



Photo By: Aaron C. Jors

A Letter from the Board President:

It is with a heavy heart that I announce Point Betsie Lighthouse will remain closed to the public until further notice. The Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse Board of Directors reached this difficult conclusion only after careful consideration of the risks posed by the COVID-19 virus.

We must err on the side of caution this summer to protect the safety of our guests, staff, volunteers, docents, neighbors and community. Based on available information, we feel that closing the tower, gift shop, museum and restrooms is the most prudent decision. At this time it is our intent to continue to rent our "Keepers" Apartment, assuming this complies with government guidelines. We plan to carefully monitor the governor's orders and consult with area resorts and community officials as we monitor and adjust our approach for the 2020 season. Please consult our Facebook page or website regularly for updates.

With our ongoing efforts to complete twin capital projects, the financial implications of not opening become a major concern as we lose the support of the 2020 season's income. First, Baird Engineering has been engaged to do the necessary study of repair details on the deteriorating Shoreline Protection System. We are hopeful the actual work may commence later this year. The seemingly ever-rising water level in Lake Michigan underscores the urgency of this project, which is our number one priority.

Second, planning is essentially complete for the Road End Project, which will facilitate pedestrian safety and improve beach access, even if that project is not yet fully permitted and ready to go. We hope to be in a position to engage that work either this fall or next spring.

While the \$1Million+ Capital Campaign to finance these two projects got off to a wonderful beginning, we remain several hundred thousand dollars shy of the amount needed to meet projected costs. It is to that end that I sincerely ask each of to continue, or if possible increase, your contributions to help us. We are aware of the financial stress these times may be creating for some, but please consider the most generous contribution you are able to give to support our necessary, urgent projects as we seek to protect and improve our Point Betsie Lighthouse for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

The entire Board of Directors joins me in sending sincere wishes of health and well-being to all in our community. We hope to be able to see you soon at the Lighthouse!

With Best Regards,

The Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse

3701 Point Betsie Road | P.O. Box 601
Frankfort, Michigan 49635
(231) 352-7644 | www.pointbetsie.org

Mission
To support Benzie County in the restoration and maintenance of the Point Betsie Lighthouse facility through advocacy, fundraising and volunteers. Our goal is to promote related educational opportunities for the benefit of all, while maintaining the historical and environmental integrity of the site.

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Recent Contributions to Point Betsie Lighthouse

In Memory of ...

Dr. Vernon R. Potts from Judy & Art Angood, Patricia & Ron Carnes, Kim & Charles Chase, Carol & John Cordes, Sharon Davids, Sharon & Deland Davis, Mary E. & Joseph R. Domenico, Jack Eagles, John Gates, Mr. & Mrs. Duane Gorkowski, Brigette Hand, Cynthia & William Hanner, Douglas A. Kane, Stephen A. Kelly, Geralyn Kobs, Jean M. Kumosz, Catherine & Don LaValley, Norma & Jack Mawdsley, Janice & Fred Messner, Bonnie Olendorf, Carol & Joe Potts, David Potts, Daniel R. Potts, Tad Randolph, Dr. & Mrs. John Rasmussen, Marcie & Clyde Reynolds, Marilyn Sauder, Jo Schils, Barbara Sellers, Colleen & Phil Seney & Alissa, Beth & Pat Sharkey, Deanna & Burrell Stults, Sandra & Russell Van Nortwick, Linda Wetherbee, Roberta J. Hill (her brother)

Betsy Kerns from Kevin Kerns

Bill Sorensen from Tib, Holly & David Sorensen

Bridget & Harrison "Tip" Miller from Mike Wilson

Bruce Walker from Lisa Holekamp, Nancy & Pete Weir

Buell Hardy Bedford Jr., Buell Hardy Bedford & Elizabeth Horton Bedford from Carol & William Bedford

Charles & Olenka Santore from Karen & Gene Pettinelli

David & Nancy DeVries from Annie & Mike DeVries

David H. Roberston, Sr. from David H. Roberston Jr.

David W. Spitzer from William Richmond

Deborah Baumhower (her sister) from Cathy Schulz

Fred Anderson from Kathleen Chinavare

Frederick Bedford & Emma Buell Bedford from Carol & William Bedford

John & Stella Sternaman from Linda & Michael Perry

John D. Ball & Sue A. Mann (her parents) from Barbara & Brian Setersky

Kathy Borgeson from Brad Borgeson

Katie Millikan Schultz from Ruth Ann & Jim Millikan

Laura & Julie from Josephine Vaughn

Michael Davidson Potter from Bill Beck

Randy Ryan from Jane Ryan

Richard & Adele McLaren from Susan McLaren

Richard Trent from Jane & Vincent Perna

Russell Trowbridge from Bonnie Trowbridge

Sharon Mullally from Kate & Chris Vaughan

William Harrison Miller from Bonnie Kistler & Jodi Blair

Betsy Churchill, Joan Callahan, Katie Crossen, Peggy

Strong & Bud Strong from Karen Crossen & Jeff May

In Honor of ...

Lisa Pfenninger from Lauren Dragoni

Rose M. Baker from Jill Baker

The Hawleys from Anne & Bill Burleigh & Family

Capital Campaign Contributions ...

Joshua Stoltz

Kristen Hill

David Dempsey

Cynthia Engdahl

Karen Pascoe

Kate Darga

Marjorie Weir

Kirk Dodge

Brad Steffens

Richard Taylor

Cindy Mooers

Julie Myers

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John & Char Ester

Bill & Carol Bedford

Marilyn Maslo

Charles & Sharon Trense

Kevin Kerns

Jim & Mary Rodgers

Bob & Edie Molumby

Drs. David & Kathleen Peters

Steve Walton

Be a Friend of Point Betsie Lighthouse!

Point Betsie Lighthouse is preserved through the support of many generous people who treasure our historic site and the memories made here over generations. See the enclosed envelop to purchase memberships, donate in memory or in honor of a loved one, or make a directed contribution to our \$1Million+ Capital Campaign. If you prefer to donate electronically, please visit us at www.pointbetsie.org and click on "Support">"Make a Contribution." As always, you are welcome to contact us directly via email at pointbetsie@gmail.com. Thank you!

Extreme Conditions Threaten Point Betsie

This summer Lake Michigan's waters are expected to surge another 8 to 10 inches. These record high water levels are eroding the shoreline and battering structures in their path – including our beloved Point Betsie Lighthouse.

Last summer, the Friends of Point Betsie officially launched a capital campaign to repair the Shoreline Protection System (SPS), a strong steel and concrete structure that buffers the historic lighthouse from harsh elements. According to Friends Board President Dick Taylor, the Big Lake's "rising tides" make the SPS project more expensive and urgent than initially believed.



The Lighthouse "apron" showing signs of wear and tear.

The SPS at Point Betsie was installed in 1869, and the last major reconstruction was completed in 1944. If you have spent time on the Point Betsie

beach you have likely noticed the SPS, the visible parts of which include a concrete "apron" extending from the lighthouse to the water, and a series of metal groins in the water running perpendicular to the shore. The SPS is intended to prevent ice and waves from eroding the shoreline and damaging the 162-year-old Lighthouse.



Evidence of SPS damage on the north side of the Lighthouse.

"We are in unprecedented times," Taylor said. "Just because the water level in Lake Michigan is at an all-time high doesn't mean that it will necessarily recede any time soon. So, we must prepare for these extreme conditions."

Michigan has experienced its wettest one-, three- and five-year periods since record keeping started more than 120 years ago, according to the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers. They predict record-shattering water levels in our peak visitor months of June and July, with strong storm systems creating substantial erosion and property damage along much of the Great Lakes coastline.

"It is likely that water levels on Lakes Michigan and Huron will set new monthly mean record high levels over the next six months," John Allis, chief of the Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office, Detroit District, told the *Holland Sentinel*. "This sets the stage for coastal impacts and damages in 2020 similar to, or worse than, what was experienced last year."

Baird Engineering is conducting a full study of the condition of the SPS, with the intent of beginning the actual repair work later this year, Taylor said.

The Capital Campaign is also raising funds to improve the Point Betsie Road End to create safer and easier pedestrian and wheelchair beach access. Although the Friends of Point Betsie have already raised more than a \$1 million in funds earmarked for both projects, the cost of the SPS repairs alone are now expected to substantially exceed that amount.

"While the capital campaign has so far been a success, we are still short of what we need by several hundred thousand dollars," Taylor said. "Please give generously to help us complete our mission. We urgently need all who cherish the historic Point Betsie Lighthouse to participate. Thank you in advance for your help!"



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Because we care deeply about the health and safety of our guests, staff, volunteers and neighbors, Point Betsie Lighthouse will be closed to the public until further notice. Please see inside for ways to stay informed and connected until we can be together again.