

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting  
April 2021 – May 2021

**The Besser Museum continues to follow CDC health guidelines until further notice.**

- The Besser Museum will be opened for self-guided tours from 10 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Visitor capacity continues to be limited to 25 people in the building at a time. Planetarium capacity is limited to a maximum of 15 people in the planetarium at a time.
- CDC guidelines are still in place: masks, social distancing, disinfecting.

**JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING will be held online.**

- New Board Candidate, Ashley Wilmot's application is on the Board website.
- A draft of the Proxy letter that will be sent out in the newsletter is on the Board website.
- I have also been working with Judy on the Board member application form.

**Log Cabin Day:**

**Besser Museum Online Log Cabin Day will launch on Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.**

Planning a Log Cabin Day event involves securing vendors, demonstrators, and lots of volunteers to ensure the event runs smoothly and provides guests with a fun-filled educational experiences. **Due to the uncertainty at this time surrounding the ability to a host large events or not, the Besser Museum opted to develop a virtual event.**

Besser Museum Education Coordinator, Amanda Kucharek will be bringing virtual audiences Log Cabin Day fun facts and at home activities the whole family can enjoy via the museum's Facebook and website. The online event will be posted Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup> and will remain available for your convenience throughout the summer.

**HVAC Contract for \$195,000 with Johnson and Woods has been signed.**

- Proposals for the HVAC Control Systems have been submitted by Air-N-Energy and Control Solutions. These bids are posted on the Board website page.
- Susan Edwards from R.S. Scott is our acting project manager for this project. The total cost for their services on this project is \$12,000.

**Alpena Glass replaced the two cloudy windows on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. The look amazing!**

The total cost for the windows were \$5,470. I will submit a reimbursement for this expense from our Besser Museum Endowment Fund at CFNEM.

**LOG CABIN PROJECT:**

**Contractor apologizes for the delay. The drying of the logs has been completed and we are now awaiting delivery.**

## **GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:**

- **Chinook**
  - Erin Campbell, director of the DNR Invasive Species Grant Program, called to let me know that our Chinook exhibit project would be a candidate for their grant program. The infrastructure for the exhibit build is not considered equipment. The Fisheries Heritage Committee will be pursuing this opportunity.
  - Dustin Black, local engineer designed the walkway and dock around the Chinook. Jim Johnson has presented those plans and estimated \$16,000 costs to committee partners. There may possibly be funds available through a DNR education grant for this portion of the project.

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

- Things continue to move along in a positive direction.
- Due to health issues, consultant Charlee will not be able to fulfill the duties in Phase 2. She will, however, continue to serve as an advisor on the committee. Charlee's work during Phase 1 has provided an outline that will guide the development of the narrative during Phase 2. I will perform the duties of compiling the information to present to the Advisory Committee for their review/edit/consultation. The Advisory Committee will do live edits of the exhibit narrative during our meetings.
- Museum Collections Consultant, Laura Quackenbush has been hired to start processing the private collection donated by an anonymous donor. This collection will be incorporated into the new exhibit.

## **ART: Wilson Art Gallery Renovation:**

- The renovation of the Wilson Gallery is almost complete.
- Security cameras will be added to the gallery due to the value of the artwork.
- Gary Dawley built a frame to go around the electrical panel the gallery. This panel will also be used to give special recognition to the Besser Foundation for funding the renovation project.
- Local artist, Brian Schorn, working with the Fine Art Committee has chosen art for the first exhibit.
- Exhibit labels and a catalogue will be produced.
- We hope to open to the public at the end of June 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Due to Covid, as mentioned above, we will send out a special acknowledgment to all past museum board members thanking them for their service and inviting them to come visit the new gallery space. There have been 140 board members over the past 50 years. (All Board members received a spreadsheet with names and dates of service)

**ARTIFACT COLLECTIONS:** Major work continues in the collection storage areas.

The Alpena News did an article featuring the “hidden treasures” in our collection storage rooms. The Collection Committee will be presenting a list of artifacts for the permanent collection to the Board on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

- **PastPerfect Data Software**
  - Sarah is continuing to work with volunteers on several projects.
  - Sarah handles questions from the public at large, conducts research, and continues to organize objects, artifacts and documents found throughout the museum.
- **Temporary Custody donations**
  - Sarah continues to hold virtual meetings to address the temporary custody items.
  - This work will be ongoing as there is a backlog of Temporary Custody donations.

**MISCELLENOUS:**

- **Education Outreach:**
  - Johnathan continues to produce YouTube presentation in the planetarium. Those videos can be found on our website. Johnathan is also hosting planetarium presentations Thursday thru Sunday.
  - Amanda is working on developing an online Log Cabin Day event.
  - Amanda has also been working on creating a few new exhibit panels for the Besser Company hallway. These panels will focus on Jesse and Anna Besser, their international travels will President and V.P. at the Besser Company, and the international locations where Besser Company has a presence.
  - Amanda, Sarah, and Katrina continue to create interesting Facebook posts that are receiving a lot of attention.
- **Catholic Central High School Time Capsule**
  - I am continuing to work with the Boys and Girls Club on hosting the time capsule opening event at the old CCHS gymnasium. The museum has several graduating class photos, other random photos, and news articles about the donation of the land by Jesse Besser and the building of the new school. We are working on creating a mini exhibit, including a media event to highlight Jesse Besser’s generosity and dedication to the educational and cultural enrichment for the citizens of Alpena.
- **Other art exhibits**
  - NEMAG exhibit is up in the Trelfa Gallery until the end of June.
  - Bruno Hirzel exhibit will go up on the entrance gallery space (black walls) May through the end of September.

- **Gift Store:**
  - Katrina and Matt continue to research vendors to acquire unique inventory for our gift shop. We also have many items on consignment from local artists.
  - Katrina continues to engage members through email blasts, membership renewal reminders, and phone calls.
  - Katrina designed the May newsletter, which will be going out to members on May 24<sup>th</sup> in time for the membership business meeting announcement.
  
- **July 2020/June 2021 Fiscal Budget**
  - I will be working with accountant Marie Williams to develop a draft of the 20/21 fiscal budget to present to the Board at the June meeting.