



# CANAVERAL BEACON

The official newsletter for members of the  
Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation.

Follow us on Facebook @CCLighthouse



## Our Mission

*To assist Space Launch Delta 45 in preserving, protecting, promoting, and interpreting the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse and its historical significance to the Florida Space Coast, State of Florida, and our Nation*

Vol. 15, No. 1

January 1, 2025

### Message from Our Foundation President



I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and will enjoy a Happy New Year. For the Lighthouse Foundation, 2024 was a roller coaster year. Early on, we learned of several legal documents with the Space Force that needed updating. Fortunately, the SLD 45 Legal Office collaborated with us in correcting the documentation, and permitted us to continue operating tours of the lighthouse and the gift shop. Next, it looked like we were going to get money from the State to complete Phase 2 of the Cottage Restoration Project. Unfortunately, this appropriation was vetoed in the final budget signed by the Governor. However, when one door closes another one opens. We applied for and received a Tourist Development Council Capital Facility Grant from Brevard County for \$775,000. So the year turned out to be great, with the Lighthouse ready to launch into the next phase of building out “What was once, will be again!”

As we enter 2025, I am positive this year will be better than last year. With our legal issues behind us, and assurances of collaboration from the Space Force leadership, I am confident we can resolve any new issues that might arise. We expect to start construction on the two new cottages in the Spring / Summer with construction taking about nine months and the outfitting taking about three months. That puts the grand opening in the Spring / Summer of 2026.

The Lighthouse Foundation could use your help during the various events we have scheduled in 2025. At the present time we have Descendants’ Day scheduled in March. We need a volunteer with a four-wheel drive to help get the older descendants back to the cemeteries and grave sites. This is a big day for the descendants since they only get to visit the grave sites once a year. **Please let us know if you are available to help.**

This summer, we will hold our Third Annual Christmas in July Fundraiser. Please let us know if you are available to help.

Most importantly, I would like to thank everyone who volunteered their time and effort to enable the lighthouse to have a successful year. I am not going to list everyone because there would not be enough space in this newsletter. Your personal contributions are all significant and sincerely valued.

Wishing all of you a HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Thank you for your help in keeping our light shining into the future. Ron

## Museum Highlights

### Museums of Brevard Holiday Tour Highlights

Cape Canaveral Lighthouse once again participated in the annual Museums of Brevard (MOB) Holiday Tour of Historic Homes.

For the 5<sup>th</sup> year of this event, the MOB decided to mix it up. In past years, visitors would purchase tickets and be able to visit all seven of the historic homes. However, it was proving to be a challenge to ticket holders to be able to schedule that many visits during the holidays. This year, the MOB significantly reduced the price and allowed visitors to pick as many as three of the historic homes for \$30 and add the lighthouse for another \$10. This approach proved to be popular, and it was a record breaking year for the number of tickets sold!

In addition to the MOB Holiday tours, other visitors from mid-November through mid-January were able to enjoy the light station all decked out in holiday cheer.

Look for more details on our decorations this year elsewhere in this Beacon.

Becky Zingarelli  
 Museum Director  
[museumdirector@canaveralight.org](mailto:museumdirector@canaveralight.org).



### Did You Know?

The soil on Cape Canaveral is sandy and not conducive to growing too much, but the early European settlers managed to grow quite a bit for themselves and some for sale. These included corn, beets, carrots, cabbage and sugar cane. Fruit trees were plentiful, such as oranges and peaches, while some keepers also grew pineapple.

It's believed that Keeper Mills Burnham created a sweeter type of orange when he combined two varieties in his orange grove along the Banana River side of the Cape. Tobacco was another crop that seemed to thrive in these conditions.

In addition to what they grew, they also maintained livestock. Chickens, turkeys, ducks, hogs and sheep were among the most popular. Keeper Burnham also bred horses which he sold.





## “Race to Make History” Fundraiser at the American Muscle Car Museum

On Saturday, November 30, CCLF held their second major fundraiser of the year at Mark Pieloch’s American Muscle Car Museum in Viera. Judging by the record breaking attendance for our event, everyone had a wonderful time bidding on live and silent auction items, playing in the 50/50 raffle, and enjoying good food and drink! A BIG THANK YOU to the Fundraising Committee for making everything so special, to Jeanna Merrifield for not only leading the event but providing such wonderful food from her own Wild Ocean Seafood, and to all the volunteers who pitched in to make everything run seamlessly. Also, a huge thank you to everyone who bought tickets and attended the event! This fundraiser makes a big difference in our ability to “Keep the Lights On”!





## Decorating the Light Station for the Holidays

This year, the entire light station was festooned with holiday magic! Everyone took a part in making it all happen. Certified Top Docents installed net lights on the railing all around the catwalk at the top of the lighthouse. Docents installed the garland and wreaths along the outside lighthouse stairs and on the doors, as well as the inside and outside of the museum. Volunteers from the Keepers Closet beautifully decorated the gift shop in the holiday spirit. It was all topped off by the Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Team from Ponce Inlet (who are in charge of our light) once again installing the giant wreath on top of the lighthouse. A big THANK YOU to all and especially to Karen and Ken Arbuckle for guiding us with their professional decorating experience!





### 3rd Annual Space Force T-Minus 10-Miler

This year marked the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual T-Minus 10-Miler, commemorating the anniversary of the founding of the United States Space Force. Held on Saturday, December 14, the event was run from the Cape Industrial Area, over the NASA Causeway and back, culminating in a run past historic and active launch pads on the Cape, finishing at the lighthouse. This year, there were nearly 2,000 runners, observers and volunteers who had the opportunity to enjoy the light station following the run. It's always amazing to watch the men and women who just completed running 10 miles actually be excited about climbing the lighthouse!



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**CCLF Welcomes Space Coast Porsche Club.** On Saturday, November 16, the Space Coast Porsche Club visited the lighthouse gracing Hanger C's parking with 26 beautiful automobiles with the lighthouse as a backdrop. The Space Coast Porsche club made a generous donation of \$1,200 to the Foundation.



**Parrish Medical Center Annual Gingerbread Competition Winner!** I hope you all saw the great Cape Canaveral lighthouse entry in the Parrish Medical Center's annual Gingerbread competition. I believe (thanks to our efforts to vote), the lighthouse won all categories for the event!



#####

Calling all future Volunteers for Community Outreach! Please contact us if you're willing to assist us. Not a lot of time is required and would be very much appreciated.

Bev Merrilees  
(321) 452-5426 Home  
(321) 537-0300 Cell  
[Bmerrilees@cfl.rr.com](mailto:Bmerrilees@cfl.rr.com)

Patricia Lautner  
(321) 693-2461 Cell  
[Pal46220@gmail.com](mailto:Pal46220@gmail.com)



## Keeping the Light Shining Membership Musings

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

## CAPE CANAVERAL LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION MEMBERS!

2024 has been quite the year for the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation (CCLF). During the year there were two strong fundraisers, Christmas In July (in July, of course), and the American Muscle Car Museum (AMCM) Race to Make History event in November. But, the cherry on top was in September when CCLF was awarded a grant from the Tourist Development Council, approved by the County Commissioners. Our members came out strong on all fronts and were greatly supportive of the grant process as well as the fundraisers. Your support is invaluable!

Currently the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation is about 647 members strong, not counting a good number of new members who joined through the American Muscle Car Museum fundraiser in November. The fundraiser was held on 30 November, leaving limited time to complete Christmas shopping, so we have not yet entered all the new members into the system, although some have been added; it takes time to ensure addresses, phone numbers and email addresses are entered correctly. Until the final count is in for the new AMCM members, we have 38 new members (there are plenty more) and 42 renewals.

In December, there were two Member/Brick Owner convoys to the lighthouse. Ordinarily there is one convoy per quarter, but the additional convoy was added to include not only our established members, but also those who became members by purchasing Christmas In July tickets. A trip to the lighthouse during the holidays was part of the event, but we had to wait for the holidays. Both convoys proved to be quite popular with sign-ups.

**Members and Volunteers Appreciation lunch.** In early November, we had a good turn-out for our members and volunteers appreciation lunch. Graced with beautiful weather, good food (Sonny's Bar-B-Que) and a good time at the Field Manor, we have already scheduled a redo for 1 November 2025 at the same location. This is the occasion at which your CCLF Board of Directors treat you, our members and volunteers, to a relaxing picnic to thank you for all your efforts and support throughout the year.



Your Membership Committee is already looking and planning for 2025. We need to check the calendar to schedule next year's quarterly convoys, but we are ahead of the game for our fall member picnic. There will, of course, be more information as we get closer to the date. No rush here; this year is already passing too fast.

As we begin a new year, we hope you enjoyed special times with loved ones in the celebration of Christmas, remembering the Reason for the Season, and we wish all of you a very

# *HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

***Welcoming the newest members of the  
Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Family!***

**NEW MEMBERS 22 October 2024—22 December 2024**

**Assistant Keeper (\$35 - 1 Member)**

Michael Amyzial Jean Borcina William Coley Sandra Gunthorpe Marcia Iannatto  
Patricia Johnson Ronald D. Jones Mark Mainiero Moti Marash Robert Munchbach Amy Norris  
Brenden Norris Devin Norris Barbara Rankin Andrew Rielly Thomas Savage Debbie Strawhand  
Scott Strickland Garrett Trambauer Trinity Wilga Daryl Williams

**Lighthouse Keeper (\$50 - 2 Members)**

Roger Casey Kent & Karen Castro Michael & Barbara Danagher Steve & Tiffany Innes  
Larry Nisivoccia & Sandy Rea Joey Radesi & Chloe Matt & Anne Maizie Werle

**Head Lighthouse Keeper (\$100 - 2 Members)**

Timothy Tucker

**Student Member ((\$15 = 1 Member)**

***...And celebrating our renewing members of the  
Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Family!***

**RENEWALS 22 October 2024 - 22 December 2024**

**Assistant Keeper (\$35 - 1 Member)**

Karen Cook Gina Grey Barbara Hardy Lise' Kramer Patricia Lautner Daniel Luna  
Kathy Neff Boneta Nord

**Lighthouse Keeper (\$50 - 2 Members)**

Gary & Karen Barrows Gary Castner Kelly Guldi Linda Halpin  
Michael & Kristin Moehle Judy & Joe. Qualls Terry Ryan Shane & Marian Smith  
Kim & Salvatore Zocco

**Head Lighthouse Keeper (\$100 - 2 Members)**

Marcel P. Bedard & Margaret Talbot-Bedard Jim Chamberlain & Karen Dyson  
Jim & Mary Clamons Larry G. Clark Gary & Wanda Cordelli  
Curt & Linda Smith Mark & Nancy Tomassone Timothy Tucker  
Jody Yeomans & Margaret Gibb

**Upgrade to Lifetime Individual Membership (\$1,000 = 1 Lifetime Member)**





# Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Lifetime Members

Pierre & Kathy Alix Titusville, FL	Christy & Randy Horn Oviedo, FL	[Yvonne]/Bob Thornton Titusville, FL
Julia & Joseph (Jett) Black, III Cocoa Beach, FL	Jerry & Darleen Hunt Merritt Island, FL	James Trammell Melbourne, FL
Ginny Blaetz Cocoa, FL	Bill Jelen Merritt Island, FL	RADM James and Kathie Underwood Merritt Island, FL
Gail Browning Cape Porpoise, ME	Gene Johnson Merritt Island, FL	Celeno West & Allen McFarland Cocoa Beach, FL
Carolyn Burby Port St. John, FL	Rocky & Lisa Johnson Cocoa, FL	Rose Marie Wiley Cocoa Beach, FL
Lloyce Campbell Merritt Island, FL	Larry Kaczor & Caroline Kaczor Elliott Cocoa Beach, FL	Dr. Elbert (Sonny) & Kay Witt Melbourne FL
Barry & Sheila Compagnoni Melbourne Beach, FL	Al & Carol Koller, Jr. Titusville, FL	Dr. Jess & Bertie Yates Melbourne, FL
Scott & Liz Cooper Greenwood, IN	[Eric Kucera] Merritt Island, FL	
Preston A., Jr & Nancy C. Creech North Augusta, SC	Lynn & Mike Mariotti Naples, FL	
Sharon Crockett Rockledge, FL	Jeanna & Mike Merrifield Titusville, FL	
[Charles] & Ginny Davis Manvel, TX	[RADM Robert] & Beverly Merrilees Merritt Island, FL	
Robert Davis Merritt Island, FL	Joe & Barb Mihelcic Cocoa Beach, FL	
Debra Divich Merritt Island, FL	Cal & Virginia Myer Naples, FL	
Jill & (Jim) Dooley Merritt Island, FL	[Donald] Ellen Myer Washington DC	
Cynthia Dropeski Melbourne, FL	Jamie & Jessica Myer Los Angeles, CA	
Ron & Christine Ecker Satellite Beach, FL	Jeff & Cathi Myer Burlington, MA	
Albert & Marie Elebash Melbourne, FL	Larry & Elva Ostarly Rockledge, FL	
Rodger S. Fowler Merritt Island, FL	Caroline & Jimmy Raleigh Merritt Island, FL	
Ric & Nancy Garwood Merritt Island, FL	Jim Ravitch Merritt Island, FL	
Rep. Tom Goodson Rockledge, FL	Dixie & [Jerry] Sansom Cocoa, FL	
[Bud]] & Liz Gravuer Cocoa, FL	Michael & Susan Schwarz Port Canaveral, FL	
Beth & Dwight Greenberg Cocoa, FL	David Spain Merritt Island, FL	
[Bobbie Grine] Tuscaloosa, AL		
Bob & Dianne Heidersbach Cape Canaveral, FL		

**\*\*\* CCLF Membership Application Form \*\*\***

**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY & JOIN CCLF TODAY!**

Completed forms should be submitted along with payment to:  
CCLF | P.O. Box 1978 | Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.**

Please select a membership level from the categories below:

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head Lighthouse Keeper                   | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighthouse Keeper (Family)               | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Lighthouse Keeper (Individual) | \$35  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Lighthouse Keeper                | \$15  |

**LIFE MEMBERSHIPS**

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership (Family-2 member) | \$1,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership (Single)          | \$1,000 |

**TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**Chris Ecker, CCLF Membership**

Phone: (321) 591-9844

Email: [cclfmbrship1@aol.com](mailto:cclfmbrship1@aol.com)

**Bev Merrilees, CCLF Volunteers**

Phone: (321) 452-5426

Email: [bmerrilees@cfl.rr.com](mailto:bmerrilees@cfl.rr.com)

**To pay your membership dues online via PayPal, visit [CanaveralLight.org](http://CanaveralLight.org)**

**CCLF Member Benefits**

- Admittance to annual membership appreciation meeting held at the lighthouse;
- Subscription to *The Canaveral Beacon*, CCLF's bi-monthly newsletter;
- Discounts at the Keeper's Closet Gift Shop, including 10% off commemorative brick orders;
- Volunteer opportunities to support & promote the lighthouse in its historical context; and, most importantly,
- Supporting CCLF's efforts to restore the lighthouse grounds and resurrect history!

**MEMBERS SAVE 10% AT  
KEEPER'S CLOSET**

Stop by the Keeper's Closet gift shop during your next visit to the lighthouse. Browse our selection of souvenirs, books, apparel, jewelry, children's items and other lighthouse memorabilia. Proceeds support Foundation initiatives and community events. Members who present their membership card when shopping will receive a 10 percent discount on their purchase.



## Volunteer Spotlight on Mark Tomassone

Mark Tomassone — a docent at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse — was one of the top three volunteers on the Space Coast last year.

Tomassone was one of three finalists for *Florida Today's* Volunteer of the year for 2024 in Brevard County and named Brevard Zoo's Volunteer of the year in 2021.

There is no doubt why he would receive such accolades. He is an enthusiastic volunteer who certainly makes a difference in his community.

In addition to his 700 volunteer hours last year at the Brevard Zoo and his work at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse, Tomassone gives his time to the Daily Bread. He helps people in need select clean clothes and hygiene products and schedules others for counseling.

At the zoo, Tomassone manages one shift of volunteers each week, works in the education department and helps with special events.

He also helps adults with literacy skills through Literacy for Adults in Brevard, where he previously served on their Board of Directors. He has been meeting with some of the same students for more than three years.

Some people spend a lot of time on hobbies or recreational pastimes, but Tomassone gives back to the community he has called home since 2018.

"I don't play golf and we live in Florida," Tomassone said.

Born and raised in New Jersey, he earned a degree in marketing from Seton Hall University. Tomassone worked in human resources for McGraw-Hill Publishing, Version, and Columbia University. He retired at 51 and moved with his wife Nancy to Atlanta for a few years before coming to Brevard County.

After moving here, he took a tour to the lighthouse and knew he wanted to get involved. He soon became a docent.

"Five years later I'm still here," he said. "Recently, I've been helping with the school groups, which is really enjoyable."

Tomassone is a certified Top Tour docent who helps as a tour escort for groups. He has been volunteering at the lighthouse for over four years.



# Paving the Way & Building a Legacy

## New Brick Art

It's never too late to create a lasting commemorative of a Special event. The recent Space Force 10-Miler Run is an excellent example of a fun activity worthy of remembering. Commemorate your race with a custom runner art brick-- perfect for immortalizing your run! There is also a Space Force emblem and a NASA worm added to the art repertoire. You can request these new emblems by writing them on the order form below or on our website. There is room for three rows of engraving with nine characters in each row.



You can purchase a 4" by 8" brick for \$150. Purchase includes engraving of three (3) rows, up to 12 characters per line *as well as insignias and art designs, such as a lighthouse or heart and a matted 5 x 7 inch picture of your brick ready for framing - all at no additional charge.* CCLF members will receive a 10 percent discount on all brick orders. All donations are tax deductible. For additional information, please contact Ann Bolton, CCLF's Brick Project Coordinator, at [annbolton@me.com](mailto:annbolton@me.com) .

Brick orders may be placed online under the Brick Walkway News section at [CanaveralLight.org](http://CanaveralLight.org).



### \*\*\* BRICK ORDER FORM \*\*\*

To purchase a 4" X 8" brick paver, complete this form and return along with payment to:  
Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation, P.O. Box 1978; Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Member       Non-Member

Engraving Instructions: Each line is limited to 12 characters, including punctuation and spaces.  
*CCLF retains the right of final approval of copy.*

Line 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3 \_\_\_\_\_



## Phase 2 Light Station Cottage Restoration Project Update

Work has been proceeding over the past few months since we were awarded the grant money from the TDC and County Commission for construction of the new cottages. The architecture review to finalize the drawings is underway.

Preliminary work to prepare for outfitting both cottages is also in process. We've been fortunate to have Linda and Tom Swenson of Lady "S" Antiques volunteer to help us evaluate the period furnishings we will be putting into the Replica Cottage. Along with other volunteers who have an affinity for antiques and knowledge of keeper's cottages of the period, we will be determining which furnishings will best help us tell the story of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse keepers and their families from the late 1800s through the early 1900s.



*Thank you for all you are doing to keep our Lighthouse Shining!*



## 2024 Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Board of Directors & Advisors

### OFFICERS

Mr. Ron Ecker, President & FLA Liaison  
 Mr. Shane Smith, 1st Vice President & Lighthouse Race Coordinator  
 Mr. Todd McDowell, 2nd Vice President  
 CAPT Jim Passarelli, Treasurer  
 Mrs. Janet Abt, Secretary  
 Mr. Larry Ostarly, Past President

### DIRECTORS

Ms. Sharon Crockett, Speakers Coordinator  
 Mrs. Chris Ecker, Membership Chair  
 Mr. George Eustis, Jr., Docents Coordinator  
 Mrs. Nancy Garwood, Archivist  
 Mr. Rocky Johnson, Director  
 Mr. Brendan McMillin, Asst. Treasurer  
 Mrs. Jeanna Merrifield, Major Events Chair  
 Mr. R. Norman Moody, Public Relations/Media  
 Ms. Mary Anne Moore, Tours Co-Chair  
 Ms. Michele Rohrmann, Tours Co-Chair  
 Mrs. Dixie Sansom, Legislative Advisor  
 RADM Jim Underwood, *Canaveral Beacon* Editor  
 Ms. Laura Lee Walko, Marketing Committee Chair  
 Maj Gen Ed Wilson, Director  
 Mrs. Lisa Wilson, Director & Education Co-Chair  
 Ms. Becky Zingarelli, Museum Director, *Ex Officio*

### ADVISORS

Mr. Ken Arbuckle, Keeper's Closet Co-Leader  
 Mrs. Karen Arbuckle, Keeper's Closet Co-Leader  
 Mrs. Cheryl Bennett, Advisor  
 Ms. Ann Bolton, Brick Project Leader  
 Mr. Chris Broome, Esq., Legal Advisor  
 Mrs. Kate Chase, Education Co-Chair  
 Mr. Ric Garwood, Maintenance Team Leader  
 Ms. Patricia Lautner, Community Outreach  
 Mrs. Bev Merrilees, Volunteer Coordinator  
 Mr. Ciro Morales, Social Media Guru  
 Ms. Barbara Moser, Museums of Brevard Advisor  
 Mr. Ray Valley, Webmaster

### 45TH SPACE DELTA REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Jamie Draper, SLD 45 Command Liaison  
 Mr. Mike Blaylock, CCSFS CE Liaison  
 Mr. Tom Penders, CCSFS Advisor

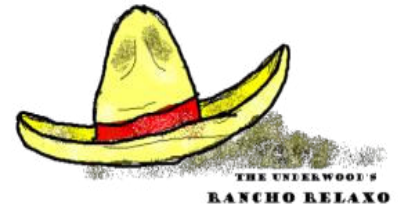
# Please Thank Our 2024 Sponsors With Your Support



## Fresnel Lens Crystal



## Brass



## Wick



PROPELLER CLUB PORT CANAVERAL  
CHARTERED 1999



The Ostarly's



## Friends

Aggressive Pest Management

Canaveral Pilots Association

Satellite Family Dentistry

The Viera Company

Petroleum Resources and Development, Inc.