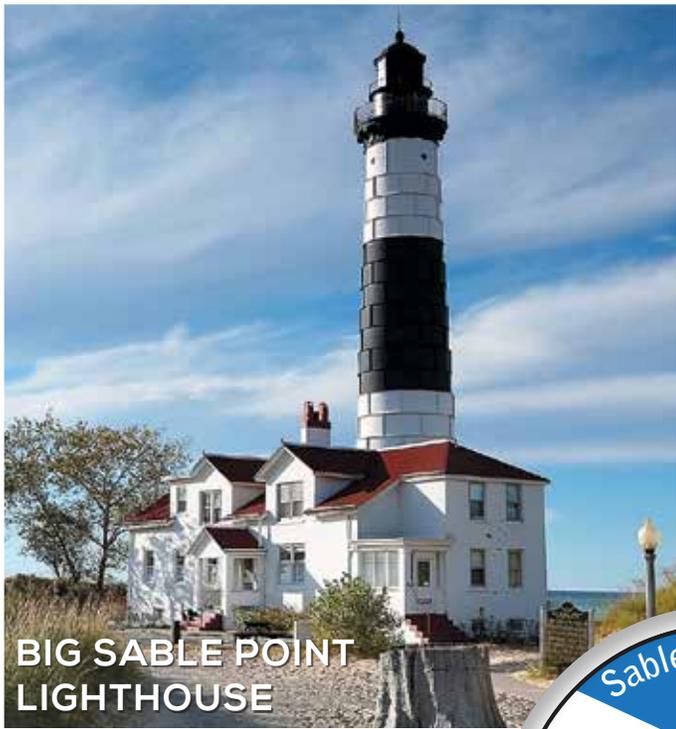
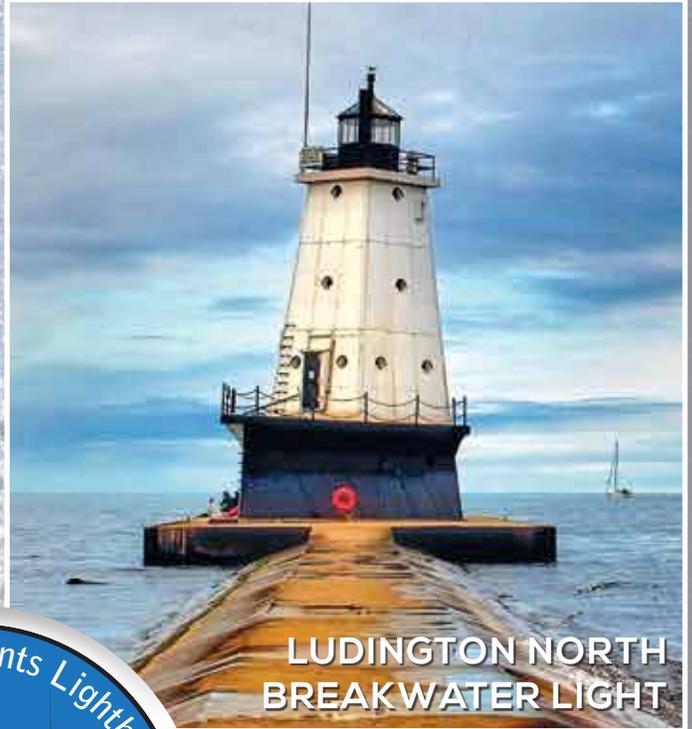


Sable Points BEACON

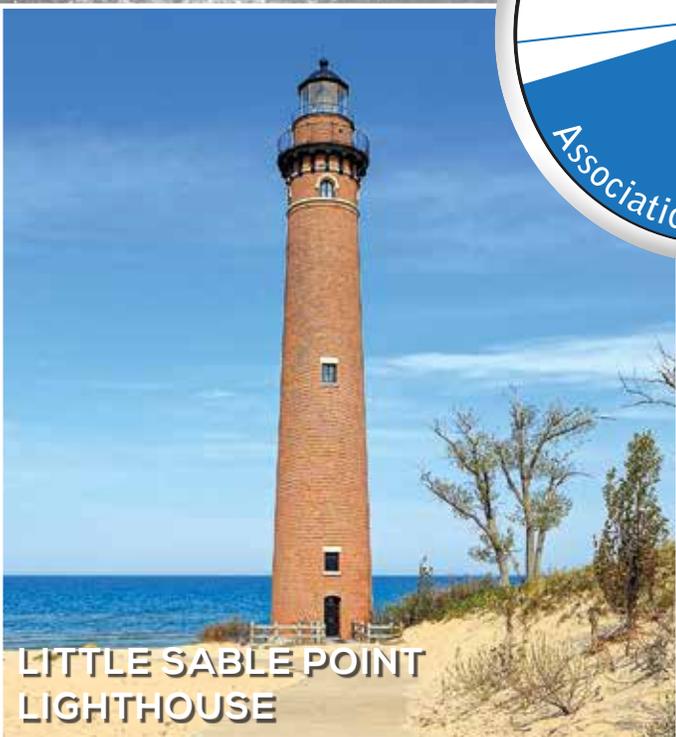
NEWSLETTER • JUNE 2020



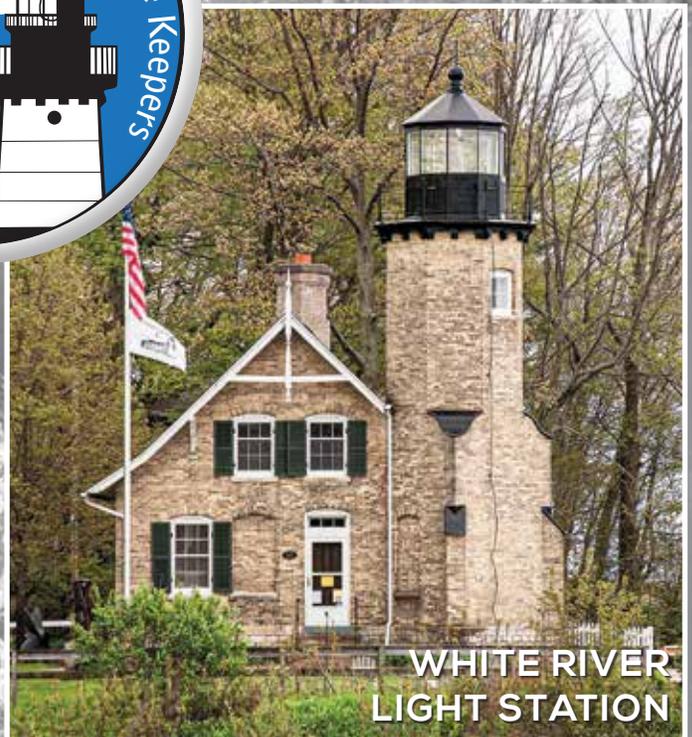
**BIG SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



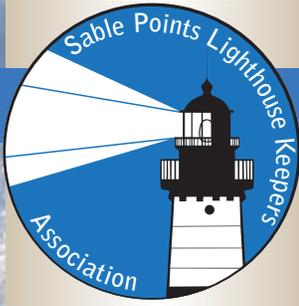
**LUDINGTON NORTH
BREAKWATER LIGHT**



**LITTLE SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE**



**WHITE RIVER
LIGHT STATION**



Letter from the President

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As I compose this letter - my first as president of SPLKA- I have several thoughts running through my mind. The first is a comment my wife, Nancy, made recently: "You certainly picked an interesting time to head the Board." The second is the ancient oriental curse, "May you live in interesting times." The third and dominating thought is that we have much to be thankful for. Namely, you, our volunteers, and our staff. Without either, we as an organization would be lost. So, before we go any further, thank you to all of our volunteers. This is YOUR association; we only attempt to steer it. To our staff and volunteers, thank you for your tireless work each and every day.

We certainly do live in interesting times! At the beginning of the year, we all thought that dealing with record lake levels would be the challenge of the year. Who could have possibly imagined that we'd be dealing with a public health emergency that shuttered not just our facilities, but nearly the entire country! Even as I write this, your board and staff are actively involved in addressing both to ensure continuity, sustainability, and safety for everyone involved. Our staff has proven they are ahead of the curve, and, collectively, your board is supporting them in every way needed.

This isn't about our facilities. It's about us. Our lighthouses don't care. They've seen it all before. If they could only talk, they'd regale us with tales from the 1880s and 1980s when lake levels were just as high; they'd tell us about smallpox, the Spanish Flu, H1N1, polio, storms, shipwrecks, wars and so much more. They'd tell us to stay informed, but not panic. Our lighthouses are permanent, stoic, and steadfast; and they suggest that we follow their lead. Our association is not just about buildings - it is about everything these landmarks symbolize and represent. They respectfully demand that we step up to the challenge and shine on as they have for all these years.

Let's look forward. By now you are well aware of our capital campaign. It is progressing, but not as quickly as this impatient author would like. That said, I intend to maintain focus and keep the bar set high so that we can better deliver on our vision and mission. Our executive director has proven to be a master at grant writing and has been successful with many applications. Your help with the identification of potential donors to the campaign fund has paid dividends, and Peter and I ask for more of these! We're getting closer to having our repairs fully funded, but we can't let up yet.

A key part of our mission is education. To that end, I have asked the board and a former board member to expand our educational outreach. We have some exciting concepts in development, and I hope we can report on new programs - for children AND adults - in the coming months. Along these lines, I know we have many, many educators, active and retired, among our membership. Would you like to be a part of this success story? We'd love to have you bring your ideas and participate on our education committee.

We are also starting a new committee focused on marketing. Not sales, but marketing: getting our message out to a wider audience, telling the public about our mission, programs, and membership. Why keep this wonderful resource to ourselves? Let's get the word out! Perhaps you have experience in this area? Or just an interest? We'd love to have interested members participate in this committee, too!

I firmly believe that we have a tremendous opportunity before us. Our association is stable and strong and positioned to take us well into the future. No other organization in the U.S. can say they have restored and opened as many lighthouses to the public as we have. Let's show everyone that we are the world-class organization that we know we are!
Please join me in praying for a healthy and successful 2020 season!

Respectfully,

Al Cocconi

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.

It is my hope that, by the time this newsletter is printed and in your hands, the world will be somewhat back to normal. Last season, when we began to plan for 2020, we couldn't have imagined the COVID-19 virus and how its global effects would impact our organization.

As I write, we remain under the stay-at-home order. Planning is under way to open three of our four lights in time for the Memorial Day weekend. We are hoping to be back at work at the lighthouses on May 1. If all goes well, we will open the Big Sable Point Lighthouse, the Little Point Sable Lighthouse and the White River Light Station and Museum on May 22.

SPLKA was informed at the end of March that the City of Ludington, due to the high water, intended to keep the north breakwater pier closed for the summer. Since then, we have had email conversations exploring options and hope to have a workable plan to open the pier on calm days. It is our hope to have the LNBL open by mid-June if we are able to come to some resolution.

By mid to late June our summer programming should be going strong. SPLKA is still planning to host six bus days at Big Sable. Once again, on those days we will provide musical entertainment out at the lighthouse. New this year, Gordie the Grinder will be with us on July 9. Gordie will

be at Big Sable with his organ and his sidekick monkey. Children of all ages will get a chance to crank the organ, make the monkey move, and enjoy a taste of the old world and times gone by.

Still scheduled for the summer season are our Night at the Lights programs in July and the first week of August for the sixth year. We have a few regulars like Ark Harbor and the Steel Doin' It Steel Drum Band. Ghost of the American Road and Olivia Manville are back after taking a few years off. New to the lineup this year are Dave Tamulevich and Libby Glover who form Mustard's Retreat.



They are from Ann Arbor, and the last time they played in West Michigan was last spring with Peter Yarrow of the group Peter Paul and Mary. They will bring their unique style of folk songs and storytelling this year to Night at the Lights.

Friday evenings the sound of music will fill the grounds at the White River Light Station. Chris Kennedy and Eric Michaels are local musicians who join the lineup this year along with favorites Ark Harbor, Catfish and the Man, and Ghost of the American Road. The White Lake Library will be hosting a family fun night, and the Montague Library will be hosting a story time event. Do not miss the West Michigan Dulcimer Friends jamming at the White River station.

It is our hope that by June, July and August we will be given the go-ahead to host these events while being socially responsible. As events get closer, updates will always be available

on our web site.

In September at the annual meeting, the SPLKA Board of Directors announced their intent to build our Capital Campaign Fund to finance major preservation projects that have been identified by the board. Our first two projects include funding a Historic Structures Report for Big Sable and to repair and repaint the Big Sable Point tower. The cost for this phase is \$225,000. Our membership answered the call and in a month and a half raised over \$20,000 to meet a \$20,000 challenge match. As of this writing, over \$158,000 has been raised toward this goal. Our most recent gift was a \$7,000 grant from the Mason County Community Foundation which was received in April 2020. I continue to work on other grants and to speak with preservation and lighthouse supporters in the West Michigan area.

High water continues to be a concern at three of our four lights. It is possible, due to the high water, that the Ludington North Breakwater might not even open during the 2020 season.

The seawall at Big Sable continues to take a pounding with water breaching the seawall on windy and stormy days. We are working with the State of Michigan to come up with a solution to this problem. Recent aerial photos, with the shoreline erosion on both the north and south sides of the lighthouse property, show Big Sable located on a point of land jutting out from the mainland. The new sump pump installed in November has kept the basement dry through the winter and spring months.

The water at Little Sable is almost up to the rocks that the State of Michigan had placed in front of the lighthouse in 1988. Earlier in the year, a picture was posted on Facebook showing the Little Sable tower leaning. The angle at which the picture was taken did give the illusion of the tower leaning. Phone calls from all around the



county came in from lighthouse lovers who were concerned that the tower at Little Sable was falling into the lake. We assured everyone that it wasn't and that the State Park service and SPLKA were monitoring the high water and that it was not endangering the tower. High water has been a problem in the past and continues to demand our attention in 2020.

In the last seven years SPLKA has made great strides meeting our mission statement "to preserve, promote, educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all." Preservation efforts at all four of our lights have been extensive and were recognized in 2018 when SPLKA received the State of Michigan's Governor's Award for Historic Preservation. We continue to promote

our lighthouses and are seeing increases in attendance, even in years when tourist traffic in West Michigan has declined. In an independent survey that the Ludington Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored, 49 % of visitors surveyed said that they had come to the area to see the lighthouses. Our education efforts include hosting school groups at no charge and distributing our SPLKA student activity books. New exhibits at our lights tell the story of the lighthouses and the keepers who manned them. The SPLKA Board of Directors has a very active Education Committee, and I am looking forward to what they will take on as their new education project this year.

Accessibility to the lights remains a high priority. People continue to

take advantage of our ever-popular bus days at Big Sable. White River's new keeper's workshop is wheelchair accessible to enable viewing of artifacts and the White River information video. New exhibits to be unveiled in the White River oil house this season will give our guests who are unable to climb the stairs an idea of what is on exhibit in the lighthouse.

The start of 2020 has been a trying time for many. It has been for SPLKA as well. Operational funds are in short supply as we were not able to open Big Sable on schedule, and there remains the possibility of the Breakwater light not opening at all. We as a staff and board have adjusted our budget to accommodate the shortfall that we will be facing.

Thank you all for everything that you as members and supporters continue to do to help us achieve our mission. Please consider supporting SPLKA this season by making a gift to the operations fund. Gifts can be given on line at www.splka.org or sent into the office at SPLKA, P.O. Box 673, Ludington, MI 49431. With your help, we can navigate these unexpected times together.

As we open this season, the SPLKA staff are ensuring that our policies will reflect the current restrictions and recommendations regarding the health and safety of our volunteers and our guests. We want everyone visiting or working at the lights to have a good time and be safe.



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

THE WHITE RIVER CURATOR REPORT/SPRING 2020



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 EVERYONE!

Since the end of the 2019 season, a few things have been taking place here at the White River Light Station & Museum.

New this season in the workshop you will find a collection of lighthouse models that have been donated to SPLKA. Also in the workshop, visitors will find a couple of additional artifacts have made their way to White River. The oil house will also see some additions. Two informational panels

have been added. One panel shares a bit of information about the keepers of the light station, and the other shows how lighthouses were lit over time. In the Middleton Memorial Room in the museum, exhibits have been rotated.

Also in the Middleton Room, with the help of Jim, our Maintenance/Restoration Supervisor, a new hands-on activity will be available this season for visitors to enjoy. Want to know what it is? Then you need to stop on down and visit the museum as I am trying to keep it a surprise. In the Colby Memorial Room, some additions have been made to the exhibits there. During this time, I have been researching information on artifacts along with looking for additional artifacts and display items to add to the collection here.

I have scheduled three presentations within the White Lake community to discuss the keepers of the White River Light Station while it was an active aid to navigation and to highlight the need for volunteers. Depending on how things are going in Michigan this spring, I will either be giving the programs in person or electronically with a voice-over presentation via the internet.



During the 2020 season we will again be having many concerts and yoga sessions on the grounds. Our Beer and Wine fundraising event will be taking place again on

August 7, and I am continuing to work with local libraries to host story times for children at the light station.

The White River Light Station & Museum, just like our other lighthouses, can always use additional volunteers. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering at the light station this year or have questions please contact me at 231-894-8265 or whiteriverlight@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you all here during the 2020 season!

*Respectfully Submitted By
Matt Varnum, Curator,*

White River Light Station & Museum

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>

Lighthouse Maintenance News

SPRING/SUMMER 2020



by Jim Hardie
Restoration and
Maintenance Supervisor



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

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Today is Easter Sunday as I sit at my computer writing the update for this spring edition of the Maintenance Update. It is a warm albeit cloudy spring day. I do hear the birds chirping, busy making nests for their new homes. We have a couple of bluebirds this year, which are always a treat to see. What I don't see this year are tulips and daffodils blooming and people dressed in their Easter outfits heading to brunch and to their places of worship. Not so much this year. It was a mild winter, but spring has come to a screeching halt here. Today is pleasant, but we had snow on the ground the day before yesterday and tomorrow the temperature is predicted to drop like a rock. Yuck. I did put on a new pair of sweats for my Easter outfit, but life has been basically comfort clothes, facemasks and social distancing in this unique spring with 'stay at home' being the new normal. This update will be primarily about two things: the lake levels and Covid-19. Oh, and one other thing. Our beautiful English cream golden retriever, Misty Rose, had a litter of seven pups born on March 10. Watching these little ones start their

lives has truly been a joy during this stay-at-home time. They have all found new owners and are awaiting reaching the age of eight weeks old to go to their chosen homes. They are so cute. Sorry, I digress. Back to the lighthouses.

First, let's discuss Covid-19 and the impact it has had on the lighthouses from a maintenance perspective. The day is March 23, 2020. Work was on track for our normal opening of the various lighthouses and residences. The new doors for Big Sable are stained and ready to install. The plaster is being repaired in the two west bedrooms, and the rooms are scheduled to be painted. I am preparing to have a new refrigerator delivered for the upstairs kitchen and the old refrigerator moved to the basement. I was hard at work on the remodel of the Breakwater residence. New carpet was set to be installed in another week. The new living and dining room furniture was scheduled for delivery on April 1.

STOP. That was the word to me from the state. No work was to be performed at any of the state-owned facilities. This was clarified by the DNR as to mean that everything was to stop and that I could not be in the buildings until after the stay-at-home order was lifted. Oh, well. Best laid plans and all. Luckily, I have a very nice workshop at my house. I have new displays for WRLS to build and other projects to keep me busy. Along with the puppies, of course.

I did develop a new opening plan for this year and a schedule based on the initial loss of three weeks' worth of construction time. I modified my original plan and timeline to reflect what was absolutely essential to complete before keepers could arrive and the lighthouses could be ready for visitors. As a staff, we reviewed my proposal and had a good discussion on the different ways we could get everything completed in the shortest period of time, still be safe, and keep our volunteers safe. We have a plan.

The stay-at-home order has now

been extended to May 15. We need to be flexible and determined. We can still work with that and we'll make it work with slight modifications to the plan.

Then again, we do have that pesky little issue of Lake Michigan being at record high levels for the last four consecutive months.

The City of Ludington has announced they are closing the pier to the lighthouse for the summer. Peter has discussed our concerns with them, and they have agreed that we will revisit this issue as the summer progresses in the event that the lake levels start to fall. This actually, in my humble opinion, was a very good decision. The walkway out to the lighthouse is almost under water and the slightest breeze will put water over the top of it. Let's hope for dry weather and light winds. It is not safe during the current conditions.

White River Light Station and Little Sable are currently in good shape, even with the lake level so high. The beaches at each lighthouse are pretty narrow now, but the lighthouse structures are currently in no danger.

The situation at Big Sable is a little different. The water pounding the sea wall during any wind has taken its toll on the wall. Last summer and last fall a portion of the cap on the sea wall had been washed off. I had received estimates for repairing this section of cap. The board tabled action on it until the engineer/designer of the seawall had been contacted. The lake levels continued to rise. The basement started to flood. If we couldn't keep the water from breaching the seawall, we could do something about getting the river out of the basement. A sump pump was installed with an emergency battery-operated back-up pump as well. This has done an acceptable job of keeping the flooding to a minimum in the basement. It has been running fairly non-stop since installation, but I am happy to report the floor is essentially dry.



I again presented to the board at the end of the season options that had been examined and what my recommendations were for repairing the seawall and why. This time, as over half of the cap is now off, the estimates to fix it had dramatically increased. The board elected to table the issue until next year as they felt it was too late in the season to solve the problem.

The board then agreed to bring in another seawall engineer to evaluate the situation. Since that time, the State of Michigan hired a consultant engineering firm to come and assess some of the state properties along the lake for recommendations. They recommended repairing the seawall cap and putting large boulders in the lake to try to get the waves to break farther from the wall. A good plan. The state is looking at purchasing and installing the rock, but it is on us to take care of the sea wall cap. This spring our board will consider the options presented to them to protect the lighthouse and make a decision. There have been many options presented to try to mitigate the water issue, but, in my opinion, by far the best permanent solution is what the state engineers have endorsed.

Hopefully, when I write the fall update, it will be filled with good news and with our plans for 2021. As always, I want to thank the volunteers who continue to support our lighthouses and SPLKA's mission, particularly those who offer their assistance with maintenance on our lights. I also want to give three shout-outs this spring: first, to Chuck Jameson who is always pushing me to keep the faith and helping to get things done. Couldn't do it without you, my friend. Next, to Dave and Bunny Lumpkin. You are a joy to work with, and I appreciate all that you do. Lastly, we have a new volunteer this year, Kate Dennis. She has been helping me paint and work on the Breakwater residence, and she is a hoot to work with. I am sure everyone will get to know her this year and appreciate her as I do. There are many others who help and have been recognized here before. Ken Reeves, Bob Turnwald, Jacquelyn McShulskis and so many others. Thank you for your help in maintaining our precious and irreplaceable lighthouses.



As we go to print, the Governor of Michigan's Stay at Home order was extended and is in effect until May 28th. After May 28th we will still have a few weeks to go before we will be able to open as we have not been able to work at the lights or the residences during this time. Covid-19 is the word of the day. Due to the outbreak, all of our outdoor activities at Big Sable, Little Sable and the White River Light Station have been canceled for the summer. This also includes our six Bus Days to Big Sable. On May 19th the SPLKA Board of Directors and Staff working together, put together a plan for the 2020 season. Know that at the very forefront of our plan is safety for both our keepers and visitors to the lights.

- **The towers at Big Sable, Little Sable and White River will be closed.**
- **There will be no housing available this season.**
- **Gift shop in Big Sable will be open Friday thru Sunday in accordance with state and local guidelines by July 3rd. On-line shopping will still be available through the website.**
- **White River Light Station and gift will operate at limited capacity. One household at a time will be allowed into the facility to view museum and climb the tower. More detailed plans will be in place when we hope to open on June 15th.**
- **Little Sable and the Ludington North Breakwater will be completely closed.**
- **Volunteers will wear a mask unless there is a medical reason not to when the gift shop is open and they are interfacing with the public. Our requirements will be in accordance with all of the governor's guidelines. The same will hold true for visitors. They, too, will be required to wear a mask.**
- **We will offer outside tours and historical talks at Big Sable as staffing and weather permits.**
- **We will offer on-line virtual tours.**

Several other lighthouses in Michigan and in other states have also announced that they will be closed to the public for the 2020 season. Ted Robinson, the Board Treasurer, and myself have put together a revised budget for Covid-19 2020 which reflects the Boards decisions. On a positive note, SPLKA was the recipient of a SBA PPP Loan/Grant to help fund staff for two months. We are also pursuing other funding opportunities as well. We do have some reserves but not enough to carry us through the entire season. We need your help. Please renew your memberships if you have not done so already. Other ways you can help us out will be to consider making a donation either by sending it in by mail or giving on line, checking out our on- line store for our new 2020 merchandise, telling your friends and neighbors about the SPLKA's on line store or buying a walkway board to be placed at one of our lights. Continue to check the SPLKA web site at: www.splka.org, for the latest updates regarding our lights.

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.

We sure didn't see this coming! Well.... depending on which media source you read (apparently) there are claims that this was projected to happen. Somehow I missed that, because I would have never guessed our country would be nearly shut down. Even when toilet paper was flying off the shelves, I still didn't see this coming.



People are experiencing different emotions as we move forward through all the uncertainties of this moment in history. Just think, YOU are experiencing a piece of what life was like for the lighthouse keepers. Yes, think about it. You are isolated and not supposed to leave because, if you do, there are risks. In the past, it was risk of the light going out and the possibility of a shipwreck. Now, the risk is getting sick or infecting someone else.

Some of you may be having groceries delivered to you, or you might take a quick trip out to stock up on supplies. Imagine the keepers receiving three

months' worth of supplies brought by ship. Now that even our libraries are closed, we must find alternate means of reading and entertainment. Think about the keepers and the traveling library that was rotated every three months when the supply ship came in. Maybe you are spending more time working on all the projects that have been on the back burner, so you can relate to those long days of work done by keepers. Maybe you are journaling this experience during your isolation, just like the keepers. (I have my kids doing this.)

We have so many conveniences now. Though we may be home, most of us are not isolated. Technology has given us so much that many of us take it for granted. Besides TV, we have cell phones that provide on-demand information at our fingertips. Our phones can put us right in a room with other family members for a virtual visit. Employees (like the SPLKA staff) can have virtual meetings where we can continue our planning for the upcoming season. News of the world is just a screen touch away. All of these digital wonders allow us to remain connected.

While we might experience some similarities of the day and life of lighthouse keepers, we have many modern-day conveniences that keep us from feeling the loneliness and isolation they often felt. Think about this: What if this pandemic happened 'in season'? Imagine you are at the lighthouse – no TV, no internet (due to the high demand), and I call you with the news of the stay-at-home order. I tell you that you are quarantined at the lighthouse because you've been with the public and possibly exposed. You are not permitted to go to Ludington. There is no supply ship coming.

You're thinking about it, right? Great!

Write it down and send me your version of "The Quarantined Keepers." Seriously. Be creative!! Email your stories to splkaoperations@gmail.com or send them via mail to **PO BOX 673, Ludington, MI 49431.**

So, what is going on at SPLKA?? This is always one of the busiest times of the year for the SPLKA staff as we prepare the lights to open for the season. We are continuing to work from home on everything we can to be prepared for opening day. This means we will be crazy busy when we get the go-ahead, doing all the things we can't get done from home.

All the merchandise was scheduled to be delivered beginning mid-March (right at the time of the stay-at-home-order) all the way through May 1st. The shipments were staggered so that the larger orders would arrive first. That way, we can get everything separated by lighthouse, added into the computer systems, tagged and moved to the correct locations. Now we are not sure when the orders will be shipped or maybe even delayed.

The schedules look great for volunteer keepers, and they are the most complete they have been for this time of year (April). There are only a few spots left. Our goal is to have the schedules full by May 1st, so that we are prepared when we start opening the doors and welcoming guests to the lights. This may be the first year that happens! Go figure!! We've already had to cancel the first tour scheduled to arrive at Big Sable. This is a hard-working team that comes in to do the deep cleaning and set up the gift shop. Just when the schedule is looking its best, we are canceling tours . . .

Fingers crossed we can quickly overcome this health crisis. I am hoping that by the time you are reading this we are welcoming keepers and visitors to the lighthouses.

I wish you all good health and look forward to your "Quarantined Keepers" stories! ~ Rachel



THE SAVING OF BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

By Jacquelyn McShulskis

As I write, the world is experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic, and Michigan residents are under shelter-at-home orders. The lighthouses will open later than usual this year. But even now, far away, they provide mental escape. It isn't hard to imagine sitting around the kitchen table at Big Sable with a few of you, looking north along the beach as we talk about many things ... like maybe some of the individuals who were key to the successful rescue efforts of the Big Sable tower and keepers' quarters when they were abandoned, vandalized, battered by the elements, then slated for demolition. Dr. Ron Hutchinson, Dick and Ruth Smith, and Donna and Ed Hallin generously spoke with me about those times. From their words, I have written the following account of the earliest days of Big Sable's restoration.



THE SAVING OF BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

FROM STURGEON POINT TO BIG SABLE DR. RON HUTCHINSON AND THE FOUNDATION FOR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH



Sturgeon Point Lighthouse, five miles north of Harrisville on Lake Huron, played a timely role in the survival of the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. The Sturgeon Point Fresnel lens was lit in the spring of 1870, and in 1915 Sturgeon Point became a US Coast Guard station. But when Dr. Ron Hutchinson visited it over half a century later, the lighthouse was one of many without a keeper on site, and the place was falling apart. Passionate about preserving historical structures, Dr. Hutchinson envisioned the severely vandalized limestone house and tower at Sturgeon Point as a potential scientific conference center and developed a plan to attempt its restoration. The Michigan DNR agreed and gave Hutchinson's organization, the Foundation for Behavioral Research (FBR), a lease.

Dr. Hutchinson and his volunteers accomplished a lot there, and the lighthouse became habitable. Their efforts made a good impression on the Michigan DNR. But Sturgeon Point was a bit far from the Kalamazoo/Augusta home base of the FBR, so he decided to check out another lighthouse that was facing the same threat to its survival that Sturgeon Point had: Big Sable Point. Fortunately for Big Sable and all of us, Hutchinson's efforts at Sturgeon Point had earned him enough respect from the DNR that, in 1973, they accepted his offer to protect and restore BSP in exchange for a use agreement.

"Across the country, en masse, lighthouses were being destroyed," Dr. Hutchinson said. "The Coast Guard shut down one after another and put up metal towers. In Michigan, a few lighthouses were sold, but mostly they were shuttered or turned over to the State."

Big Sable Point was an appealing piece of property that included 40 acres of beach adjoining Ludington State Park. Ron envisioned a scientific conference center there as a place where students and faculty could come together in

a relaxing atmosphere to learn from visiting scientists. He felt that scientists would come because of the novelty of the location, if nothing else. These gatherings would be the purpose of the Foundation's use of the lighthouse; research was never conducted there. Ron and a few students and colleagues (including Ed Hallin, the Foundation's vice president) worked on the restoration for a year before it was habitable, investing about \$10,000 of their own money, and thousands of hours of volunteer labor.

"We would pull in there at 7:00 or 8:00 in the evening on Fridays, and we would work hard Saturdays until about 6:00," Dr. Hutchinson explained. "Saturday evening Dick Smith and others from the community would come out and we would talk and laugh, maybe have a beer or two, then work again the next morning until about noon. In the afternoon, we'd head out in various directions hiking. By 4:00 or so we were heading back down south."

Without Coast Guard or State of Michigan protection, a caretaker was needed to keep the place safe during the times that FBR people weren't around. One day, Dr. Hutchinson stopped to talk to a young couple he had spotted building a 40-foot concrete boat within view of the highway in Augusta, not far from his home. They got to chatting about the lighthouse project, and when the doctor suggested maybe the couple should live at the light as caretakers for a while, they eagerly agreed. They loaded up their boat, drove north, and lived at Big Sable for almost two years, using mahogany debris hauled from the dunes to augment their vessel. They sailed away on their completed concrete boat "to Florida or some place," in 1974, Hutchinson said. (Never heard of a concrete boat? Visit this site: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concrete_ship)

In the summer of 1974 the FBR hosted three or four of the conferences for which they had prepared Big Sable. But



FROM STURGEON POINT CONT. . .

THE SAVING OF BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

then Dr. Hutchinson's research was interrupted by national politics. Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire chose Dr. Hutchinson's research project (which was focused on the causes of aggressive behavior) to be the recipient of his infamous "Golden Fleece Award" (April 1975), which claimed the FBR research was a waste of government grant funds. Hutchinson's attention was diverted, funding lost, and his FBR work interrupted. The group was forced to abandon the restoration and conference work at Big Sable.

However, Hutchinson fought back in court and won extensive vindication over the course of ten years,* and he was ready to turn some attention back to lighthouse preservation. In 1985 Ron Hutchinson heard that the Coast Guard had declared they could no longer take responsibility for the lighthouse at Big Sable Point. The empty buildings required an impossible amount of work and created liability issues. Hutchinson realized that Big Sable might again be available for use as the Foundation's conference center (regular conferences had been a feature of the Foundation since 1969, in more traditional settings closer to their Kalamazoo headquarters). The group decided to try again, and, for the second time, were granted use of and responsibility for the property, this time in the form of a 25-year lease.

"When we returned we were heartbroken to see that all of the original accessory buildings were gone," Hutchinson said. "We had hoped to make it an elaborate historical site."

However, lacking any funding for maintenance or repair over those years, the DNR's safest and most efficient option was to tear down or board up vandalized buildings. Windows were broken, the furnace was cracked, doors had been hauled out and burned on the beach, hardware stolen. Everything that was loose enough to remove was gone. (See more information on the vandalism from the Hallins, below.)

In addition, there had been serious storms that tore out steel riprap from the seawall, and water was encroaching on the base of the tower. That first weekend back at Big Sable in 1986, the FBR group got a scout troop and others from the community to help sandbag against the rising lake. The goal during this second tenancy: get local contractors to fully

understand that their historic lakeshore sentinel was in jeopardy and needed their help.

"We spent the first three or four weekends after we returned sleeping in sleeping bags in the house," Hutchinson said. "We scoured places that had salvaged parts from torn down buildings so we could replace things with the proper millwork and proper doors and antique hinges."

Dr. Hutchinson said it was always pleasant at Big Sable. However, he acknowledges that he had a tendency to be a slave driver at times and that he could be obsessive, with a relentless desire to get things done.

"Very early on," Hutchinson said, "even in our first residency at Big Sable, one of the most fortunate assets we had was Dick Smith. I'll take a lot of credit for being a key person, but he was at least as important, probably more. It must be impressed upon the written record, that were it not for him, I'm not sure the effort would have survived. He was the essential glue with the locals, and his persistence was critical. He is a very smart, sophisticated human being, with much greater modesty than I have been able to achieve."

It became clear that Big Sable Point Lighthouse needed steady, dedicated caretaking. After the years of trying to coordinate and accommodate the procedures and personalities of government agencies, no one could see that more clearly than Ron Hutchinson. The lighthouse needed to be legally guarded by an organization that could protect it against vandals, weather, and rising lake water. But Big Sable Point Lighthouse and the land around it also needed wise defense against shifting political policies among state and federal agencies. And, while providing that defense, the guardian organization could facilitate thoughtful, accurate restoration for generations of visitors.

The Foundation for Behavioral Research filed a DBA in Mason County to act as a caretaking group they named Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association in 1985. In 1986, this entity signed a lease agreement with the Coast Guard. In 1987, the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association became a 501C3, the precursor to our Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association of today.



*Ronald R. Hutchinson's full article about his "Golden Fleece Award" – "Scientists Provide a Civics Lesson for Politicians" – was published in the Association for Psychological Science magazine, December 2006, Vol. 19, No. 12



LUDINGTON RESIDENTS WITH DOGGED COMMITMENT – DICK AND RUTH SMITH

“My first trip to Big Sable was in fifth grade with our teacher,” Dick Smith told me. “We took a bus all the way out to the lighthouse. There were no rules then.”

In high school, one of Dick’s classmates lived there with his family, in the first floor assistant keeper’s apartment. The boy and his brother slept in the pantry off the kitchen, their sister slept on a davenport in the living room, and the parents had the bedroom. The family was descended from keepers.

“His grandfather died there in the stairway at the front of the house,” Dick said.

Ruth and Dick spoke with me about Ron Hutchinson, Senator Proxmire, the DNR, and the Coast Guard during the phase described above by Ron Hutchinson. During the early 1970s, erosion of the shoreline near the lighthouse was the most apparent immediate threat. The DNR provided a front-end loader, obtained three-or-four- cubic-foot gabian baskets, filled them with rocks the size of large grapefruits, and placed them in the water along the shore to protect the shoreline from further erosion. Hutchinson and his volunteers worked on the inside of the building.



After the 1973-1975 phase of restoration was interrupted and the FBR left for about a decade, the State ran a rehabilitation program out at Big Sable for a short time. The participants in that program worked, hiked, swam. The Smiths said it was a successful program, but not popular politically. After it was shut down, no one cared for the property for several years, which led to the heavy vandalism.

“The State just wanted Big Sable to disappear. The water was creeping up,” Dick said. “The generator building collapsed. The Coastguard worried about the collapse of the brick tower, and a D9 tower was installed in the dunes just south of the lighthouse. The D9 was never used because the existing tower blocked it. Rising water claimed the fog signal structure, oil tanks, and steel sheeting from the sea wall . . . all gone. Water came over the wall, pooled on the wrong side of the wall, and when the steel sheets were exposed, the wind knocked them down.”

Ruth recalls taking her mother out to Big Sable for Thanksgiving during that period of disintegration. The windows were covered up because they were shattered, but

the upstairs kitchen oven still worked, and that was their only heat. They sat around in coats.

The next big challenge was the high-water levels and catastrophic rainfall of 1986. In one night nine inches of rain fell, wiping out an overpass in Pentwater, shutting down 31 South, and tearing at the ground around Big Sable. Everything started to wash away. Ruth recalled the cold, stormy night that year when a huge group of people filled sandbags to buttress the lighthouse against the water, heaping them around the tower and against the south side of the house. Not long after, the seawall was stabilized with inert construction waste, mainly broken concrete.

“Contractors from town brought us their construction waste,” Dick said. “We couldn’t afford to buy rocks from a quarry at that point. ‘That’s illegal,’ people said. ‘You can’t put that stuff in the lake.’ Well, we did what we could.”

This struggle against erosion has been going on for decades and continues now in 2020. The original seawall was built during the 1940s, with a wartime special permit because no one was using steel for anything but battleships at that time. Rebuilding of the seawall in 1987 was accomplished through mostly donated work by local contractors: Hardman Construction, Maclean Construction, Towns Brothers Construction, and Sergeant Sand.

“They brought equipment and ran around out there in the four-foot deep water,” Dick said. “All you could see on the cranes was the turntables.”

Ruth and Dick both served on the board of the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association, though never at the same time. Ruth became more involved with the lighthouse operations when BSPLKA began opening the building for tours.

“We started having the lighthouse open two or three times every summer, so I did whatever was needed,” she said. “I was the buyer for the gift shop for a while. It was such fun when the guy from Gear [a company that supplied imprinted sweatshirts, jackets, etc.] would pull his mini-van up to the lighthouse and come in and show me all his wares. It was so much fun.”

Fun . . . when you listen to Dick and Ruth Smith talk, you understand that “fun” is the consistent element that drove the early rescuers of Big Sable. But “fun,” to them – and to so many SPLKA volunteers through the years – includes a lot of hard work and passion for a special kind of adventure.



FULL-TIME KEEPERS FOR FOUR YEARS – DONNA AND ED HALLIN



From December of 1986 through the spring of 1990, Donna and Ed Hallin were the official caretakers of Big Sable and lived there 24/7. This was in affiliation with the Foundation for Behavioral Research during that organization's second period of occupation and restoration of Big Sable.

Ed Hallin was Vice President of the Foundation for Behavioral Research and had been working with Ron Hutchinson for many years.

Ron refers to Ed as the Foundation's "tech guru." Together they'd done restoration work at the vandalized, dilapidated Sturgeon Point Lighthouse in the early 1970s, hoping to use it for a Foundation conference center, and gaining a reputation as responsible, dedicated restoration tenants. That led to their work at Big Sable in the mid 1970s and in the 1980s.

glass, then remounted on the house. Banisters, doors, light fixtures, receptacles, and hardware had all been stolen. Thieves even took the cast iron door off the boiler and started carrying it down the beach, dropping and abandoning it in the sand a few hundred yards along, most likely because it was so heavy. FBR volunteers found it and put it back on the boiler.

Even pieces of the Fresnel lens in the tower were stolen. To this day, if you visit the Big Sable lens at the Ludington Maritime Museum, you'll see that some of the bottom prisms are missing.

All over the house, plaster was falling from the walls. The re-plastering of all the walls was not done by volunteers, but by a paid contractor. It was a huge undertaking and took three weeks to complete.

Late in the fall of 1986, shortly before FBR took occupancy again and the Hallins moved in, someone cut a hole in the roof of the passageway between the tower and the house and lowered themselves down inside. In the process, they accidentally cut the power to the light and the navigational beacon blinked out. This was the last straw for the Coast Guard. They agreed to sign a lease with the Foundation for Behavioral Research.

There was no direct government oversight of the restoration from a historical accuracy point of view, but authenticity was a primary interest of those involved in the project. The State did inspect such things as the boiler and electrical work.

Ed and Donna moved into the upper back part of the house first, as they worked with other volunteers on restoring the front of the house. Eventually, they moved into different areas as needed, until they'd lived in every section, including the downstairs apartment.

I asked if they had experienced any supernatural activity in their years there, and they laughed, said they hadn't.

"The weirdest thing," Donna said, "was during another time of high water. As the waves hit the seawall, the pilings would start to come up and out of the wall. As they did, the metal would make different kinds of noises, depending on the direction of the water and the state of the pilings."

It isn't hard for anyone who has stayed at Big Sable to guess what the negatives about living there might have been. Sand everywhere. The road was sometimes flooded with water or covered with drifting sand. At times, they had to get help going to and from the property. Occasionally,

More than a decade after the interruption to the Foundation's work at Big Sable in 1975, when they returned to Big Sable for a second time in 1986, the group arrived to find not only extensive damage by vandals and the elements of nature, but also demolition of the accessory buildings by the DNR, as Ron Hutchinson and the Smiths also described



to me. The sidewalk around the tower was collapsing. The dwelling was completely boarded up. The group removed the boards on the doors, gained entry, and got to work.

All of the glass had to be replaced. Window frames were taken to Ludington Paint and Glass, outfitted with new



THE SAVING OF BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

FULL-TIME KEEPERS CONT. . .

they had the road re-graded, and eventually a fine stone was spread over especially unstable portions.

“We had to drive through axle-deep water to get down the road sometimes,” Ed said. “A lot of times we used a four-wheel-drive truck we borrowed, just to gain access to the property.”

I asked if they have any sense of the type of isolation we imagine lighthouse keepers suffered when they lived in a lighthouse year-round.

“There were so many sightseers every day, even in the winter months, that we were always aware of people wanting to see the property,” Ed said. “It was a destination for hikers. It never felt like we were isolated, though it might have felt more so for keepers before the state park was there.”

Donna said, “You do read accounts of times when the access was limited, such as during the wars, when no one was allowed. You can read between the lines that in normal times people must have been coming out to picnic, and the keepers were opening up the tower to visitors sometimes. There was a lot of war-effort activity on the Great Lakes, so for national security the lights were likely closed.”

She said it was fun for them to have visitors up into the light when they were working, especially on a Sunday afternoon.

“We’d think,” Donna said, “Whose day can we make today by letting them come up the tower?!”

We all know and love that tower, and the wide, changing views it provides. Sitting up there I have wondered what it would be like to clean the windows, and I have eyed that little rim of ledge out there, quite grateful that the job won’t ever fall to me. But Ed Hallin has had a different relationship to that tower.

“One of my jobs was to paint the tower roof,” he said. “One day I got a ladder up there to reach it. The weather

needed to be overcast because direct sunlight on a black metal roof would have made it too hot to touch! But it got so windy the paint would blow off the end of the brush before I could get it to the metal. The coat I was wearing got covered with black paint and I had to throw it away.”

Donna said one of her favorite things was sitting in the west window to watch storms roll in. Then one day a storm swept in that was so intense it dramatically changed the landscape.

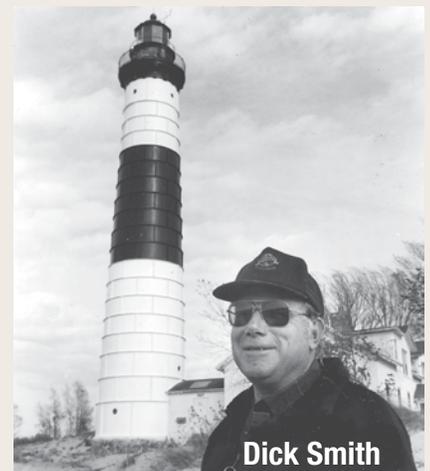
“One afternoon when the water was high, we watched the dune to the south of the house just go away,” she said. “Today when you walk out the front door you go down to the lake, but it wasn’t always that way. Between the front of the house and the lake there was a dune. From most of the windows of the house you couldn’t see the water. But that spring of 1987 the dune was wiped out by wind and rain in one afternoon. It was scary to watch.”

The scenes we think of as so familiar, and the landmark we cherish as an enduring sentinel, reside within a flowing, blowing, unpredictable wash of nature and time. The efforts of these early rescuers, and our own efforts today, make the difference between having a beautiful, historic site to visit and re-visit, and having only memories of it.

Did the Hallins feel the same about Big Sable even after spending four years there working on it, living in the flux of damage and restoration? Did they still love it?

“Oh yes,” Donna said.

Dr. Hutchinson, the Hallins, and the Smiths describe a journey that was never easy, but one which consistently led them down that narrow dirt road through the dunes, at the end of which still stands the lighthouse we love. Without the dedication of these people and their commitment to saving Big Sable, only the dunes would be there today.



Dick Smith



TIMELINE: THE EARLY EFFORTS TO RESCUE BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE



1968 - The last Lighthouse Service Keeper, Homer Meverden, leaves Big Sable and the light is automated.

1970 - Ron Hutchinson and Ed Hallin, leaders of the Foundation for Behavioral Research (FBR), work together on Lake Huron's Sturgeon Point Lighthouse restoration. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grants the FBR a use agreement for Sturgeon Point for their organization's conferences.

1971 - The last Coast Guard caretaker stationed and living at Big Sable Point Lighthouse leaves. The Michigan DNR takes over management of the property.

1973 - Based on their success at Sturgeon Point, the Foundation for Behavioral Research acquires a use permit from the Michigan DNR for the empty Big Sable Point Lighthouse, and the group begins restoration work there. They plan to restore the house, tower, and accessory buildings as a historical site, and for use as a scientific conference center.

1975 - The Foundation for Behavior Research leaves BSP, their work there interrupted by Dr. Hutchinson's legal battle over Senator Proxmire's Golden Fleece Award. Between 1975 and 1985 (specific dates uncertain) - The DNR removes accessory buildings from the BSP property.

1985 - The DNR returns the BSP property to the care of the Coast Guard.

1986 - The Coast Guard installs a D9 tower in the dunes near Big Sable after a 9-inch rainfall and high lake water levels further threaten the lighthouse, coming within 20 feet of the tower. (The lake was 500 feet from the tower in

1867.) The D9 is intended to replace Big Sable's tower as a navigational aid, because the tower is expected to collapse. The Coast Guard makes it clear that it does not have the resources to protect, restore, and maintain the lighthouse.

1986 - The Foundation for Behavioral Research returns to Big Sable Point Lighthouse. FBR files a DBA in Mason County as the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association. The organization signs a 25-year lease with the Coast Guard to care for the lighthouse and use it as an educational conference center.

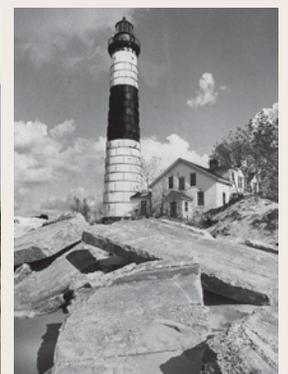
1986 - The heavy damage to the shoreline at Big Sable Point, along with the installation of the D9 tower by the Coast Guard, prompts emergency initiative in the form of sea wall repair by local contractors (a community volunteer effort). A great deal of hard work and volunteered resources save the lighthouse from destruction by Lake Michigan.

1986, DECEMBER - Donna and Ed Hallin, affiliated with the Foundation for Behavioral Research, become live-in caretakers at Big Sable (staying through spring of 1990). They live in different parts of the house as the FBR restores it.

1987 - The Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association becomes an official non-profit organization (separate from the FBR), acquiring a "license to operate" from the US Coast Guard.

1990 - The Hallins, caretakers affiliated with FBR, move out of Big Sable, and BSPLKA takes over full care of Big Sable Point Lighthouse.

1991 - Hardman Construction of Ludington (whose bid won the contract) completes the final phase of seawall work on the north end; when completed, it resembles the original wall built in 1943.



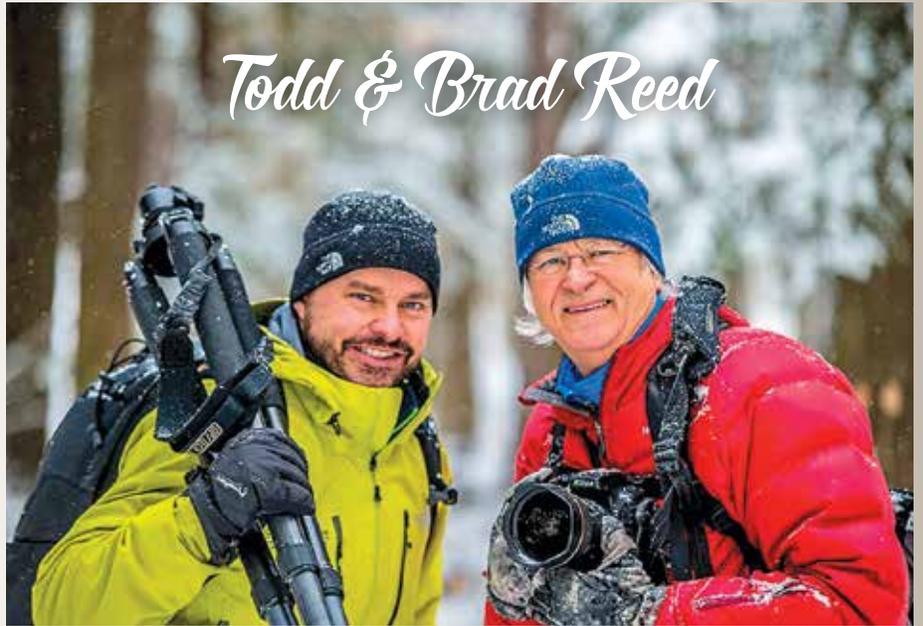
Volunteer

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!!



Todd & Brad Reed

Did you know that SPLKA has somewhere between three hundred and four hundred volunteers each season? These are not just local folks, but many of them come to us from all over the US and some from other countries. We have volunteers that have been coming for a week or two at the lights for more than 20 years! The passion of our volunteers and the time and service that they give to our lights are our greatest asset.

In the last newsletter, local groups were featured who are day keepers at the lights- meaning they pick up a day here and a day there throughout the season. These are a passionate bunch of people and very important to our team because they allow the lights to be open while our resident keepers are moving in and moving out. This is a difficult slot in which to keep volunteers scheduled because there are so many local things to keep them busy during the tourist season in a Michigan beach town. These volunteers are very much needed and appreciated here at SPLKA!

Our resident keeper program is probably one of the more recognized areas of our operation, but we have other great behind-the-scenes volunteers as well. In this edition, I would like to spotlight a father-son duo. They are great photographers who are passionate about our community, the Great Lakes, lighthouses, and the great outdoors! If you haven't already guessed, I am referring to Todd and Brad Reed.

I have known of the Reeds and their beautiful pictures since I moved to the area in 2008. After I began as Operations Manager in 2015, volunteers would share with me encounters they had at the lights with local photographers who had a lot of knowledge of the lights, especially the Breakwater. The volunteers would go on to say that they later discovered that these photographers had taken the photos on the walls.

In my second season, after adding gift shop duties to my position, I was on a hunt for pictures to put on merchandise

and was told the Reeds provided pictures for SPLKA to use with photo credit. I thought that was very kind of them, but did they really want us using their work on merchandise that we sell? I wanted to make sure I understood the agreement and also wanted to know the parameters of the photo credit. So, we set up a meeting.

They invited me into their gallery, and we went into the back where I stood looking over their shoulders while each was on a computer pulling up hundreds of beautiful photos. They sorted through them, enlarging pictures of our lights and compiling a list of photos that SPLKA might use. They were very happy to help us with pictures for publications and for merchandise as well.

Our gift shop sales help with operational costs and meeting the mission of our lights. Each year I look for new ideas to keep our souvenirs attractive and appealing. Many items require high-resolution photos, and with the willingness of the Reeds to share theirs with us we are able to offer merchandise of high quality.

Many of you may already know the Reeds. The next time you happen to see them or visit their gallery, be sure you let them know you are also a member and volunteer for SPLKA and give them a big thanks for their service.

All of our volunteers have important roles. Some of them you don't often hear about, but nonetheless they are instrumental in furthering and promoting our mission. THANK YOU to all of our volunteers and to Todd and Brad Reed for your continued service to SPLKA!



Thank you to:



PHOTOGRAPHY
WWW.TODDANDBRADREED.COM



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 \$40,000 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 603 boards at Big Sable, 69 at Little Sable and 21 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 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 Lighthouses.**

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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Kids Draw the Lights

