

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 2019 – February 2019

**1. AAM Reaccreditation:**

We should be hearing something back after the AAM Board Meeting in February.

- 2. HR Committee:** The Board of Trustees formed an ad-hoc HR Committee to help review the **Employee Handbook**: The handbook makes no mention of sick days or how to account for time off when sick. The handbook also states that employee vacations are determined by years of service, but that the vacation time resets at the start of the fiscal year. A Board discussion on both these topics needs to occur.
- a. Should vacation time be awarded on the employees' anniversary date?
  - b. Should the handbook be revised to mention sick days (pay)? Should it be part of their vacation days? Should full-time employees receive up to 3 personal/sick days per year?

**3. Facilities:**

- a. Susan Edwards from R.S. Scott Associates is continuing to work on the architectural drawings for the renovation of space and to address exterior concerns. We have not received a progress report to date.
- b. Good Design submitted a first draft of an exhibit redesign for the upper level. Still waiting to hear back on that.
- c. Matt Klimczak's monthly Facility Report provides more details.

**4. Native American Exhibit Project: ONGOING**

- a. Communicating with Good Design to finish the exhibit concept and narrative.
- b. Meet with an anonymous donor concerning a donation of artifacts and financial support.
- c. Decisions on hiring consultants needs to be made.
- d. Matt McCormack from Newline Genealogy is continuing to conduct the research of Native Americans living in Northeast Michigan.

**5. Fisheries Exhibit:**

- a. The GLFT Grant was completed and submitted by January 4<sup>th</sup>. We should hear something in February.
- b. Zach Irving completed the video interview tour with Tuffy.
- c. Visited and recorded an interview with Paul Spens for the Rogers City area. Paul and his father were commercial fishermen. Albert LaBlance was present at that interview.
- d. An interview with Albert LaBlance and his brothers is being an arranged. Proposal for this project will be presented at the February Board meeting.

**6. Art:**

- a. **Erv Lewandowski & Mark Beins:** Opening reception hosted over 120 visitors. The exhibit will be up until April 13<sup>th</sup>. Marketing strategies are being discussed to promote increased visitation to the exhibit.
- b. **Winter Blues:** This year we received 63 entries at \$20 per entry for a total of \$1,260. The opening reception was held February 13<sup>th</sup>. The exhibit will be one February 13<sup>th</sup> through January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Working on the Ritzler art exhibit and fundraising materials. Details attached at the end of this report.

- d. Choose the Yaacov Agam artwork to be exhibited in May. Collections Manager, Maggie will work with Vicki Wright to reframe the artwork. . The Education Coordinator, Amanda will develop lesson plans on the Agam artwork for the spring field trips

**7. Collections Highlights:** (see full report)

- a. Maggie continues to make progress on inventorying the museum's collections. Volunteers have begun to assist with the inventory. Maggie's monthly Collections Manager report provides more details.
- b. Maggie is processing the Cranbrook Animal education collection. The loan paperwork will be ready by March 4, 2019. John Benson is still interested in displaying them at JJs.
- c. Maggie accompanied me when meeting with the anonymous donor for the Native American exhibit.

**8. Education Highlights:** (see full report)

- a. Working with Education Coordinator, Planetarium Coordinator and Board member, John Caplis to create an educational training program for young museum professionals. This program will benefit current employees, along with potential university interns and museum volunteers. The vision is for the Besser Museum to be an institution known for providing professional development opportunities for individuals in the museum field.
- b. The first Art and Astronomy program was held Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was only one student in attendance. Discussions of how to attract a larger audience are taking place. Marketing the program through the school system; hosting the program during the week after 3pm; planning a Family Fun Day, etc.
- c. Education, Planetarium, and Collections departments are working on the Apollo 11 exhibit and complementary programming.
- d. Calendar of event includes Spring Fieldtrip programs, Log Cabin Day, Fall Harvest Fossil Fest, and Season of Light.
- e. Developing evaluation and program assessments is also ongoing.
- f. Amanda's monthly Education report provides more details.

**9. Planetarium Highlights:** (see full report)

- a. Submitted a \$2,500 CFNEM Youth Advisory grant for a show to complement the Apollo 11 exhibit. YAC will notify applicants in March if they are a recipient of a grant.
- b. Working with Education and Collections department on the Apollo 11<sup>th</sup> exhibit and programs.
- c. Working on creating a planetarium focus group to provide programming feedback. Board member, John Caplis teaches Science in the Sanctuary. John has provided the Besser Museum will some instructional materials pertaining to Science Communicators that will prove extremely beneficial as a training program for museum educators / planetarium presenters is being developed.
- d. Johnathan's monthly Planetarium report provides more details.

**10. Other:**

- a. Accounting: I am continuing to work with Marie Williams to create new account numbers and to set up a system for classifying income and expenditures. Improvements are being made to utilizing the donor restricted funds as appropriate.
- b. Audit was complete and will be presented at the February Board meeting.
- c. Kennedy Lundquist is an ACC work-study student assigned to the Besser Museum through one of her ACC instructors. Kennedy is majoring in Business/Marketing/Advertising and will be working on helping create a marketing plan starting with an advertising schedule. Kennedy will

help organize all the markets where the museum can advertise both free and paid. She will create a check list to make sure events are being promoted in a timely fashion.

- d. Working on creating a procedure (training) manual for the front desk
- e. Co-hosting (promoting) The Business of Art with Erv Lewandowski. Details are on the museum Facebook page.

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 20, 2018 @ 4:30 p.m.**

**Shirley Ritzler Art Exhibit and Fundraiser Proposal:** Shirley Ritzler is a local artist from the 80's--who has taken different elements from local homes and developed paper cutting art. The family has granted the Museum permission to use these art works for five years. ED Witulski asked for up to \$4,000 to produce prints of her work and have them framed for a permanent Museum collection. Note cards and prints will also be made for the Museum store. Jim Conboy made a motion to spend up to \$4,000 on the Shirley Ritzler Project, supported by Claudia Chapman. All ayes. Motion carried.

Richard Ritzler signed a contract permitting the Besser Museum to reproduce his wife's artwork to make notecards. He also gave permission to reproduce the work to create an exhibit for our permanent collection. The exhibit is scheduled for 2020.

Mr. Ritzler passed away in January 2019; however, an email from his daughter Jenni confirms their full agreement for this project to go forward.

Exhibit Costs:

Allegra printing scanned the negatives of the papercut artwork.	\$111.39
Allegra printing estimate to have 20 prints made	\$756.00
Painted Lady Framing	<u>\$2,400.00</u>
TOTAL	\$3,267.39

Funding Options:

Candace Smith Endowment:	\$3,222.41
Exhibit Restricted Fund:	\$6,479.27

Still working with Allegra to get prices for what it would cost to have postcard/notecards made to sell in the gift shop.