



# CANAVERAL BEACON

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

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## 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. 16, No. 2

March 1, 2026

## Message from Our Foundation President



The year 2026 has dawned with a sense of profound momentum for the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation. As we look back on the first few months, I am filled with pride at how much we have achieved together to preserve our cherished beacon.

On February 10th, we marked a truly historic milestone: the groundbreaking ceremony for the final two lighthouse keepers' cottages. It was a picture-perfect Florida morning, and the turnout from our community and partners was a testament to the enduring legacy of this site. These cottages represent more than just construction; they are the final step in restoring the historical integrity of our grounds.

I must extend my deepest gratitude to Col. Brian Chatman and Chief Master Sergeant Charles "Doc" Apodaca for taking time out of their demanding schedules to support us. We were also honored to have Jeff Baron and Mike Blaylock in attendance, and a special thank you goes to our Keynote Speaker, Jamie Draper, for his inspiring words. Furthermore, this event would not have been possible without the tireless dedication of Becky Zingarelli and Laura Lee Walko. Their expert planning and execution ensured a flawless morning that our guests will long remember.

In our continued effort to modernize our operations, we are officially rolling out Volgistics to our entire volunteer force. Following a successful beta test, this comprehensive, cloud-based management system will streamline how we recruit, schedule, and track the thousands of hours you give to the Light. By moving to this "all-in-one" platform, we are ensuring that our volunteer experience is as seamless and professional as the tours we provide.

Now that the ground is broken, we need your help to cross the finish line. We are currently only a few thousand dollars away from our goal to Outfit Our New Cottages. Your donations will allow us to furnish a replica 1900s Keeper's Cottage and equip our "Lighthouse Experience" cottage with interactive, engaging exhibits. Please visit [canaverallight.org](http://canaverallight.org) to make your contribution and help us bring these cottages to life.

Thank you for your unwavering support of our history and our future.

Keep Shining,  
Shane Smith  
Board President

## Museum Highlights

### Museum Highlights

After six years and many changes on the Cape, we now have on display in the museum and lighthouse a new panoramic view from the top. A big thanks to Nancy Garwood for creating the original prints and to Rick Kibbey for capturing today's view.

To commemorate the 250-year semiquincentennial of the United States, we have modified the flag pole by the lighthouse and will fly the official flag for the entire year. The flag is flying under the American flag and above the lighthouse pennant. We will also have commemorative half-round flags to be displayed on the museum railings during the "Patriotic Season" (Memorial Day through Labor Day), as well as other patriotic days throughout the year.



### Did You Know?

While no fighting took place on land in this area during the American Revolution, the Cape is renowned for witnessing the last naval battle just offshore. To commemorate the conflict, the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center on Merritt Island is home to the historic marker and a replica Revolutionary War era cannon.



The inscription on the marker reads: "The last naval battle of the American Revolutionary War took place off the coast of Cape Canaveral on March 10, 1783. The fight began when three British ships sighted two Continental Navy ships, the *Alliance* commanded by Captain John Barry and the *Duc De Lauzun* commanded by Captain John Green sailing northward along the coast of Florida. The *Alliance*, a 36-gun frigate, and the *Duc De Lauzun*, a 20-gun ship, were loaded with 72,000 Spanish silver dollars they were bringing from Havana, Cuba to Philadelphia to support the Continental Army. One of the British ships, the HMS *Sybil*, a 28-gun frigate, commanded the British ships. The HMS *Sybil* chased the *Alliance* and *Duc De Lauzun* to the south. The HMS *Sybil* fired first, exchanging shots with the slower *Duc De Lauzun*. Then in a daring strategy Captain John Barry aboard the *Alliance* reversed his course, and while under fire, waited until the HMS *Sybil* was close. When the British ship was alongside he returned fire to the broadside with greater number of cannon. The battle lasted less than an hour, when the HMS *Sybil*, outgunned and badly damaged, broke off from the battle and fled. The *Alliance* and *Duc De Lauzun* then continued on their mission at dawn on March 11, 1783."

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Becky Zingarelli  
Museum Director

[museumdirector@canaveralight.org](mailto:museumdirector@canaveralight.org)

## Groundbreaking and New Cottages Update

Our official groundbreaking was held on Tuesday 10 February. We had a good turnout everyone enjoyed the ceremony. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped that day. Extra groundbreaking programs are available at the lighthouse museum if you'd like a souvenir. Jamie Draper, Museum Director of the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum, provided a stirring keynote speech. [You can read his excellent remarks here.](#)



The atmosphere at Groundbreaking was accentuated by the pouring of concrete in the background! The foundation has been set and we'll start to see the walls rising in the next 2-6 weeks as the cottages begin to take shape.



By the way, if you've wondered why the cottage behind the lighthouse is so far back... when the project was first approved in 2018, the State Historic Preservation Office said we could rebuild the cottages close to where the originals stood, but we couldn't disturb the original foundations and bricks. Therefore, even the Museum and Gift Shop cottage is close but not on the exact spot. The cottage in the back is more noticeably offset.



## Honor their Watch, Restore their Station!

The festivities of groundbreaking on the new cottages are now behind us and construction is well underway. The foundations have been poured and the walls will quickly rise. In parallel, we are working diligently to outfit the cottages with remarkable displays and exhibits that will remain in visitor's memories long after their tours.

Please consider donating now to help fund these efforts to provide a wonderful new experience for all who visit our lighthouse. Our *Honor Their Watch, Restore Their Station* campaign will make our vision a reality. Your generous donation will help us furnish and equip our beautiful new Cottages — a replica Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage circa 1900 and a Lighthouse Experience cottage with interactive and engaging exhibits. As a thank you, you'll receive unique gifts and be entered for a chance to win an unforgettable private tour to the very top of the lighthouse — a breathtaking experience not open to the public. Bring up to 10 of your family and friends for a memory that will last a lifetime! Please act now to help when most needed. Scan the QR code or complete the [Outfitting Donation Form](#) to get started.



# Honor their Watch, Restore their Station!

GET EXCLUSIVE GIFTS  
and a Chance at a  
Once-in-a-Lifetime  
Experience



LEARN MORE



Donate Now!

Cape Canaveral Lighthouse & Museum

## Help us outfit our new cottages under reconstruction!

### TARGET YOUR DONATION FOR:

- 1 - KEEPER'S COTTAGE
- 2 - LIGHTHOUSE EXPERIENCE
- 3 - USE DONATION WHERE MOST NEEDED

- For every \$25 you donate, get one chance to win an exclusive private climb to the top of the lighthouse for up to ten people.
- \$100 to any 1 category & receive a Unique Gift\* for that category.
- \$100 to each category (totaling \$300) & receive the full set of 3 Unique Gifts\* plus 4 additional chances to win a climb to the top!

*\*Gifts are unique limited edition suncatchers designed exclusively for this project and only available here.*



[info@canaverallight.org](mailto:info@canaverallight.org)

321-351-5052

P.O. Box 1978, Cape Canaveral, FL 32920



The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation is supported by the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners and the Space Coast Office of Tourism.

Visit us @ [canaverallight.org](http://canaverallight.org)



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cclighthousefoundation

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# Groundbreaking and New Cottages Update (Continued)

What's a Groundbreaking Ceremony without...



Shovels.....Speakers Jamie Draper and Shane Smith..... And Groundbreaking Dirt throwers?



...without a Program and fabulous refreshments?



...without toasting, celebrating, remembering and recording our history and our future...to the beautiful sounds of construction.



## Keeping the Light Shining -Membership Musings

Our Membership Committee led by Chairperson, Chris Ecker, has been working hard at developing strategies for increasing Foundation support through membership, planning and scheduling Convoys for the coming year, and planning our annual Membership/Volunteer Appreciation Event.

Special fundraising events like “Christmas in July” and the American Muscle Car Museum and Museum of Brevard (MOB) Christmas Tours, guests touring with Canaveral Tours and Space Shuttle Excursions; complimentary tours for community groups and, our active Community Outreach Team, all have resulted in getting the word out about the historic significance and treasure of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse. The word is definitely out!



Convoys have been well attended, the next one being March 21 when we will celebrate with a St. Patrick’s Day theme including refreshments. To participate you must RESERVE NO LATER THAN 11 March 2026. You will drive your own vehicle with as many occupants as will legally fit; no foreign nationals are allowed. The convoy is limited to 20 vehicles, and ALL adults must have government ID, as the gate guards will be checking everyone in each vehicle.



We continue to encourage membership in the Florida Lighthouse Association. Quarterly get-togethers, organized by FLA, at Florida lighthouses, are an opportunity to meet other lighthouse enthusiasts and share concerns and ideas in the quest to protect our lighthouses. The FLA spring meeting will be at Amelia Island on May 16-17. Several of us have already committed to attend. We hope you will consider joining our CCLF contingent. Program and hotel details will be available soon.

Exciting times ahead – Groundbreaking was February 10 beginning construction to recreate our light station, as it once was, adding two new cottages- one an interactive education center and the other a replica cottage displaying furnishings and other possessions appropriate for the families that lived and worked at the lighthouse.



We can all be proud of our accomplishments, none of which would have happened without the support, energy and encouragement of our members and volunteers

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

**NEW MEMBERS 21 December 2025 - 20 February 2026**

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

Barbara Alles Ron Brown Paul Ferlita Scott Hasson Kenneth Hewitt Normand Lavoie  
Heidi Lemberg Leott Lowdermilk William McMeekin Peter Moffitt Frank Molnar  
James Morrison Francis Nisi Steve Oropallo Bernadette Passagno Charlie Reeves  
Ethan Schmidt Michelle Schmidt Clint Sharp Byron Stewart Clarice Stodden  
Douglas Tucker Brian Whitford

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

Victor Delprete Matthew Dopira Doug Dudley Erica Gaver Joe Guadagno  
Elizabeth Ives Raymond Keller Lisa Mullooly James Turi Melissa Wiles

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

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

**Lifetime individual Membership (\$1,000 = 1 Lifetime Member)**

**Lifetime Family Membership (\$1,500 = 2 Lifetime Members)**

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

**RENEWALS 21 December 2025 - 20 February 2026**

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

Lise' Kramer Marcia Lambert Hilari Seery Mark Seitter Eric Sharp

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

Sheila Cootes & Michelle Amicarelli Bob & Cheryl DeWitt Cynthia Grey  
Steve & Karen Hebert Beverly & Douglas Kasimer Gina & Frank McTernan  
Propeller Club of Port Canaveral Judy & Joe Qualls Dennis /Reilly Ashley Spitsnogle  
Mary Jean Thompson Marc & Misti Yaeger Courtney & Eloise Yelle

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

Easy Peasy Science (Mike & Marie Ecker) Gerry & Susan Gleckel  
Mary Lou Heink Randy & Linda May Adrian Smith Rick & Myhra Tubridy

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

**Lifetime Individual Membership (\$1000 = 1 Lifetime Member)**

**Lifetime Family Membership (\$1,500 = 2 Lifetime Members)**

**Jim & Mary Clamons**



# Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Lifetime Members

Pierre & Kathy Alix Titusville, FL	[Bobbie Grine] Tuscaloosa, AL	Larry & Elva Ostarly Rockledge, FL
Julia & Joseph (Jett) Black, III Cocoa Beach, FL	Bob & Dianne Heidersbach Cape Canaveral, FL	Dixie & [Jerry] Sansom Cocoa, FL
Ginny Blaetz Cocoa, FL	Christy & Randy Horn Oviedo, FL	Michael & Susan Schwarz Port Canaveral, FL
Gail Browning Cape Porpoise, ME	Jerry & Darleen Hunt Merritt Island, FL	John "Tank" & Rheta Sherman Cocoa, FL
Carolyn Burby Port St. John, FL	Bill Jelen Merritt Island, FL	Dave Spain Merritt Island, FL
Jack Burrie Deerfield Beach, FL	Gene Johnson Merritt Island, FL	[Yvonne]/Bob Thornton Titusville, FL
Lloyce Campbell Merritt Island, FL	Rocky & Lisa Johnson Cocoa, FL	Mark & Nancy Tomassone Rockledge, FL
<b>Jim &amp; Mary Clamons</b> <b>Palm Bay, FL</b>	Larry Kaczor & Caroline Kaczor Elliott Cocoa Beach, FL	James Trammell Melbourne, FL
Barry & Sheila Compagnoni Melbourne Beach, FL	Al & Carol Koller, Jr. Titusville, FL	RADM Jim & Kathie Underwood Merritt Island, FL
Scott & Liz Cooper Greenwood, IN	[Eric Kucera] Merritt Island, FL	Celeno West & Allen McFarland Cocoa Beach, FL
Preston A., Jr & Nancy C. Creech North Augusta, SC	Lynn & Mike Mariotti Naples, FL	Rose Marie Wiley Cocoa Beach, FL
Sharon Crockett Rockledge, FL	Jeanna & Mike Merrifield Titusville, FL	Dr. Elbert [Sonny] & Kay Witt Melbourne FL
[Charles] & Ginny Davis Titusville, FL	[RADM Robert] & Beverly Merrilees Merritt Island, FL	Dr. Jess & Bertie Yates Melbourne, FL
Robert Davis Merritt Island, FL	Joe & Barb Mihelcic Cocoa Beach, FL	
Debra Divich Merritt Island, FL	Teresa Moore & Don Nawalany Cape Canaveral, FL	
Jill & [Jim] Dooley Merritt Island, FL	Cal & Virginia Myer Naples, FL	
Cynthia Dropeski Melbourne, FL	[Donald] Ellen Myer Washington DC	
Ron & Christine Ecker Satellite Beach, FL	Jamie & Jessica Myer Los Angeles, CA	
Albert & Marie Elebash Melbourne, FL	Jeff & Cathi Myer Burlington, MA	
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	Rick & Michele Rohrmann Cocoa Beach, FL	
[Bud] & Liz Gravuer Cocoa, FL	Hal Row Mims, FL	
Beth & Dwight Greenberg Cocoa, 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 Orin Richardson

A casual meeting led Orin Richardson to his appreciation for lighthouses and their history. It was that encounter that took him to the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse, where he has been volunteering since shortly after that meeting in 2022.

Richardson, a retired Air Force chief master sergeant who served more than 30 years, was at the Viera VA Outpatient Clinic when he got into a conversation about the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse with a man whose shirt's logo caught his attention.

"I saw a gentleman wearing his lighthouse polo shirt, so I started to talk to him," Richardson said.

The man, whose name he does not remember, suggested that Richardson volunteer at the lighthouse if he was looking for something to do in his spare time. Richardson said he was always fond of lighthouses but was not the kind of fan who would make special trips to see them.

"I did not have as much appreciation until I started volunteering," he said. "I became interested in them."

Lighthouses and their history soon captured his interest in learning more about them.

Richardson volunteers as a docent at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse most Saturdays and for special events. His wife, Kristy Richardson, also gives some of her time to the lighthouse and volunteers with the Brevard Zoo.

It's been a lot of fun talking with people," he said. "There are people that come by that know so much about lighthouses and you learn from them."

Richardson's favorite part of working at the lighthouse? Guiding people to the top and school field trips.

Since those early days of his volunteering, the Richardsons have visited other lighthouses and have become more interested in their history.

Richardson dedicates some of his time to his hobbies, kayak fishing, golf and travel. The Richardsons like traveling to Georgia and the Carolinas and exploring the many springs and sites in Florida.

They now take every opportunity to see a lighthouse during their travels.



## Museums of Brevard Spotlight



Our closest Museums of Brevard partner is the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum, which also runs the Sands Space History Center. They not only run the museum's Hangar C annex right next to the lighthouse, but partner with us for all tours and advocate for us with the Space Force.

You can visit the Sands Space History Center anytime, without security restrictions, which makes it a great place to bring visiting family and friends. Their parking lot is also where the caravans meet to take members out to the lighthouse for the quarterly tours.



From their website [Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum](#)

“The Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station has been open since 1966 and preserves both the hardware and the spirit of United States’ ventures into space. The museum displays numerous missiles, rockets and related space flight equipment and memorabilia at several buildings and nearby facilities.

This unique museum highlights the Space Force as a major participant in America’s space program and emphasizes activities at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station beginning in early 1950 and continuing today. Tours and gift shop operations are provided by a group of dedicated volunteers. The [United States Space Force Historical Foundation, Inc.](#) provides funding for exhibit maintenance and museum operations. Management for the entire museum operation is the responsibility of the Museum Director, a civilian employee of Space Launch Delta 45.”



The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation provides commercial and group tours that allow the public to visit the Space Force Museum’s on-station venues.

## In Remembrance of Mike Brady



We lost a remarkable volunteer on 16 February. Mike Brady had been with us since 2022, embracing and excelling at many roles, including Docent, Education Docent, Top Docent, and Bus Guide. He also worked as a driver for Canaveral Tours. His fellow Saturday docents expressed how everyone felt about Mike. “We’ll miss his happy exuberance and upbeat manner. His laugh and wit. Mike was a rare soul who truly knew how to love life. His smile was a constant, and his sense of fun was infectious to everyone around him.” Fair winds and following seas.

## Our Community Outreach Team Spreads the Word



An annual event held in Brevard County is the celebration of Sams House Pioneer Days. This year on 7 February our team set up the CCLF tent and tables to promote one of the oldest and still standing historical structures in Brevard—our Cape Canaveral Lighthouse! The team members were



Gerry & Susan Gleckel, Bev Merrilees, Patricia Lautner and Liz Gravuer. Kudos to our team for spreading the story and access opportunities of the lighthouse.

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# Please Thank Our 2026 Sponsors With Your Support



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## Friends

Aggressive Pest Management  
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## Support Our Sponsors



# 2026 SHRIMPFEAST



**WHEN:** *Friday, April 10, 2026 - 6-10pm*

**WHERE:** *Gator's Portside  
683 Dave Nisbet Drive, Cape Canaveral*

**COST:** *\$50 per person to March 17  
\$60 per person after March 17*

***Tickets Must Be Purchased In Advance - NO Door Sales***



***Have Fun & Support Our  
Maritime Education Programs***

**6:00pm Cocktails**

**6:30pm Shrimp Dinner Begins**

**7:30pm Door Prizes - Live Auction - Dancing**

 **Live Auction**

 **Silent Auction**



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