

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting
March/April 2025

DATA SUMMERY OF ACTIVITIES IN FEBRUARY

Collections Management February

Major Activities	Number
New Accessions	8
Artifacts cataloged	712
Artifacts inventoried	933
Inquiries handled	5

Attendance March 2025 2024

Adult	318	196
Senior	127	72
Child	208	124
Free	372	121
TOTAL	1,025	513

Museum Memberships March

Membership Renewals	21
New Memberships	6

Planetarium March 2025 2024

Adult	174	140
Child	105	87

HISTORY EXHIBIT:

1. PHASE 2:

- a.** We are still waiting on the million-dollar grant proposal for the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Community Museum Grant Program to be announced sometime in May.
- b.** An interpretative concept for the lower-level exhibit was drafted.
 - i.** I meet with Tim Kent to discuss the exhibit concept and talk about the potential use of space for this French, British, and Early Colonial Period exhibits that will be displayed in the lower level.
 - ii.** Community content experts will be invited to join an exhibit committee. Any board member is welcome to participate in this committee.
 - iii.** After the concept is finalized, the museum will work with Spilt Rock Studios to get a schematic design developed.
 - iv.** Once the museum has a schematic design, a fundraising campaign can be launched.
- 2.** Still waiting on Omega to redo the donor wall.
 - a.** We have not received an estimate for this project.
- 3.** Split Rock Studios has finalized the graphic designs for the Alpena Flyer exhibit reader rails.

SUMMER TOURIST MARKETING CAMPAIGN

- a. Lamar sales representative, Paul Baldwin, reserved five billboards for the Besser Museum. The dates and locations are as follows.

Space										
# of Panels: 5								Billing Cycle: Every 4 weeks		
Panel # TAB ID	Market	Location	Illum	Media Type	Size	Misc	Service Dates	# Service Periods	Invest Per Period	Cost
673 402341	158-MANCELONA, MI	US-131 2 MI N/O M-88 W/S F/S (S)	Yes	Poster	10' 6" x 22' 9"		05/12/25-08/31/25	4	\$500.00	\$2,000.00
19175 401676	158-GAYLORD, MI	I-75 .5 MI S/O M-32 W/S F/N #2 (S)	Yes	Poster	10' 6" x 22' 9"		05/12/25-08/31/25	4	\$700.00	\$2,800.00
80015 50469011	158-GRAYLING, MI	BUS.75 .5MI S/O M72 E/S F/S	Yes	Digital Poster	10' 0" x 21' 0"		05/12/25-08/31/25	4	\$650.00	\$2,600.00
19260 601734	158-ALPENA, MI	US-23 1 MI N/O M-72 E/S F/S HARRISVILLE	No	Poster	10' 6" x 22' 9"		05/19/25-06/15/25	1	\$700.00	\$700.00
80012 401906	158-ALPENA, MI	M-32 .2 MI W/O BAGLEY RD N/S F/W ALPENA	Yes	Digital Poster	11' 0" x 23' 0"		05/19/25-09/07/25	4	\$1,100.00	\$4,400.00
									Total Space Costs:	\$12,500.00
									Total Costs:	\$13,100.00

EUDCATION:

1. Teachers are starting to book field trips for April, May and June.
 - a. I have been working on lesson plans and rotation schedules for field trips.
 - b. I created a scavenger hunt booklet for the new Discover Northeast Michigan History gallery that is working very well for field trips. We will continue to use the Fish booklet I created last year also. We print and assemble these booklets in house.
 - c. We hosted sixty 6th/7th graders from Mio School. It was their first visit to the Besser Museum. For many of them, it was their first time visiting a museum. They very much enjoyed their experience.
 - d. Currently we have 15 field trips scheduled over the next three months, with the concentration of them in May.

STAFF:

- Marketing/Communication: This past month I have been in conversations with a potential candidate for a full-time employee to serve as the museum's Creative Media Specialists. This person will manage the website, Facebook page, Instagram, graphic design promotional pieces for all exhibits and programming, newspaper ads and museum newsletter. This individual would help with designing outdoor signage for historic buildings.
- There will be some expense in setting up a workspace, including a computer, desk, and chair. This expense can come out of the general budget, or the museum can draw money from the endowment to cover this expense if needed since it is not in our fiscal year budget.

GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:

- **Chinook:**
 - Good Design Group is currently working on the schematic design for the new exhibit.

- Jim Johnson continues to work with people at the DNR to vet his interpretative text for the new exhibit.
- Jim and Sarah Honeycutt met to go through all the photos the DNR and Tuffy Cross has provided for this program. Their goal was to choose the best images for the exhibit. Good Design is waiting to receive these images to move forward.
- We received an extension on our grant deadline. We know have until April 30, 2026, to complete this grant funded project.

Planetarium:

- The planetarium is still operating with one projector.
 - e. Now, John Heath is having other issues with the planetarium. He fears it will not be operational much longer. Due to complications, John will only be playing videos and not doing a 15-minute star talk before each video. Unfortunately, the company we purchased the Spitz system from is no longer in business and supporting our system. A new system could be anywhere from \$150,000+ to \$300,000.
- **Planet/History Walk:**
 - We have approximately \$7,000 for this project from Giving Tuesday.
 - Gary Goren is applying for a Youth and Rec grant.
 - Gary has also been in contact with Fossil Inc. This company designs and fabricated durable outside signage for exhibit like this.
 - We meet with Carol Bobolts to discuss the possibility of her designing the layout of each Planet Walk sign using Gary's outline and information.

Misc.

- I have been working with the accountants and auditors all month. They should have our audit completed by the end of April. Then our accountants will file our 990s.
- The Besser Museum fortunately did not have any sever damage from the March 29th ice storm. We lost several branches from the pine trees in the front parking lot. Matt has cleaned up most of that mess and piled the branches by the street. I called the City, and they said that they would be coming by with a chipper at some point for clean-up. We had some branches down in the backyard, but luckily nothing hit any of the historic buildings.
- Pam O'Neil's exhibit comes down April 22. Northeast Michigan Artists Guild art exhibit will open April 25 through July 31.
- We will start planning for the June 28th Log Cabin Day event.