

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting  
December 2020 - January 2021

**Season of Light Exhibit:**

- The Exhibit was extended through January 31<sup>st</sup>. We have had several patrons express their appreciation of the extended exhibit. We are considering keeping a longer schedule in the future.
- The Holiday Give Away Raffle was extended through February 1<sup>st</sup>. We have sold several tickets through PayPal on our website. We are promoting the raffle through Facebook and MailChimp.

**The Besser Museum will continue follow all the 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.

**ONGOING PROJECTS**

**FACILITY:**

- **HVAC:** We have not received any information from John Richards from Apollo Engineering or Susan Edwards from R.S. Scott about the HVAC project.
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**HISTORIC VILLAGE:**

- **Log Cabin project: The contract with Robert Kenel LLC has been signed.**
  - **\$62,000 Phase 1 -**
  - **Funding Plan:**
    - **Committed: \$56,710**
    - **Pending: \$5,000**
  - We received a **\$25,000** grant from Alpena County Youth and Rec.
  - We received a **\$8,750** from the Alpena County Older Persons grant
  - Besser Museum will use **\$10,000** towards the Log Cabin from 2019 Giving Tuesday. (Last year's Giving Tuesday campaign raised \$15,000)
  - 2020 GIVING TUESDAY raised **\$11,210.**
  - We requested \$2,500 from the CFNEM Youth council and received **\$1,750.**
  - We submitted a **\$5,000** grant request to CFNEM for the January 2021 cycle.

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

- **Chinook**
  - Jim Johnson has reached out to the new City Planner, Andrea Kares to invite her to the museum and tour the Great Lakes Exhibit. Jim is requesting this exhibit be put into the City's Recreation Plan.
  - Funding is being sought for the Chinook exhibit. We are looking into DNR grant proposals along with Michigan Sea Grant Proposal.
  - Janet Young's work to capture Jim and Tuffy's personal histories working aboard the Chinook is ongoing.
  - The LaBlance family interview needs to be complete. Zach Irving sent a quote of \$5,000 to complete the video. I will be contacting Zach to discuss this project. No decision to proceed has been made at this time.
- **Katherine V**
  - Tuffy and volunteers closed the Katherine V for the season.

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

- Consultant, Charlee Brissette will begin work on Phase 2 January 2021.
- We have four tribal members agree to serve on the Anishinaabe exhibit advisory council We plan to hold six (6) virtual meetings in 2021. We will be sending a letter of understanding to each member shortly. We hope to hold the first meeting at the end of February.

## **ART: Work is ongoing**

- Wilson Art Gallery Renovation:
  - The modular walls from EmagiSpace are being installed.
  - I am talking with local artist and gallery owner, Brian Schorn about curating some exhibits, presenting some virtual art lectures, and overseeing the Advisory Council. The museum could arrange to pay him a stipend for his contracted services. We are still discussing how this arrangement could work.
  - We will also continue to work with volunteer Vicki Wright to set exhibits from our own collection for 2021 in the new spaces.
- 2021 Non-Juried Art Exhibit: New Beginnings will open February 13<sup>th</sup>.

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

- **Reorganizing of Space for Collection Storage**
  - Much of the reorganizing of space has been put on hold due to the Season of Light Exhibit and Matt working on the modular walls in the Wilson Gallery. Completing the Collection Storage shelving will be addressed soon.
- **PastPerfect Data Software**
  - PastPerfect database. Volunteers have been continuing to enter the handwritten accession logs. This project is almost completed.

- The Collection Volunteers and Committee continue to work on the backlog of artifacts that came during 2010 and 2019. This includes all the Temporary Custody items. Sarah is working on a program to hold Collection Committee meetings virtually so progress on the Temporary Custody items can continue.
- Sarah is also working with volunteers to inventory and properly store the collection of rolled maps and documents.
- Sarah and volunteers have properly stored the newspaper collection.
- **Temporary Custody donations**
  - Museum professional, Laura Quackenbush collections training workshop has been postponed at this time due to COVID-19. We hope to reschedule sometime this year.
  - I am also working with Laura to devise a plan to process a large private donation that will enhance the museum's collection of indigenous artifacts and the renovated Anishinaabe exhibit. This would include using the funds from the donor to hire museum professionals to process and catalogue the collection.

#### **MISCELLENOUS:**

- **Education Outreach:**
  - Both Johnathan and Amanda continue to produce virtual education programs that are reaching large audiences on our social media platforms. Amanda has done some extensive research and compiled a report on the reach our Facebook posts are having.
  - Johnathan has been able to capture some 360 tours of the Christmas tree galleries with the new camera and upload them to our Facebook page.
  - Katrina Brooks (Guest Services/Administrative Assistant) continues to update the museum website, Facebook page, and process museum memberships.
- SLK should have the audit completed soon. Much of that work took place virtually the last week of November and the first weeks of December.
- Judy Suszek and I have been working on updating the Financial Polices.
- An application for the Paycheck Protection Program Second Draw was submitted to mBank for \$36,000.