



THE FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION, INC.

A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION

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The Florida Lighthouse Association held an all-day strategic planning meeting at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, June 17, 2006, with 27 officers and directors attending to define a clear direction for the statewide organization. All the association officers attended.

The top goals, in addition to issuing the strategic plan to all members, include obtaining a lighthouse license plate for sustained funding, forging alliances and partnerships to have a stronger voice in protecting and preserving lighthouses, developing a comprehensive funding plan of corporate sponsors and legacy gifting and increasing and broadening membership.

Stan Farnham, association president, presented the Thomas H. Taylor President's annual award to Hibbard "Hib" Casselberry, of Pompano Beach, one of the founders of the 10-year old association, for his distinguished service to the organization. He serves as district one commissioner, which includes nine lighthouses along the east coast, and as chairman of the education committee. He has also served in several positions in the Hillsboro Lighthouse Preservation Society. The award is named for Tom Taylor, an organizer of the association and its president, 1997-2001. He died in 2004.

"Not only did the group give a newfound clarity to the association, but also built bridges and cemented strong relationships in the planning process," Farnham, of Naples, said. "The association is a magnet for volunteers who share the organization's passion for preserving lighthouses for future generations to enjoy and appreciate."

Kathy Fleming, executive director of St. Augustine Lighthouse and Ed Gunn, operations director of Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse were speakers at the meeting. Jamie Stuve, executive director of Jupiter Lighthouse also attended. Dianne and Gordon Levi, of Pensacola, won an award for traveling the farthest (467 miles). Beverly Oakes, of Jacksonville, received an award for a major contribution.

The association board of directors also met. They voted to modernize the bylaws, create a separate account for the lighthouse license plate fund, and invest association funds to get a return.

Lighthouses, which once protected coastal shipping and guided mariners into Florida's ports and river safely since 1824, have become tourist attractions. They are a national resource treasured for their historic, cultural and scenic values. They represent our heritage as "America's Castles." Florida's six reef lights along the Florida Keys are "America's Eiffel Towers." The remaining 30 Florida lighthouses, of the original 59 constructed, string along like jewels on a 2,276-mile coastline necklace. Of the 30, six are open to the public: St. Augustine, Ponce de Leon Inlet, Jupiter, Cape Florida, Key West and Boca Grande lighthouses. Hillsboro Lighthouse, built in 1906-07 and lit March 7, 1907, is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Open only three or four

times a year, the next Hillsboro tour is November 11, 2006. Pensacola Lighthouse is open only Sunday afternoons, May through October. Florida Lighthouse Day is September 16, 2006.

The Florida Lighthouse Association promotes, preserves and protects the rich maritime heritage of all Florida lighthouses. The all-volunteer association, with more than 1,000 people, educates and raises attention to get public support to increase Florida lighthouse preservation measures. The association meets quarterly at a lighthouse and publishes a quarterly newsletter, FLASH. The Web site, www.floridalighthouses.org, provides detailed information about the association.

Florida Lighthouse Association Officers: Stan Farnham, of Naples, president; Paul Wenglowky, of St. Augustine, executive vice president; Diana "Dede" Smith, of Orlando, vice president-membership; Charley and Lottie Knox of Lake City, vice presidents-fund raising; Stan Beckstrom, of Jupiter, vice president-information technology and webmaster; Gayle and Dennis Stemac, of San Antonio (FL), vice presidents-meetings and events; Christi Sessions, of Fort White, secretary; Sharon Puls, of Lutz, assistant secretary; and George Diller, of Cape Canaveral, treasurer. The immediate past president, Gene Oakes, of Jacksonville passed away in January. Neil Hurley, of Virginia, is association historian.

The district one lighthouses: Amelia Island, St. Johns River, Mayport, St. Augustine, Ponce de Leon Inlet, Cape Canaveral, Jupiter, Hillsboro and Cape Florida.

The district two lighthouses: Six reef lights of Fowey Rocks, Carysfort, Alligator, Sombrero, American Shoal and Sand Key, plus Key West, Garden Key (Fort Jefferson) and Dry Tortugas. The reef lights are more than 125 years old.

The district three lighthouses: Sanibel, Port Boca Grande, Gasparilla, Egmont Key, Anclote Key and Cedar Key.

The district four lighthouses: St. Marks, Crooked River, Cape St. George, Cape San Blas, Pensacola and St. Joseph Bay. St. Joseph Bay is a private residence. Cape St. George fell last year and is being salvaged and restored.



Hib Casselberry (l), Stan Farnham