



[www.stgeorgelight.org](http://www.stgeorgelight.org)

Winter 2015

## *2015 Tour of Homes Is a Great Success!*

The Fourth Annual St. George Island Tour of Homes was a tremendous success, attracting an estimated 700 participants and raising more than \$15,000 for the Cape St. George Light!

With the sun shining on the Valentine's Day event, enthusiastic tour-goers visited seven beautiful and unique island homes along with the St. George Plantation Clubhouse and the Lighthouse and Keeper's House. Attendance was up by more than 25 per cent over last year, and the proceeds more than doubled.

While a quarter of the attendees came from near and far parts of Florida, the balance of the crowd represented 25 other states and Canada. About half of the participants were "snowbird" visitors, who spend a month or more in Florida during the winter. Many said that the tour is always a highlight of their stay.

The Friday evening kick-off event attracted more than 160 people to the Jay Abbott Firehouse to enjoy refreshments and hear a fascinating presentation about the local Florida black bear population by Bear Specialist Kaitlin O'Connell Goode of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The evening's popular door prizes included such bear-related items as locally produced honey and honey pots donated by area businesses and supporters. Artists Tom Tiffin and Susan Richardson donated prints of their work that were raffled at the conclusion of the event.

Contributing to the success of the 2015 tour was a large increase in sponsorship revenue coming from Business Sponsors and the newly-introduced individual Tour Supporter campaign.

As always, we can't say enough about the more than 100 wonderful volunteers who made the tour happen, and the seven generous homeowners who so graciously opened their homes to tour participants. Without the support of our volunteers and homeowners, the tour would not be possible. So it is with great pride that I share these comments from one of our homeowners:

"It was with some trepidation with which we agreed to participate in this year's tour, especially after we asked how many tickets are usually sold! But the heartfelt assurances of the committee persuaded us to agree! We

were both impressed with the general organization of the event and the clockwork with which it unfolded. But the biggest surprise of all was when we returned to our home at 4 p.m., it looked as if no one had been there!!! The reward of contributing to the maintenance of the amazing Lighthouse Museum was the frosting on the cake. Congratulations to you ALL for a job well done!!”

It doesn't get any better than that. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, attended, supported, or in any other way participated in this wonderfully successful effort!

## New Windows Coming Soon to a Lighthouse Near You

Two new windows, custom built by island craftsman Paul McBee, will be installed in the lighthouse in the coming weeks. Constructed of #1 treated pine, then painted and epoxied, the windows will replace the plywood that has covered the topmost openings since late last year.



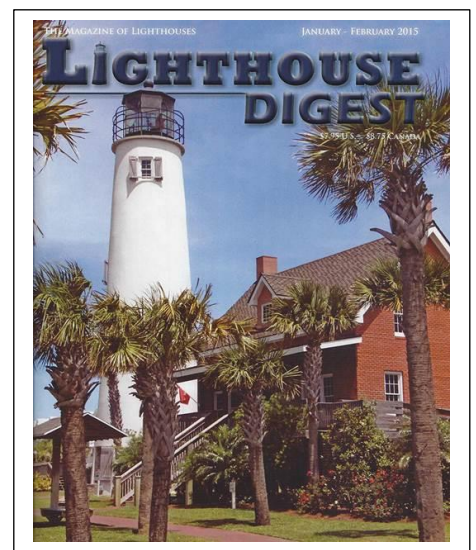
In conjunction with the window installation, Fisher Stucco will slope the sills of all five windows to prevent the collection of water that caused wood damage to the top windows.

Repainting the exterior of the tower will also be completed as part of the project, which will require again renting a lift to reach the upper parts of the lighthouse.

The work will probably cause the lighthouse to be closed for some time during the project, but every effort will be made to keep closures to a minimum during the busy spring break season. Hope for good weather so that the work can be completed quickly and soon! Check our website at [www.stgeorgelight.org](http://www.stgeorgelight.org) for updates.

## *Cape St. George Light Is a Cover Girl Again!*

The Cape St. George Light has once again made the cover of Lighthouse Digest magazine. SGLA member Lou Kellenberger's photo of our lighthouse was selected as the "Best View of any Lighthouse" in the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Lighthouse Digest Photo Contest. The photo is on the cover of the January-February 2015 edition of the magazine, published by Tim Harrison. Lighthouse Digest is a premier supporter of lighthouse preservation worldwide and is the number one source for information on lighthouse news, history, events, merchandise, and anything else related to lighthouses. Congratulations, Lou – a great photographer, a great shot, and a great subject!



# Lighthouse Supports Chili Cookoff

The first Saturday in March was a chilly day AND a chili day on St. George Island, and the lighthouse team again participated in the St. George Island Charity Chili Cookoff, the annual fundraiser for the island's Volunteer Fire Department.



Chefs Vito Bell and Bob Heide slice and dice.

Veteran Chili Chefs Bob Heide and Vito Bell once again did the honors, stirring up our official bean-less entry in the International Chili Society sanctioned event. Before the 2 p.m. entry deadline in the competitive event, Chef Jim Kemp kept the crowd warm with a spicy pot of Chili with Beans.



Jim Kemp stirs the pot of chili with beans.

We sold more than 200 tastes of chili for \$1.00, and several \$5 bowls to those who liked it so much they had to have more – contributing \$238 toward the always profitable event. This beat last year's contribution by 36 per cent. When asked about the increase, Chef Kemp said "It was easy. I just made a bigger pot of chili!"



SGLA member Jackie Bell (center) serves up Lighthouse Chili to hungry customers.



The team relaxes after a busy day!

We collected a fair share of the "People's Choice" favorite chili tickets, drank a few beers, supported our colleagues in the Fire Department – and had a GREAT time!

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEER DOCENTS

Spring Break is about to launch into full swing, and from now until mid-April the island and the lighthouse will be hosting first college students and then younger revelers enjoying a break from their studies.

This busy period is a lot easier on our hard-working Gift Shop staff when we have a docent in the museum to help tell the story of our lighthouse and make our young guests feel welcome. We provide new docents with a short training session and plenty of information to help answer questions about the lighthouse and the island.

So if you are interested in spending a few hours helping at the museum, please stop by the Gift Shop or call 850-927-7745 and we will get you on the schedule!

## Student Art Day "en Plein Air"

The St. George Lighthouse Association is proud to be a partner in the annual Forgotten Coast en Plein Air Paint-out event, and this year will host Student Art Day on May 6.

More than 20 students each paired with a visiting Plein Air artist will paint in Lighthouse Park from 10 a.m. until noon. Then we will host lunch for the students, artists, and volunteers and view the exciting results of their morning's work.

We will be asking for volunteers to help with food preparation and set-up, so plan to join us for a lovely morning of art in the Park on May 6!



## *Please Patronize Our Business Members*

Aloha Bugs Pest Management  
Mason & Marilyn Bean, Realtors  
BJ's Pizza  
Blue Heron Group, LLC  
Kristy Branch Banks, P.A.  
The Butler Agency  
Century 21 Collins Realty, Inc.  
Collins Vacation Rentals  
Steve Harris, Realtor  
Island Adventures  
Island Outfitters  
Bobby James Roofing

Journeys of SGI  
Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty  
Resort Vacation Properties of SGI  
Sanders and Duncan, P.A.  
Pandora Schlitt, Realtor  
Thomas M. Shuler, Attorney-at-Law  
Survivors Bait and Tackle  
St. George Island Civic Club  
St. George Island Realty  
R.W. Thomas Construction Inc.  
Jerry Thompson, Realtor

# Renewal Time Once Again

It's almost spring, and that means it's time to renew your annual membership in the St. George Lighthouse Association. Renewal letters will be in the mail in March. If you don't receive a renewal letter, or if you want to save us the postage, renew or purchase a new membership by sending your membership contribution to the St. George Lighthouse Association, 2B East Gulf Beach Drive, St. George Island, Florida 32328.

Membership categories are \$25 for an Individual Membership, \$50 for a Family Membership, \$100 for a Keeper Membership, and \$500 for a Lifetime Patron Membership. Business Memberships are \$125.

Members climb the Lighthouse for free, and receive a 10% discount at the Lighthouse Gift Shop.

## Quick Blinks

- Check the calendar on our website ([www.stgeorgelight.org](http://www.stgeorgelight.org)) for the schedule of coming Full Moon Climbs at the lighthouse. Experience sunset and moonrise from the top of the tower and enjoy snacks donated by an island business and washed down with a sparkling cider toast to the full moon. The climbs fill up fast, so call the Gift Shop at 850-927-7745 today to reserve a spot.
- We will be ordering another round of commemorative pavers for Lighthouse Park around mid-March. So if you are considering honoring a friend, family member, or yourself with a brick in a "Pathway to the Light," now is the time! Please call the Gift Shop at 850-927-7745 for information.
- Florida Lighthouse Day is Saturday, April 11, 2015. Join us for free climbing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and take a moment to remember the importance of lighthouses in the history of our country.
- The spring meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association will be held at one of our sister Panhandle lighthouses – Pensacola on May 29 and 30, 2015. See the FLA website at [www.floralighthouses.org](http://www.floralighthouses.org) for details.

## A Parting Shot . . . .



This group of young people attended a Children's Retreat sponsored by the First Baptist Church of Eastpoint late last year.

They spent the weekend on the island, participating in retreat activities, playing on the beach, grilling out – but coordinator Rita Millender said that their favorite thing was climbing the lighthouse.

Keeper Jim Dunkin said that they were well-behaved, and are welcome back any time. Children enjoying the lighthouse is one of our favorite things!