

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting  
October 2021 – November 2021

**Attendance for both September and October were better than 2020.**

**Fall Harvest Day: was a great day and well attended.**

**HVAC Project**

- To date, Woods and Johnson have almost completed the installation of the new chiller unit. The plumbing is done. There is a pump that has not been delivered yet, they will install it as soon as it arrives. The electrical is wired all the way from the main breaker to the chiller, but it will not be turned on and the breakers will be locked until the pump arrives and everything is installed. The dehumidifier is being hooked up and is not yet finished.
- Control Solutions is working to get all the controls working. Matt has flagged some issues and is working with the company to make sure everything is up and working properly.

**LOG CABIN PROJECT:**

The work was completed on November 8th. Bob Kenel will return Sept/Oct 2022 to do a one year check up to make sure everything looks good

**MUSEUM EXTERIOR:**

A Capital Project grant request for \$194,000 was submitted to the Besser Foundation for consideration at their December meeting. The request included the bids from Meridian and Moran Iron Works along with photos of the exterior of the museum. The quote from Meridian for the exterior repairs is \$164,000. A quote from Moran Iron Works for the back patio art installations and matching deck railing is \$30,000.

**GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:**

- **Chinook:**
  - The DNR Invasive Species Grant was submitted for the Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit. We should receive word on the grant by March.
  - Tuffy and his volunteers have completed the dock that connects the Katherine V and the Chinook.
- **Kat V:**
  - Tuffy and his crew have closed the Kat V for the winter.
- **Film Project:** Gary Goren started working with the committee on the LaBlance family video. We hope to continue editing work on that project throughout the winter.

**ANISHINAABE EXHIBIT REVITALIZATION PROJECT (Native American Gallery)**

- The committee has not met this month. Work is continuing, however, was delayed due to my focus on the Great Lakes Fisheries grant, and the Season of Light exhibit and Membership Drive.

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**Season of Light:** this year's theme is Merry and Bright

1. Alpena Power has contributed \$1000 to the Season of Light exhibit. We will also allocated funds from the Harry Johnson Fund for some of the expenses.

2. Volunteers, DeLynn Medina and Marilyn Thom started working on props for the exhibit in September. The museum staff and volunteers started setting the exhibit November 1st. We also have sixteen non-profit organizations participating in Community of Trees gallery.
3. This year, we decided to have a Members Only Gala on November 20<sup>th</sup>. Because we received so many great raffle donations for this event, I developed a Membership Drive in conjunction with the Members Only Gala.
4. To date we have received several new memberships, and several increased their member levels. So far, the membership drive has raised \$4,110 in membership dues. The Membership Drive will continue through December 19<sup>th</sup> with the drawing for the Membership Drive Holiday Raffle being live on Facebook December 20<sup>th</sup>.
5. The Membership Drive Holiday Raffle tickets can be purchased by museum members for \$5 or 5 for \$20. Every new member will receive a free raffle ticket, increased membership levels receive a free raffle ticket. We have six prizes that have been donated for the Membership Holiday Raffle.
6. The November 20<sup>th</sup> Season of Light Gala will be catered by Jon Benson. The budget for the buffet is approximately \$2,000 depending on how many attendees we have. To date we have 130 people planning on attending. We have 15 raffle prizes for the Gala. Every attendee will receive one free ticket. Additional tickets can be purchased for a \$1 each at the Gala.
7. Board of Trustees members are being asked to help serve punch and assist Jon Benson staff where needed.

**ARTIFACT COLLECTIONS:** Sarah Honeycutt continues to excel in the position of Collections Manager working with volunteers and staff major works continues to be achieved in this department.

1. We are using the Giving Tuesday Campaign to raise funds to purchase equipment needed to digitize the collections, starting with the photo collection. Digitizing will provide great access for the member in our community to view and study the artifacts in our collections.
2. The marketing campaign for Giving Tuesday will be rolled out starting November 12<sup>th</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**EDUCATION Outreach:**

- Amanda is currently working with staff and volunteers on Season of Light exhibits. Creating several new exhibit labels for the Trees of Nations. She is also preparing for school field trips.
- Johnathan held two Astronomy & Ales events at Austin Brothers Brewery in October. Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, the weather caused the October 8<sup>th</sup> event to be cancelled, and we had low attendance at the October 29<sup>th</sup> event. Those in attendance enjoyed their experience and Johnathan does a wonderful job educating the audience. I have discussed having these special events start at the planetarium first and then go to the outdoor location afterwards. We have done this in the past with Dark Sky Park events. This way people are getting an experience despite the weather, and it is bringing people to the museum. I also purchased marketing for this past event, and I am not comfortable in investing our small budget in marketing events that end up being cancelled do to circumstances out of our control, and then do not generate revenue.

**MISCELLENOUS:**

- Gary Goren is pursuing the Planet/History Walk. He is working on a grant and has obtain several letters of support from local officials. The Visitor Bureau has also committed money towards the project.
- We are trying to make contacts with someone who can fix our pendulum.