



"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all year long." ~Charles Dickens



Steve Murray is Superintendent of Parks for North Wildwood, (including the award-winning Hereford Inlet Lighthouse Gardens,) he serves on the board that operates the Lighthouse and is editor of its newsletter and author of several books. Each year he is responsible for the decorations which adorn the Hereford Inlet Christmas Tree and Gazebo. Steve's hopes for the patriotic theme of the decorations this year were to boost our spirits in these hard economic times. His intentions were that we would all be reminded we are Americans, and because of this, we can get through anything!

On Friday, December 5th, 2008, the official **Hereford Inlet Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony for the City of North Wildwood** began at dusk on a quiet chilly winter evening. The townspeople gathered in the courtyard of the Lighthouse, in front of the gazebo to officially welcome the holiday season 'island-style.' The festivities included the singing of the national anthem by Dolly McGee, the Margaret Mace School Choir singing traditional Christmas Carols, led by Ms. Macrie. The evening was also blessed with a beautiful prayer by Al Mouklas, a 'Friend of the Lighthouse', especially praying for peace, for our new president and for the state of our economy along with special prayers for the former Mayor Anthony Catanoso who had taken a severe fall that afternoon. **He's is doing much better as we go to print!**

The night culminated in a long line of very good children waiting in line to see Santa and Mrs. Claus. The Hereford Inlet Lighthouse was open for touring, free of charge, encouraging everyone to come in and do a little Christmas shopping in their Gift Shop and to get warmed up with hot chocolate (donated by Lehigh Dairies in Wildwood) and homemade cookies. Be sure to mark your calendars for next season's event! It's a real nice way to get into the spirit of Christmas and to get out and mingle with friends, neighbors and family.

The night could be compared to a Norman Rockwell or Currier & Ives scene.



North Wildwood Mayor Bill Henfey with his wife Diane and Steve Murray



Hereford's Betty Mugnier & Peter Harp in character as the Keeper. Peter performed sea shanties & songs on his banjo, some with lyrics about the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse that he wrote. Sea shanties were the work songs sang on ships during the Age of Sail.



Sophie, Rosie, Gage & Anthony
Maggie's in background on left



Newlyweds **Bill & Lauren Auty** celebrating their first Christmas as husband and wife.



My beautiful Mom, **Diane McMonagle**, who recently made her North Wildwood summer home of 40 years, her year-round residence. Her new retirement schedule includes early morning walks along the sea wall, visiting the Lighthouse gardens, line dancing at the Rec, attending community crime watch meetings, and she can't wait for the free concerts to return!



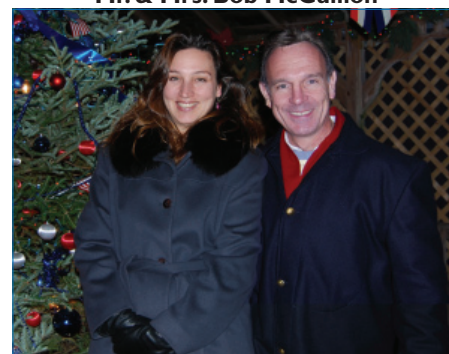
Susannah, Don & Cindy Scace



Little Eileen Carey with Santa & Mrs. Claus



Mr. & Mrs. Bob McCullion



Christine & Ron SOLDano



Dan MacDonald with Santa & Mrs. Claus
Dan was driving the sleigh!!



Johnny & Mary Britton spent their first Christmas in their New House!



Hot Cocoa & Homemade Cookie Duty
Kathy Mills & Jay Coleman



Phillies Fanatic & North Wildwood's Honorary Lt. Ron "Fonz" Despo



Friend of the Lighthouse and our friend too! Joe Loehman