

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
 Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting
 August/September 2025

DATA SUMMERY OF ACTIVITIES IN MAY

Collections Management

| Major Activities | Number |
|-----------------------|------------|
| New Accessions | 0 |
| Artifacts cataloged | 978 |
| Artifacts inventoried | 0 |
| Inquiries handled | 7 |

Attendance August

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Adult | 416 | 359 |
| Senior | 363 | 278 |
| Child | 277 | 169 |
| Free | 427 | 312 |
| TOTAL | 1,483 | 1,118 |

Museum Memberships August

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Membership Renewals | 15 |
| New Memberships | 3 |

Planetarium 2025 2024

| | | |
|-------|------------|------------|
| Adult | 165 | 199 |
| Child | 64 | 77 |

EUDCATION: August 2025 – September 2025

1. Time was spent planning Fall Festival.
2. We are already receiving inquiries for scheduling field trips. Hosted a field trip on September 10.

FACILITY:

1. The contract has been signed with Control Solutions to replace the faulty valves and actuators on the HVAC system. We are waiting to hear when they will start the work.
2. Jon Benson visited this month to discuss the idea of adding on room for a reception/meeting hall. This is something he has mentioned in the past. It is a much-needed space for the museum to host events and would be a revenue stream for the museum. More to come on this idea; one being to build an addition that resembles a lighthouse complete with a viewing deck on top. Then we could curate a historical lighthouse exhibit with photos and information of all the lighthouses in our region.

HISTORY EXHIBIT:

1. PHASE 2:

- a. Split Rock Studios is working on SD1 designs. They should have some drafts to us by early November.

GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:

1. Chinook:

- Good Design Group is continuing to refine the schematic design and secure bids from subcontractors for the fabrication and installation. There have been many fisheries agencies contributing to the final editing process. The exhibit panels will take six weeks to produce. We hope to have everything installed by the end of October.
- Jim and Matt hung several LED screens up in the Chinook exhibit.
- Bids are being secured for both electrical and plumbing/water hook work.
- Attended the Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Trail Conference/Meeting in Oden, MI at the DNR Fish Hatchery September 15.

Planetarium:

- September 13th, Mike Beaulac and I traveled to Eastern Michigan University to meet with Norbert Vance and see how the Digitalis Education equipment works and if it will be a good fit for the Besser Museum.
 - a. Norbert Vance is the planetarium director/educator at Eastern Michigan University.
 - b. Eastern Michigan University recently installed a Digitalis Education Solutions “Digitarium Lambda” which comes in at around \$100,000 verse \$300,000 and up. For more information on this system:
https://www.digitaliseducation.com/products-digitarium_lambda_fixed.html
- **Planet/History Walk:**
 - We are waiting to hear word on the Youth and Recreation Grant application.
 - When awarded, Angela Addington will work with Gary on graphic design for the signs. One side will be planetarium information, and the other side will be Alpena history information. Sarah will be able to provide photos and information of the history.

Misc.

- More updates are being made to the website. Check it out.
- Besser Museum will have a commercial in the Sanctuary Cinema theater and the Grayling theater. This theater commercial will run for 64 weeks.
- On Tuesday, September 2, I met with local representatives from the Great Lakes Excursions discussing the possibility of being added to the Viking Cruise ship options in April and May. They will submit a proposal to management at Great Lakes Excursions and let us know what they decide.

- Fall Harvest Fossil Fest plans are underway. The event is **Saturday, October 4.**
Marketing materials are being distributed to various medias and on the website.
- Plans for this year's Season of Light Exhibit is underway.
 - The Members Only Gala is scheduled for **Sunday, November 16.**
- I will be on vacation **Monday, September 22 through Monday October 6.** I will be traveling to Switzerland September with the Chamber of Commerce group.
- Michigan Historical Society State Conference in being held in Alpena **September 26 and 27.** The Besser Museum is cohosting and has been working with the Historical Society to plan this event. . Janet Young will be one of the presenters at this event. The main event will be held at ACC. The Besser Museum will be hosting a meet and greet reception Friday, **September 26.** Sarah Honeycutt, Isabel, and Nicole will be hosting the museum.
- Working with Judy Dawley on a new fundraising event for 2026. More information to come.
- Working on audit for FY 2024/2025.
- The Finance Committee meet with Marie Williams on Friday, September 12 to discuss the budget and financial reporting. See Finance Committee meeting notes.