

HURON ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Burt Mason

Huron Island Lighthouse Preservation Association Elects Officers

Joins Forces with Friends of the Huron Mountains

L'Anse, Michigan, October 10, 2019 The Huron Island Lighthouse Preservation Association (HILPA) elected new officers on October 3, 2019, at a meeting hosted by the Friends of the Huron Mountains (FOHM). The incoming slate includes President Burt Mason, Vice-President and Treasurer Joe Bollech, Secretary Nancy Bernard, and trustees Jeffery Loman and Wayne Abba.

In view of HILPA's 20-year stewardship of lighthouse preservation and the organizations' mutual historical and environmental interests, FOHM leaders met over the summer with United States Fish & Wildlife Service and HILPA representatives to facilitate a smooth transition to new management.

HILPA's formation began in 1996 when local resident Marie Stiebe organized a meeting at the Baraga County Courthouse to explore interest in fixing the lighthouse roof. An enthusiastic turnout led to formal organization as a non-profit group and an eventual 20-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Fish & Wildlife Service through the cooperation of Seney Wildlife Refuge. HILPA obtained grants and met matching requirements through community fundraising activities such as dinner-dances, t-shirt sales and raffles.

Those grass-roots efforts produced results. The roof was fixed and a new dock was built – the latter with the assistance of Congressman Bart Stupak. The original group of officers – President Marie Stiebe, Vice President Mike Roberts and later John Saarinen, Secretary Chris Collins, Treasurer Joan Teddy, and Trustee Janet Gransell – remained in office until the October 3 election. The community – indeed, all who appreciate historical preservation – owe them a vote of thanks for their untiring dedication.

Incoming HILPA President Burt Mason said "I can't overstate the value of HILPA's achievements, which are synergistic with those of the Friends of the Huron Mountains. We look forward to preserving the

Huron Island Lighthouse in the lakeshore and mountainous wilderness setting foreseen by the islands' designation as a wildlife refuge in 1905. The lighthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a national treasure."

HILPA and FOHM will remain legally separate organizations. HILPA funds raised over the years will be used exclusively for lighthouse preservation.

Over the winter months HILPA will be planning next summer's work and calling for volunteers, which will provide an opportunity for people who have never visited the Huron Islands to see this rare and beautiful place.

The Huron Island Lighthouse Preservation association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the Huron Island Lighthouse and providing for its enjoyment by future generations.

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