NEW JERSEY LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY
General Meeting, December 6, 1997
Henry Hudson Regional High School, Highlands NJ

President Tom Laverty called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. The minutes of the September 21, 1997, meeting were distributed to members present. One spelling correction was made: "Ray Vleit" was changed to "Ray Vliet." Rich Veit moved, Jim Cope seconded, acceptance of the minutes; motion was approved.

Treasurer Debbie Megonigal reported a balance on hand of $5235.44, plus $8548.91 in the Preservation Fund and $2071.21 in the Memorial Fund. Bill Geilfuss moved, Ray Vliet seconded, acceptance of the treasurer's report; motion was approved.

Ballots for the 1998-99 term of office were distributed. The votes were counted during the meeting by George Feirer, judge of elections, along with Lee Sliwa and Nancy Matthews.

President's Report Tom Laverty
Tom informed the membership that the Society has some recent *New Jersey Outdoors* magazines containing an extensive lighthouse article he had written. They are available for $4.00, 50 cents of which will profit the Society.

The tours of Sandy Hook Lighthouse this year, a joint effort of the National Park Service and NJLHS, have been very popular, with approximately 2,000 tourists climbing the tower. On December 14 and 21, NPS is planning special holiday tours; our help is needed on the 21st. Noting that the details have yet to be worked out, Tom said that the Society is working on obtaining part of the keeper's house for office and/or display space. The spring and summer tour schedule will be set up in the near future.

A group planning the establishment of a national lighthouse museum has met several times, Tom, a member of the steering committee, reported. Three sites meeting the group's criteria have been proposed--Staten Island, NY; Mackinaw City, MI; and Hull, MA. The NJLHS board supports the Staten Island site, not because it is close to our state, but because it is historically significant (location of lighthouse depot) and can be visited all year long (unlike the Michigan site which is inaccessible in winter.) In addition, the Staten Island site provides access to many people and is close to many lighthouses and other attractions. The group will meet again in March.

New Jersey Network expects its video of New Jersey lighthouses to be completed sometime in the spring of 1998. A video crew accompanied the Society on its September meeting/boat tour on Delaware Bay, and will visit Twin Lights soon. PBS has also visited Twin Lights and Sandy Hook in connection with a six-hour video of American lighthouses slated for an October, 1998, airing.

A Memorial Fund has been created by NJLHS, giving individuals an opportunity to remember deceased loved ones by contributing to lighthouse projects. When Ed Renner, a lighthouse enthusiast and father of a Society member, passed away, his family requested that donations be sent to NJLHS in his memory. The more than $2000 in this dedicated account will be used to fund lighthouse projects in his name. Any person may make a donation to this fund in memory of someone he or she would like to honor in this way.

Tom introduced Art Weimer, president of the Leonardo Citizens' Committee, whose goal is to restore Conover Beacon. Leonardo, a section of Middletown Township, is the location of two

lighthouses--Conover Beacon and its rear-range light, Chapel Hill. In the 1920s, Leonardo bought the land around Conover; in time, it was closed and vandalized, but people who wanted to preserve the tower battled for decades to save it from destruction. Mr. Weimer acknowledged Tom Laverty and NJLHS for helping the Leonardo citizens in their efforts on behalf of the tower, which they hope to have painted by next summer. The citizens' group has become a member of the Society.

Programs Yvonne Miller
Today's program includes visits to Conover Beacon and Chapel Hill light, a private residence, Yvonne said. Because of limited parking at both sites, "tickets" will be issued to members and guests, with half the people going to each location at a time. "The new owners of Chapel Hill have been very gracious in allowing us to go on their property to take photos," she said, "so please consider their neighbors."

The March 21, 1998, meeting will take place at Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island, NY, and will be held jointly with the New York Harbor Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society. The annual photo contest is on the agenda, and Yvonne is working on getting directions to the other Staten Island lights....The Society's annual picnic/meeting will be held June 27, 1998, at Fort Mott Park near Finn's Point light. The meeting will be held right at the park; there will be no speaker so members may enjoy a longer day of activities, including the picnic, tours of the fort and nearby Fort Delaware.....Tentative plans for future meetings include Stony Point on the Hudson River in September and East Point in December.

Membership Mary Beth Doherty
The latest count shows that the Society has 714 members! In June, 1990, 19 charter members attended the first meeting of the society co-founded by Jim Gowdy, Jack Granger and Kim Ruth.

Lighthouse Tour Carole DiNapoli
Carole has arranged a five-day, four-night motorcoach tour of Maine lighthouses to take place from May 31 to June 4. The price is $495 per person, double occupancy, and includes lodging, four breakfasts and dinners, admissions and boat cruises. Thirty-five to 38 people are needed to make the trip economically viable.

Photo Contest Al Smith
The rules for the photo contest, the second "people's choice" competition, were in the most recent issue of *The Beam*. Al detailed some of the changes made since last year, including the addition of a "master's category" for members winning first, second or third in any previous NJLHS photo contest. "The idea is to give more people a chance to win," Al said. "We have some very good photographers in our society. Eventually, the masters will be recycled back into the general contest." Al also again emphasized that while snapshots are not prohibited, photos smaller than 5 by 7 do not show well against larger ones. In response to a question about entering digital photos produced on a computer,
Al responded that laser blow-ups are OK, but added that creating a photo by manipulating images on a computer is "between you and your conscience."

Ways and Means Steve Martorano
Steve listed some items on hand and to be ordered for sale at meetings and at Sandy Hook tours and other events the Society attends. "We appreciate anything you buy, from a magnet to a sweatshirt," Steve said. "All proceeds go directly to the Society, and this money keeps us going."

Publicity Rich and Elinor Veit
Rich and Elinor send information every month to *Lighthouse Digest* and other publications about our activities, and distribute Society information at events they attend, such as the Batsto Craft Fair and the NJEA teachers' convention. They are also the Society's representatives to the Absecon lighthouse. Elinor is keeping an album of Absecon's renovation project; her photo of the lighthouse appeared in the USLHS's *Keeper's Log*, but the caption stated the wrong colors.

Election Results George Feirer
George and his assistants counted the ballots twice; there were 107 ballots counted, including absentee ballots mailed or delivered. For Corresponding Secretary, the only contested office, there were 111 votes cast; this discrepancy was attributed to "creative voting" on the part of some members who voted for each candidate. For the three seats on the Board of Directors, the results were: Al Smith, 106; Ray Vliet, 104; Bill Volpe, 107; Bill Geilfuss, 4 write-in votes. For Corresponding Secretary, the results were: Rich Hellenbrecht, 39; Betty Smith, 72.

Society Dinner-Dance Bill Volpe
For some time, the Society has been interested in producing a video of New Jersey lighthouses with a view toward distributing it to schools throughout the state. We will be working with New Jersey Network to set up a "lending library" to distribute NJN's video; to finance the distribution, Bill has planned a dinner-dance to be held April 18 in the Atlantic City area. A show of hands indicated about 35 people are interested in attending.

The 50-50 of $98 was won by Steve Martorano.

Jim and Nancy Cope presented a two-part slide show--activities of the NJLHS and an alphabetical journey to lighthouses of the U.S. and other countries. At the conclusion of their program, Al Smith moved, Rich Hellenbrecht seconded, adjournment. The meeting ended at 1:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Swiencki, Recording Secretary