

# Singer focuses on the moon for lighthouse set

**Amanda Sieradzki**  
Council on Culture & Arts

There are 128 steps to the top of the Crooked River Lighthouse in Carrabelle. The historic 103-foot iron skeleton structure is the tallest on the Forgotten Coast. Though singer Susan David, says she has yet to make it to the top, she is preparing her setlist for the Full Moon Climb on March 10.

David hopes to dedicate her set to the late Kathleen Herzog — an arts supporter and member of the Apalachicola Riverkeeper organization — and will offer her microphone to anyone who wants to celebrate her life in a story or song.

David will play music on the wrap-around porch down below as she and her guitar serenade visitors with tunes like “Cajun Moon,” “Moon Shadow” and “Moon Dance.” She’s even written a song called “Chasing the Moon.”

“You know when you’re driving in a car and you see the moon and you feel like you’re kind of racing it?” says David. “It’s right there in the corner of your eye and you know you’ll never catch it, and you know you’ll never beat it, but you’re running with it.”

A native Floridian, David has been chasing her dreams of being onstage since she performed her first show tune. She would gather her family around and sing for them, with her eyes set on Broadway. In high school she was given guitar lessons from a neighbor but has remained mostly self-taught on the instrument.

At the University of Florida, David took drama classes before joining her first band. Folk and blues spoke to her and she cut her teeth in the Gainesville music scene. At the time, David was also working as a physical education teacher. She loves the physicality of sports just as much as the emotional release she feels from dancing and singing, and jokes that getting up in front of students or an audience bears many similarities.

“It’s kind of crowd control,” laughs David. “I do think being in front of 30, 40, 60 kids helps in being an entertainer.”

David moved to the Tallahassee area to be closer to her daughter but continued to cultivate her musical passions. She joined the Tallahassee Community Chorus and was coached in how to warm up her voice, which she continues to do before every performance as a ritual. David also plays and harmonizes with local trio, Low Country Boyle.

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# Singer

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Now the harmonica, mandolin, bass and ukulele round out her instrumental repertoire as well. David released her debut album "Steppin' Out" in 2018. She cites country and blues musicians like Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris as early influences. As a singer and songwriter, David enjoys playing in the atmosphere at festivals and farmers markets best.

"Something inside of you drives you to do this kind of stuff," says David. "I just have to. It's something that calls you."

For David, it is always easier when the melody appears first and the words follow. Her songs range from murder mysteries to lovers at sea in a shipwreck. The inspiration comes from everywhere. David lives at Alligator Point where she kayaks, plays tennis and brings ideas to workshop at music jams.

She wants songs to have a positive impact both in the lyrics and melody. She is drawn to creating and playing upbeat music that make people happy. While learning Bobbie Gentry's "Ode to Billie Joe," a song whose ending is often made up by whoever is playing it, David says she was inspired to try something similar. Other song structures appear while she is on the road, while some are created from procrastination.

"When I try to avoid practicing, I start playing other things and they turn into songs," says David. "Sometimes when you're just sitting around, you get a melody and it just seems like the words fall in somehow."

Other pieces are not as they first appear as her creative process evolves and shifts. David says her song "Falling" started out as a love song but didn't stay that way in the traditional sense. While some might think

## If you go

**What:** Full Moon Climb with singer Susan David

**When:** 8-10 p.m. Tuesday, March 10

**Where:** Crooked River Lighthouse, 1975 Hwy 98 W, Carrabelle

**Cost:** \$8 per person, pay at the Crooked River Lighthouse Museum gift shop

**Contact:** For more information please call 850-697-2732 or visit [crookedriverlighthouse.com](http://crookedriverlighthouse.com). For more information on Susan David, visit [susansingerdavid.com](http://susansingerdavid.com).

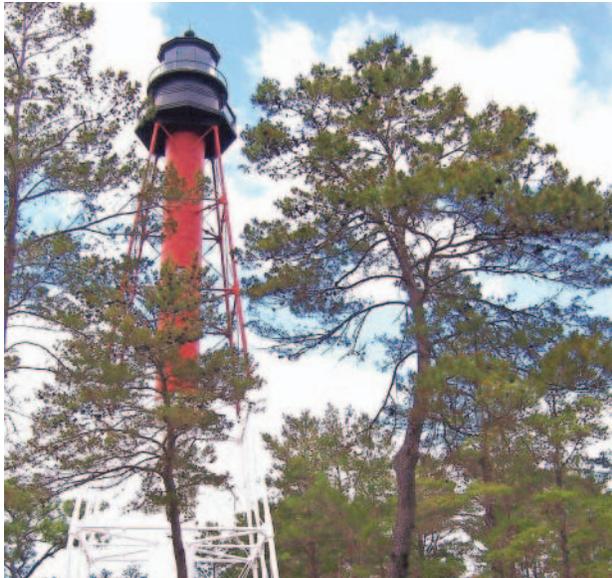
it's about falling in love with a person, David sees it as a song about falling in love with yourself first.

It remains a goal for David to write an original song for one of her idols like Raitt. She finds it most rewarding though when people request songs at shows. Her most popular one is "Get Gone," which came to her after watching Shawn Colvin and Mary Chapin Carpenter perform.

David recounts how they said every songwriter must write a song about leaving home and then another one about coming back. For David, her guitar remains where she feels most at home.

"If you have a passion, don't let people stop you from following that passion," says David, who wrote the song, "My Old Friend" about her guitar. "Whenever I need some uplifting, I usually go to music. With music, there's always a way."

*Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area's umbrella agency for arts and culture ([www.tallahasseearts.org](http://www.tallahasseearts.org)).*



**Crooked River Lighthouse in Carrabelle.**

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT



**Susan David will perform for the Full Moon Climb at the Crooked River Lighthouse in Carrabelle.**

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT