

# Chippewa Valley Museums 2023 Annual Report

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*“Every time you come in here there’s something you haven’t seen before. Or, something you saw before that might have been moved...and now, because of the light that’s on it you see something different. The museum is like that. It’s constantly changing”*

- Dan Perkins, Chippewa Valley Museums Member



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



AASLH  
American Association  
for State and Local History



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FY2023 began 10/01/2022 and ended 9/30/2023 for Chippewa Valley Museums  
Chippewa Valley Museums is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization



## ≡ From Our Board President

I trust this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. As another fiscal year ends, I am delighted to share with you some highlights that have shaped the journey of Chippewa Valley Museums in 2023.

Our biggest news of the year, aside from the merger of Chippewa Valley Museum and the Wisconsin Logging Museum, was the opening of the *Have You Heard?* Object Theatre. It has captivated audiences and engaged visitors of all ages, enriching their museum experience with immersive storytelling and creativity. Major funding for this project came from the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley's *David L. and Rita E. Nelson Fund*, the *Royal Credit Union Foundation*, and *The Pablo Foundation*. Additionally, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Cleghorn Lions Club, Eau Claire Community Foundation's Women's Giving Circle, Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire, and the Wisconsin Humanities Council for their contributions. It is through their generous support this project became a reality, enriching our community.

The *Play Ball* Baseball exhibits brought the thrill of America's pastime to the museum, attracting enthusiasts and fostering an appreciation for this iconic sport.

This past year has been filled with accomplishments and opportunities, and I'm truly grateful for the dedication and hard work of our staff, volunteers, and board members.

It is through your collective effort and unwavering commitment that we have been able to maintain and evolve a museum that continues to enrich the lives of our community members.

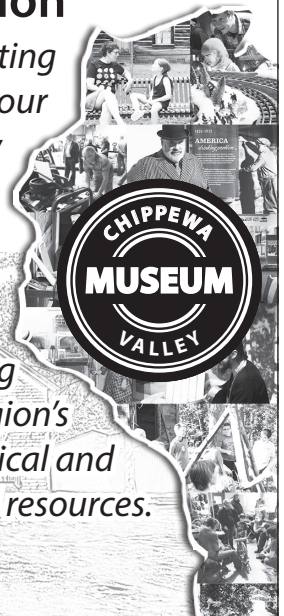
As we look ahead to 2024, I'm excited about the potential for even more growth and progress for Chippewa Valley Museums. Together, we can continue to preserve our heritage, educate, and inspire generations to come.

Warm regards,

Jeff Stevens, President

### Our Mission

Connecting people to our community and inspiring curiosity by collecting, preserving, and sharing our region's historical and cultural resources.



## Special Event Highlights ≡

**Public events and special functions are an opportunity to share Chippewa Valley culture and history. Here's a look at some experiences we offered our visitors this year:**

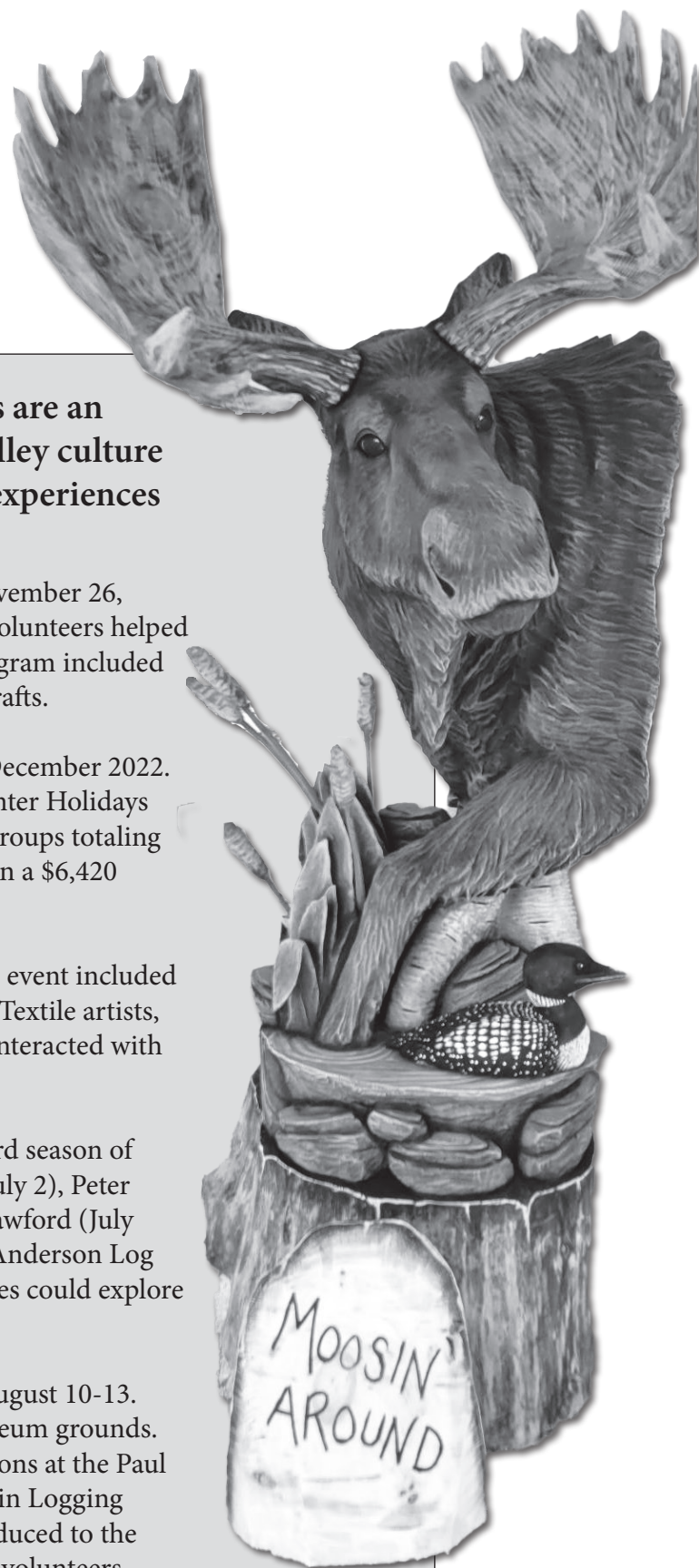
*Caroling, Cookies & Crafts* community days, November 26, December 3 & 10. Eau Claire K-Kids and adult volunteers helped visitors celebrate the holidays. The three-day program included music, cookie decorating, and holiday-themed crafts.

*Schlegelmilch House Escape Rooms*, October – December 2022. Tactical Escape 101 designed Halloween and Winter Holidays escape rooms for the Schlegelmilch House. 154 groups totaling 868 participants played the two games resulting in a \$6,420 donation from Tactical Escape 101.

*13th Annual Folk Arts Festival*, February 25. The event included 20 individual booths and five live performances. Textile artists, woodworkers, carvers, sculptors, and hobbyists interacted with 250 guests.

*Outdoor Concert Series*, Sundays in July. The third season of outdoor concerts welcomed the Hey Joe Band (July 2), Peter Phippen with Victoria Shoemaker and Rahbi Crawford (July 16), and Naalia (July 30). Volunteers staffed the Anderson Log House and Sunnyview School so concert attendees could explore historic buildings during band breaks.

*US Open Chainsaw Sculpture Championship*, August 10-13. This four-day event brought 2,115 people to museum grounds. It was started here in 2011 to support the operations at the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum, as the Wisconsin Logging Museum was then known. CVM staff were introduced to the event this year and welcomed the support of 183 volunteers.



## ≡ Programs & Education

One full-time Educator, a part-time Education Assistant, three Museum Assistants, and 10 volunteer docents led 4,449 students and adults on nearly 300 guided tours. Students came from 43 unique school districts and homeschools. Ten daycares and school-age summer child care programs brought students to the museums. Special visits included three bus tours, Beaver Creek Reserve Master Naturalists, and a tour group from Gothenburg, Sweden.

FY23 programs reached 3,826 people with 54 unique programs. The vast majority of program participants were in-person and adults. Ninety people attended CVM programs virtually; monthly book club meetings and five presentation-programs (including the annual meeting) offered the opportunity for virtual participation. 74% of in-person program participation was through museum “Community Days.” Vintage skills workshops returned after a two-year hiatus.

A sampling of this year’s programs includes:

*Collecting the Valley hybrid series* highlighting museum collections and local history. 62 people participated in the three-program series.

*Gallery talks and workshops (3)* led by artists featured in the Dimensions & Discovery art show.

*German Beer Tasting in the Gardens*, Schlegelmilch House, July 20.

*Time Travelers Summer School Workshops* (4 session with 3 sections each) for 138 students. Classes offered: Dairy Daze, All Stars, Logging Camp Lore, and On the Move.

*Walking Tours:* Forest Hill Cemetery (2) led by volunteer guides Robert Gough and Greg Kocken, and Sawdust City Scuttlebutt (2) led by Archivist Jodi Kiffmeyer.

### Program Attendance Breakdown

	FY23				FY22			
	# of programs	In-person	Virtual	TOTAL attendance	# of programs	In-person	Virtual	TOTAL attendance
Youth Programs	6	197	0	197	10	343	0	343
Adult Programs	13	131	27	158	13	119	50	169
Workshops (Vintage Skills)	2	20	0	20	0	0	0	0
Lectures and Presentations	13	211	55	266	16	225	210	435
Community Days	5	2,724	0	2,724	10	1,660	0	1,660
Member Exclusive	3	136	8	144	4	153	14	167
Biking/Walking Tours	2	75	0	75	6	85	0	85
Volunteer Exclusive	3	83	0	83	2	46	0	46
Other	7	171	0	171	2	79	1	80
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3,736</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>3,826</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2,719</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>2,994</b>

# Community Center & Resource ≡

The Chippewa Valley Museums provides gathering spaces for others and goes out into the community to share museum resources. Thirty-one separate individuals, organizations, and businesses reserved a museum space or building for private use. Uses ranged from monthly meetings, to filming a music video, to a week-long day camp. Private events celebrated all stages of life: engagement photo shoot, baby shower, birthday parties, 50th wedding anniversary, and Celebration of Life.

CVM co-hosted 20 programs and events last year. These are programs led by volunteer presenters, or programs developed by another organization using CVM facilities and/or staff. Museum volunteers and staff also attended 10 outreach events.

## Sample of regular meetings —————

Adventures in History Book Club in partnership with the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library

Aging and Disability Resources Center of Eau Claire (ADRC)

Memory Café

Tri-County Dementia Coalition

Chippewa Valley Railroad Association

Eau Claire K-Kids

Genealogical Research Society of Eau Claire

Historic Preservation Foundation

## Sample of partner and private events supported by the museum —————

**Fireside Production, LLC** video shoot with those connected to the former Uniroyal tire factory for its soon-to-be released documentary *When Rubber Hit The Road*.

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**, held in museum's LE Phillips Auditorium, June 26.

**Menard Center for Constitutional Studies at UW-Eau Claire High School and Middle School Teachers Symposium** opening program, July 19

**Girls on the Run Day Camp** for girls in 3rd-5th grades, August 14-18.

**Outreach Table at UW Meets EC**, a downtown community fair for UW-Eau Claire students, September 23

## Social Media ≡



### Followers:

Oct. 1, 2022 – 7,217

Sept. 30, 2023 – 8,138

### Reach:

342,648



### Followers:

Oct. 1, 2022 – 1,502

Sept. 30, 2023 – 1,630

### Reach:

4,806

## ≡ Exhibits

The Museum opened two original exhibits in FY23, hosted a guest-curated art exhibit, and made two traveling exhibits available to the public. The Farmhouse Theater, closed in 2019 due to equipment failure, re-opened with the production *Have You Heard?*, a project three years in the making.

Exhibit options increased due to the museum merger. The list now includes exhibits available at the Wisconsin Logging Museum.

### Long-Term Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_

#### Chippewa Valley Museum:

*Changing Currents: Reinventing the Chippewa Valley* (2014), Barland Gallery

*Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors* (2004), Rural Heritage Wing

*History Quest* (2010), Children's Gallery

*Have You Heard?* Object Theater (2023)

*Downtown Eau Claire, 1933: Model Train Layout* (2022)

*Eau Claire by Air* (2014), L.E. Phillips Memorial Auditorium

#### Wisconsin Logging Museum:

*1890s Logging Camp* (1934 with additions in 1939 & 1947. Moved 1983)

*Paul's Tall Tales Room* (1999) Children's Gallery

*Lumbering in the Chippewa Valley* (1996)

*The Big Cut* (2004)

### Short-Term Original Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_

*Then and Now: 150 Years of Change in Eau Claire*, Ayres Associates gallery

*Dimensions & Discovery Art Show*, Ayres Associates gallery

*Play Ball*, Ayres Associates gallery

### Virtual Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_

360 degree tour of Chippewa Valley Museum

*Hmong in Eau Claire*

### Traveling Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_

*¡Pleibol! In the Barrios and the Big Leagues / En los barrios y las grandes ligas*. SITES, Ayres Associates gallery

*Playing Through: African American Baseball in Dunn County*, Dunn County Historical Society Ayres Associates gallery

Members of Chippewa Valley Museums enjoyed the exhibits at the Wisconsin Logging Museum at the annual meeting.



# Collections ≡

The Chippewa Valley Museum has 22,541 objects in its collection. This past year, we received 55 new items. Some object highlights include:

- **Jingle dress** made in the 1990s by Joyce Becenti from the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The jingle dress is on display in the *Have You Heard?* exhibit.
- **Spindle cradle** The Beck family purchased the cradle in 1911 from the Adin Randall family for their son Peter Beck. According to the donors it was originally used by Adin and Clamenzia Randall for their daughter Nelli, born in 1855.
- **Little League uniform** from the 1970s and objects relating to the Eau Claire Cavaliers, a team in the Chippewa River Baseball League.

An inventory of the former Wisconsin Logging Museums collection started late in the fiscal year. There are an estimated 1500 objects at the site. Each object will be properly documented and compared to past inventories before becoming a part of the permanent merged museums' collection.

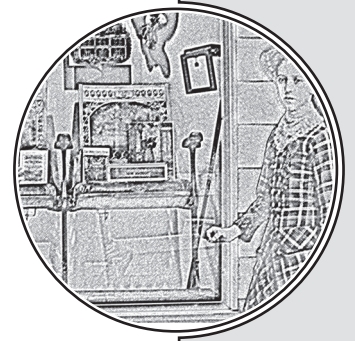
Six volunteers processed new donations, installed and de-installed exhibits, inventoried, cleaned objects and exhibit areas, put objects away in storage, and entered information into database records. Intern Alicia Schneider added research material to 90 objects in the collection.

## Library and Archives \_\_\_\_\_

The Glenn Curtis Smoot Library and Archives responded to 58 research requests by email, telephone, and in person. Archivist Jodi Kiffmeyer filled 36 requests for prints and digital files of historical photos (245 photos total). The collection currently contains 5,757 archival materials (increase of 269), 1,523 library materials (increase of 12), and 21,408 cataloged photographs (increase of 543).

Eleven short-term and long-term volunteers were active in the library this year. The Library and Archives benefitted from Tim Hirsch's service with AmeriCorps, as reflected in the increase in volunteers (up from seven last year). The number of archival items processed and cataloged was nearly double that of last year.

The archives had help from three UW Eau Claire interns over the course of the year, thanks to a new position funded by an endowment from Dean Arnold. Interns worked with the L.G. Arnold Co. collection of photographs and documents and created a StoryMap website to showcase the company's construction projects in the Chippewa Valley and beyond.





# 14,522

Adults: 9,394 in-person  
Children: 5,128 in-person

*Fun fact:* Chippewa Valley Museums had 14% growth in attendance this year over 2022.

## VISITORS



# 900

Membership Revenue  
\$69,278

New Members  
254

*Fun fact:* Triple Play membership is up 29%, and 213 members have been members 10+ years.

## MEMBERS



# 6353

Total Hours

# 436

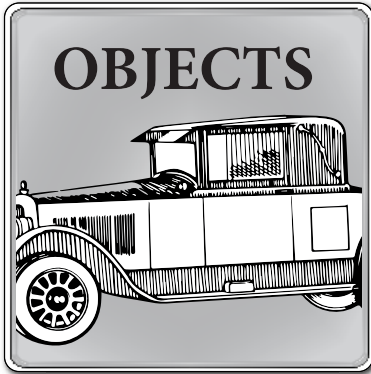
People

*Fun fact:* Volunteers spent over 500 hours building scenes in the new object theater.

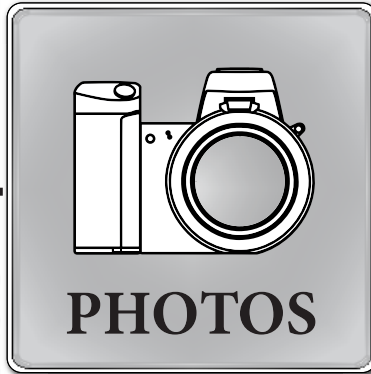
## VOLUNTEERS



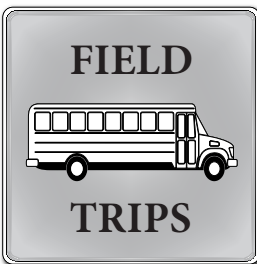
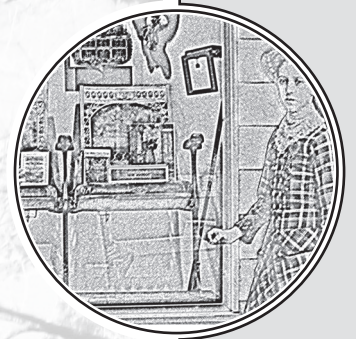




**22,541**



**21,408**



**3542**  
Students



**54**  
Workshops, Lectures,  
Presentations, etc.



**3,826**  
People



**47** Rentals  
for **\$4,263**



**8** Grants  
**\$45,431**



**\$16,851**  
Dollars Sold



## ≡ Grants & Sponsorships

### Grants and Contracts Awarded in FY23

AnnMarie Foundation: <i>Play Ball Exhibit</i>	\$2,650
Eau Claire Community Foundation: Schlegelmilch House security and internet access	\$4,790
RCU Professional Development	\$200
Xcel Energy Foundation: <i>Tall Tales</i> exhibit renovation	\$5,000

### Grants Awarded in Previous Years and Continued in FY23

AnnMarie Foundation: Family exhibit guides	\$1,725
Community Foundation of the Fox Valley: Object Theater Technology	\$61,000
Eau Claire Community Foundation: <i>Reflections of Eau Claire</i> book	\$8,450
RCU Professional Development	\$200
Women's Giving Circle: Object Theater	\$6,000
Eau Claire County: ARPA Component 2 (merger, children's exhibits)	\$100,000
National Endowment for the Humanities: ARPA Act	\$50,000
Nordson Foundation: Education program	\$10,000
Pablo Foundation: Object Theater	\$20,000
Neil E. Park Family Foundation: History kits	\$10,000
Royal Credit Union Foundation: Object Theater	\$30,000
Wisconsin Arts Board: Artes Latinas	\$4,510
Wisconsin Humanities Council: Object Theater	\$10,000
Xcel Energy Foundation: <i>¡Pleibol!</i> traveling exhibit	\$5,000

### Corporate Sponsors

Banbury Place Inc., Bartingale Mechanical Inc., Biesterveld & Spies, LLC, Chestnut Consulting, Culver's, Dairyland Power Cooperative, Downtown Eau Claire, Inc., Festival Foods, Great Northern Corporation, Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce, IT Voice, iHeart Media, Lasker Jewelers, Market & Johnson, Menomonie Market Food Co-op, Nestle, Nicolet Bank, Security Financial Bank, Royal Credit Union, Tactical Escape 101, Trust Point, Volume One, Xcel Energy



# Profit/Loss

	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY22</u>
<b>INCOME</b>		
City County	\$206,897.47	\$103,592.92
Memberships	\$69,278.00	\$77,610.00
Sponsorships	\$8,550.00	\$19,950.00
Earned Income	\$90,939.20	\$74,214.50
Gifts	\$50,616.42	\$201,733.73
Grants	\$45,430.65	\$106,920.00
Investments	\$42,041.61	\$33,659.61
WLM	\$66,946.86	-
Special Events	\$150,881.38	\$5,009.00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$731,581.59</b>	<b>\$622,689.76</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$731,581.59</b>	<b>\$622,689.76</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Personnel	\$389,464.28	\$318,928.40
Operations	\$166,761.29	\$111,964.32
Schlegelmilch House	\$9,865.14	\$9,387.60
Programs	\$17,332.28	\$11,921.11
* Grants Programs	\$78,106.94	\$95,743.82
Retail	\$8,412.01	\$8,717.17
Special Events	\$164,151.34	\$4,431.18
Miscellaneous	\$2,312.09	\$889.24
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$836,405.37</b>	<b>\$583,799.00</b>
Fixed assets	-	-
Depreciation	-	\$79,849.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$836,405.37</b>	<b>\$641,832.49</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$(104,823.78)</b>	<b>\$(19,142.73)</b>

\* \$77,612 of these expenses were covered by grant monies received in previous years.

	FY23	FY22
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash	153,573.85	260,146.41
Property, Equip (net)	661,339.29	714,567.29
Other Assets	(3,635.49)	(1,729.49)
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>811,277.65</b>	<b>972,984.21</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Withholding	5,051.24	3,901.02
Long Term Liabilities	-	-
Capital	806,226.41	969,083.19
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; CAPITAL</b>	<b>811,277.65</b>	<b>972,984.21</b>

Jarrod Showalter discussing canoe travel with kids taking part in the On the Move workshop.



## ≡ Development

Grants accounted for 6% of revenue this year, a significant drop from previous years which benefitted from pandemic relief funding and gifts to the Object Theater project. The Corporate Sponsor program experienced a decline partly due to change in personnel and partly to a significant focus on the US Open Chainsaw Sculpture Championship. Corporate Sponsorships only accounted for 1% of total revenue. Membership dues and member donations were 16% of the total revenue.

### Chippewa Valley Museum Foundation

The Chippewa Valley Museum Foundation (CVMF) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charged with overseeing the Museum's endowments and other investment funds in order to advance our mission. The CVMF Investment Policy Statement states that up to 4% of the Foundation's managed assets may be distributed annually to the Chippewa Valley Museum. At the end of FY23, CVM managed assets were valued at \$748,621, a 3.25% increase from FY22. The Foundation distributed \$37,214 for museum operations (\$32,014) and merger expenses (\$5,200). CVMF is also named the beneficiary of a whole life insurance policy gifted to the museum in 1996. The life insurance policy is valued at \$40,000.

### CVM-Wisconsin Logging Museum Agency Fund

The merger added an agency fund at the Eau Claire Community Foundation to the organization's assets. The CVM-Wisconsin Logging Museum Fund was started by the Wisconsin Logging Museum (formerly known as Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum) in 2006. The purpose of this fund is to support operations and capital needs of the logging camp buildings. On September 20, 2023 it was valued at \$127,677.

Donations made by individuals			
	FY23	FY22	FY21
# Made	313	409	363
Totals	\$57,859	\$190,959*	\$58,391

\* This includes a \$120,000 bequest

### Gifts: October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

#### \$5,000+

Mary Foote

Joel and Lenore Higgins

John G. Kinney

Christopher and Jana Lind

Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire

Susan M. McLeod

Marjorie McManus

Jerome and Kathryn Reinecke

Johanna Warloski

Dennis and Karen Zacho

Paul and Bev Jacobson

Al and Peggy Jones

Jack and Sally Kaiser

Daniel and Kerry Kincaid

Stan Larson

John and Shyre Mann

Rebecca Mattson

Lois and Marlin Mueller

Designated Pass-Through Fund-  
ECCF

Daniel Perkins

Marge and Wayne Peters

Traci Roske

Sue Suechting

Barbara and William Thiel

Becky and Dave Wood

Helen and Norb Wurtzel

Shannon and Timothy Young

Thomas and Sheila Zahorik

#### \$2,000-4,999+

Dean Arnold

Thomas and Jill Barland

Brian and Mary Blakeley

Mary C. Harmon

Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire-

Indianhead

LE Phillips Family Foundation

Charles McLeod

Dorothy Sorlie and Jim Urness

Paula Utpfall

#### \$500-\$999

Kathryn Berman

Thomas L. and Joyce Bruckner

Roger and Betty Davis Fund-  
ECCF

Janet L. Etnier

Tom and Libby Gillett

Debbie and Robert Gough

Vicki and John Graaskamp

Patricia and Dave Hoban

#### \$1,000-\$1,999

Richard and Rochelle Arnold

Tom and Mary Burt

Flynn Family Foundation

Laurie, Andrea, and Jacob Gapko

# 2023 Staff & Board

## Staff

Angela Allred, Program Manager  
Frank Barby, Director of Operations  
Dustyn Dubuque, Development Manager  
Karen Jacobson, Educator  
Jodi Kiffmeyer, Archivist  
Patrick Kleist, Custodian  
Rachel Lange, Curator  
Olaf Lind, Creative Director  
Mike O'Connor, Maintenance Technician  
Diana Peterson, Assistant Curator/Editor  
Carrie Ronnander, Executive Director  
Jarrod Showalter, Education Assistant/  
Exhibit Developer  
Jill York, Operations Manager

Elizabeth Jackson, Museum Assistant  
Fred Theiste, Museum Assistant  
Hunter Bresina, Museum Assistant  
John Vonasek, Museum Assistant  
Pam Weiland-Schuster, Museum Assistant

Timothy Hirsch, Public Health  
AmeriCorps member serving as  
Chippewa Valley Museums' Program  
Assistant

## Chippewa Valley Museums Board

Benny Anderson, Visit Eau Claire  
Samuel Bach-Hanson, Weld Riley S.C., treasurer  
Kevin Dague, Herrick & Hart, S.C.  
Kevin Dallas, Market & Johnson  
Rachel Meyer, Badger Meter, vice president  
Tom Mihaljov, retired, Kiwanis rep  
Melissa Peterson, Frandsen Bank, secretary, Kiwanis rep  
Phil Rechek, UW-Eau Claire  
Travis Schroeder, Wendel Companies  
Casey Schumacher, UW-Eau Claire  
Jeff Stevens, Independent Consultant, president  
Curt Van Auken, Security Financial Bank

## Chippewa Valley Museum Foundation Board

Becky Adamski Krische, Century21  
Ryan Balts, Royal Credit Union  
Cassie Fisher, Wings Financial Credit Union, treasurer  
Kelly France, LPL Financial  
Dustin Olson, UW-Stout  
Debbie Gough, retired, UW-Eau Claire, secretary  
Shaughnessy Murphy, WIN Technology  
Nicholas Pedersen, Nicolet Bank  
David Schian, CLA Eau Claire, vice president  
Julie Thoney, Xcel Energy, president  
Brenda Trump, Prevail Bank

