

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called in the National Guard this winter to help with a special project on Faulkner's Island. At the request of USFWS Manager Rick Potvin, Chief Warrant Officer Paul Melanson and his crew flew a Chinook helicopter out to the island and brought back a stranded skid steer loader. The 7,000-pound piece of machinery had been on the island to help dig the foundation for the expanded generator building. The equipment was stranded when a hurricane brushed by and washed out a dirt road. "These guys really helped me out and I can't thank them enough," Potvin said. Melanson and crew landed the machine expertly onto a parking lot at Hammonasset State Park. The aerial photo was provided by Doug Livornese, Walt Kudler and Chuck Stevens of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Air Unit.

## Announcing A Spectacular Summer And September

There is exciting news at Faulkner's Island, a summer of activity for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a September with two Open House Weekends planned and, for the first time, the hiring of an Island Keeper.

And then there is much more. Where to begin?

First, there is a new, enlarged generator building, making it possible for summer interns and USFWS personnel to spend more time safely and comfortably on the island. The three interns hired for the summer are two Guilford natives, Orrin Jones and Wayne Vetre, and from Utah, Anna Hathaway.

Cindy Coughenour, USFWS, explains, "Our interns will be monitoring tern colony activity and predator activity. We continue to count the number of chicks and compare that number to previous years. We also continually monitor conditions for breeding." The interns



Chinook helicopter

will be on the island seven days a week on a rotating schedule.

The new generator building also enables USFWS to hire, for the first time, an Island Keeper. Elizabeth and John Delemarre of Madison will take up residence on the island through September, welcoming guests once the roseate terns have safely moved on.

Last year's rebuilding of the pier, installation of a floating dock system and dredging of the boat basin makes it possible this year to hold two Open House Weekends in September. They

will be September 6-7, and September 13-14.

In addition to all of this, Faulkner's Light Brigade has also completed another restoration project, this one the painting of the cast iron stairway inside the lighthouse. This conservation project will be on view for this year's Open House Weekends.

Welcome to an exciting summer and September on Faulkner's Island.

# Renovating The Generator Building



What used to be a one-room building to house interns and USFWS staff has been successfully renovated this spring, providing better space and conveniences, working room and lodging.

Cindy Coughenour of USFWS, explains the original building presented some restrictions. “We would survey the tern colony early in the morning. The birds defecate on us. We would return ‘home’ to the generator building to change clothes, eat and recline until the noon heat passed. By necessity, our equipment would be piled not far from our plates.

“The building as one room did not support a stove for cooking, an area for separating eating from soiled work clothes, and washing dishes had to be done outside on the edge of a colony.

“Expansion of the building supports interns and staff, allowing them to separate a clean living and eating space from work clothes and equipment. The

USDA monitors the Faulkner’s Island colony for Avian Influenza and other diseases. Fortunately, there has been no sign for concern, however, we want to keep everyone safe and clean.

“The rehabilitation affords the interns a more comfortable space to live and work in for a week at a time. The roof has been repaired. Windows have been installed as well as a tile floor and a propane stove. A non-potable water system will support short showers and washing kitchenware. A new restroom on top of the island has been added. Next year individual sleeping areas are planned for the interior of the building.

“We are excited to offer interns improved living facilities and Faulkner’s Light Brigade an opportunity to house a fall Island Keeper. Not only will we enjoy the island, so will the general public as we begin to plan for open house weekends and other events.”



From May to September is a busy time for the roseate tern, which nests, breeds and fledges its young on Faulkner’s Island. It is also a busy time for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which monitors and counts the young chicks. This photo of a nest, egg and young chick remind us that Faulkner’s, in addition to its service as an active lighthouse, is an important wildlife sanctuary, a part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

## FLB Welcomes The Delemarres As Island Keepers

Since childhood Elizabeth Delemarre spent her summers at her grandmother's cottage on Hartford Avenue in Madison. When she was a teenager, she would climb aboard the family's 14-foot Boston whaler piloted by her brother and visit the Coast Guard living out on Faulkner's Island. "It was very exciting," she recalls.

In late August she returns to Faulkner's, this time with her husband John, as the pair take up the new position of Island Keeper. "I think this will be very exciting as well," Elizabeth says.

The Delemarres take up this position – new to them and new to the island – the week of August 24 and they will remain to the end of September. They have lived for years on Neck Road where Faulkner's Lighthouse has been a familiar, comforting presence.

"We would hope we

could introduce that same feeling to others. We'll see. We don't know yet what this first September will bring," John says.

John's background includes 34 years in military service, both active and reserve, as well as 23 years working with the federal prison system. He was also an attorney. Elizabeth, for years a stay-at-home mother, is now working on a children's book about sea creatures. She began considering the Island Keeper position when FLB Chairman Fred Farnsworth, seeing Elizabeth out on her daily walk, suggested it. The Delemarres were interested.

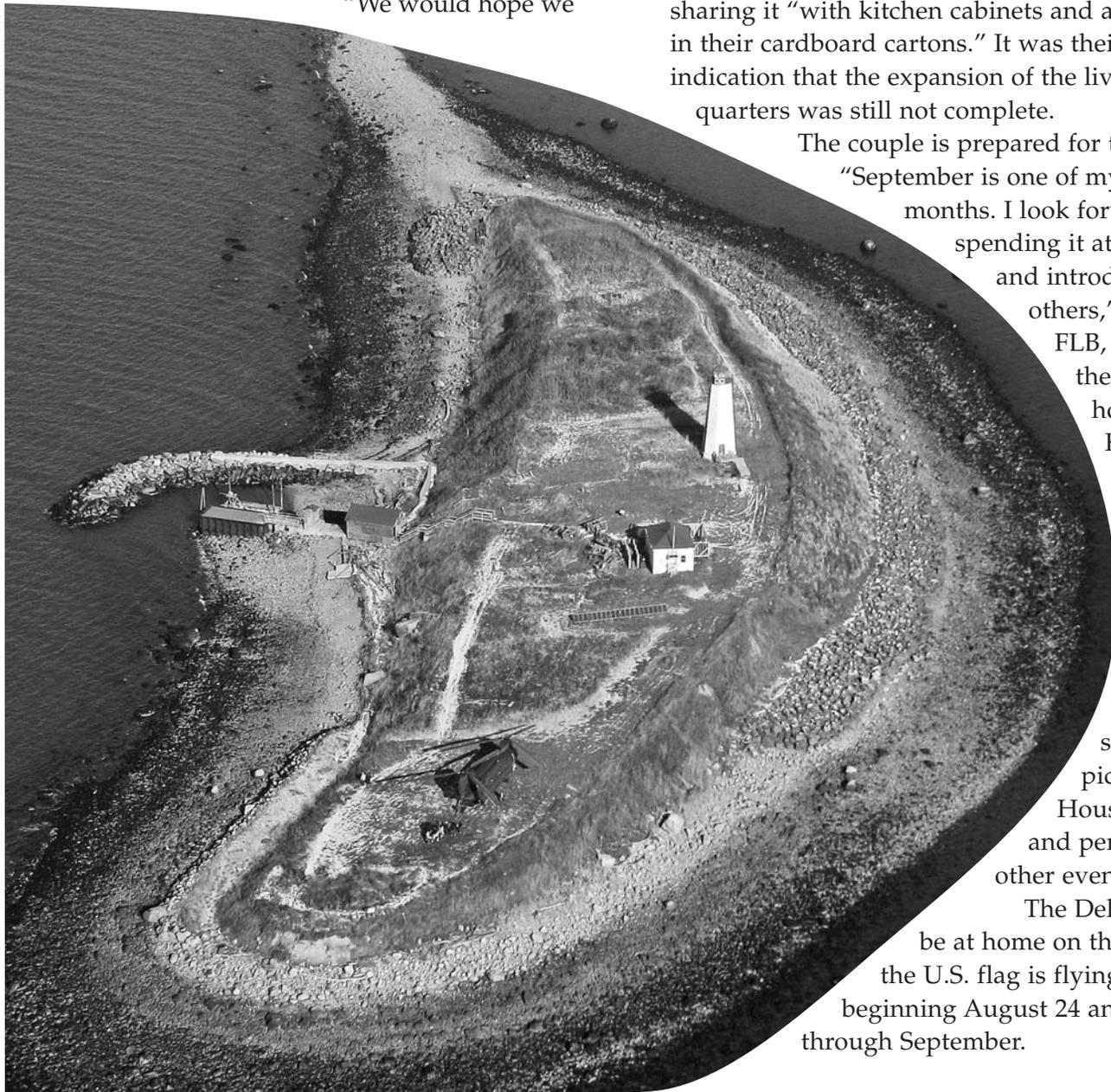
"We committed to the position first, then we had our first real visit to the island," Elizabeth recalls. It was around late April and the Delemarres were being ferried out to the island in a USFWS transport, sharing it "with kitchen cabinets and a stove still in their cardboard cartons." It was their first indication that the expansion of the living quarters was still not complete.

The couple is prepared for the adventure.

"September is one of my favorite months. I look forward to spending it at Faulkner's and introducing it to others," John said.

FLB, USFWS and the Delemarres hope the Island Keeper position will allow Faulkner's to open to the public most days throughout September for sightseeing, picnics, Open House Weekends and perhaps other events.

The Delemarres will be at home on the island when the U.S. flag is flying. Watch for it beginning August 24 and continuing through September.



## Conserving The Spiral Stairway: FLB's Latest Major Project



**Spiral staircase before renovation and at right, Brett Budde of Conservation Services LLC. is hard at work on the staircase.**

Left photo: Steven McGuire

Inside the Faulkner's Island Lighthouse is a 33-foot high cast iron spiral staircase. Until last fall it was suffering from years-old flaking paint, which left it vulnerable to increasing rust in the harsh island environment. No more.

In November John Saunders of Guilford and his crew from Conservation Services removed the old paint, restoring and repairing the staircase. The project cost \$15,724 and was financed by Faulkner's Light Brigade as part of its mission to conserve the lighthouse.

Saunders reported an exposed oxidized surface on approximately 90 percent of the staircase surface. "Corrosion levels varied from severe to moderate," he said. "The most heavily corroded were the horizontal tops of the steps." His inspection showed that none of the cast iron units appeared to be compromised by corrosion.

All the corrosion was removed, the entire staircase treated with a stabilizer, and then primed and painted.

Interestingly, Saunders reported that most stair

units showed signs of painted or applied numbering, beginning at the bottom with 1. "To preserve these as a historic feature, they were masked off during painting and carefully hand cleaned and coated with an exterior grade clear urethane," he explained.

Cracks and holes caused by corrosion were repaired and welded. The ladder between the top landing and lantern house cast iron deck was reattached.

The work was done under the supervision of Fred Vogt, chair of FLB's maintenance committee. The rust and repairs were completed according to guidelines recommended by the National Park Service and in ways that were sensitive to retaining the historic value of the staircase.

Records show the lighthouse was originally built around 1802 when James Madison was President of the United States, and the cast iron staircase recently restored was installed in about 1871 as part of a major lighthouse renovation. The Brigade is pleased to have been able to conserve this piece of island history.



View from Lighthouse window.

photo: Steven McGuire

## Volunteers Needed!

Faulkner's Light Brigade is seeking volunteers who would enjoy becoming more active with the Brigade. Anyone interested in giving a little of their time to assist with various activities would be very much appreciated.

The Brigade could use assistance with mailings of The Octagon, covering the telephone answering machine via home phone, setting up for various programs, and manning tables of merchandise for sale and refreshments at events.

Preparing for the September Open House Weekends will also require a lot of extra hands and we could definitely use help cleaning up and mowing portions of the island. On the days of the Open House help is needed either on the island or at the marina with setting up, manning tables for merchandise, and assisting visitors on and off boats, as well as monitoring lines of visitors going into the lighthouse.

We could definitely use the assistance of boat owners who would help with various jobs during the Open House Weekends.

If you would be interested, please send a note to our P.O. Box 444, Guilford, Connecticut 06437 or leave a message on our answering machine at 203-453-8400.

Your help will be appreciated!

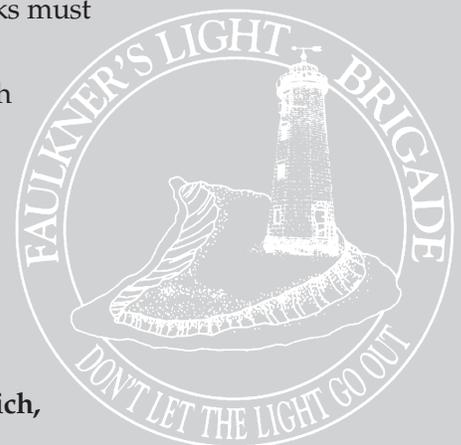
## Recognizing Retiring Directors

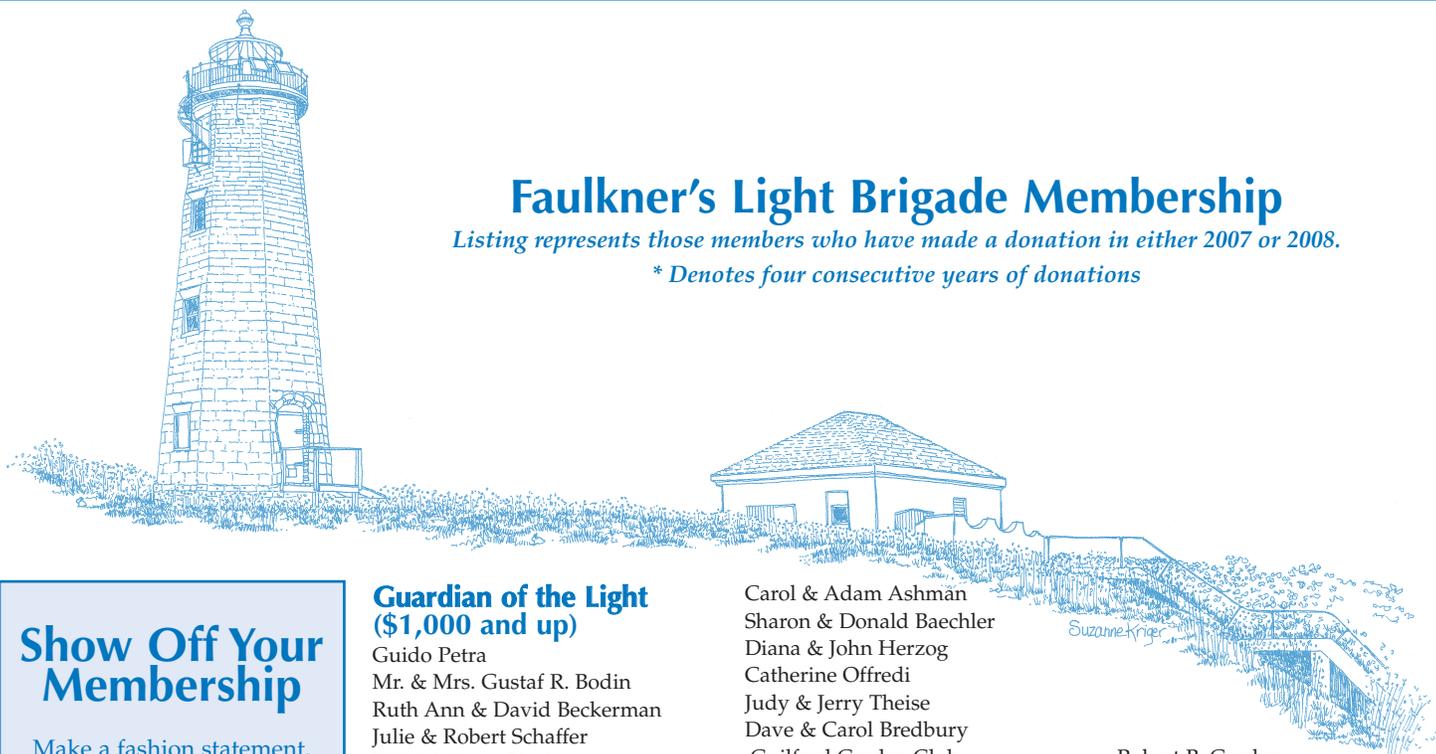
For a decade Faulkner's Light Brigade has succeeded in preserving the island and restoring the lighthouse through the time, energy, interest and expertise of its members. Special thanks must be given to the Brigade's Board of Directors for their unflagging efforts

This year we are saying goodbye to several directors who have been with us since the earliest days. They have chosen to retire and they deserve our particular thanks. We wish to recognize the following directors who are retiring: **Joe Arnold, Gustaf Bodin, Richard DiNardo, Lew DeSanto, Guido Petra** and **Sally Richards**.

## Welcoming New Ones

At the same time, we welcome good friends who have accepted a request to join the Board of Directors. The new directors are: **Henry Graver, Jeff Heinrich, Bob Kazdan, Drew Kufta, Gary Lyon** and **Marie Pohlman**.





## Faulkner's Light Brigade Membership

*Listing represents those members who have made a donation in either 2007 or 2008.*

*\* Denotes four consecutive years of donations*

### Show Off Your Membership

Make a fashion statement. Faulkner's Light Brigade t-shirts and polo shirts are available for sale. The 100 percent cotton t-shirts carry the distinctive Brigade logo printed on the left chest. They can be ordered in two colors, ash or sand, in sizes M, L, XL, and XXL. The price is \$16 each, plus \$4.50 per order for shipping.

The polo shirt with an embroidered image of Faulkner's Lighthouse is available in navy or hunter green in sizes S, M, L, XL and XXL. The price is \$29, plus \$4.50 per order for shipping. These shirts can be personalized with a name, for an additional \$5, at the time of ordering.

Please make checks payable to "FLB" and forward to: Faulkner's Light Brigade, c/o Joseph Nugent, 423 Whitfield St., Guilford, CT 06437. If you have questions, please call Joe at 203-453-4034 and leave a name and contact number with your question.

Show your support for Faulkner's Island and the Light Brigade!

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*Listing represents those members who have made a donation in either 2007 or 2008.*

*\* Denotes four consecutive years of donations*

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