

2015 Annual Report  
*Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation*

MALLARD ISLAND IN RAINY LAKE  
ISLAND RECOVERS \* BOARD STRENGTHENS MISSION



THE WANNIGAN: Photo By David McPhee, Mid-June

Organization incorporated in 1964, a 501(c)3 organization and a private operating foundation

Employer ID # 41-6042619 ~ Visit [www.eober.org](http://www.eober.org)

**“The Ernest Oberholtzer Foundation maintains Ober’s legacy and north woods island home as a source of inspiration, renewal and connection to Indigenous Peoples, kindred spirits, and the natural world.”**

## Dear Friends of Mallard Island and the Oberholtzer Foundation,



The repaired rock walls on Mallard Island are like three new sacred spots-- each one catches the light in a new way. Each place adds the beauty and strength and security that only a well-made rock wall can.

Yes. We looked back at the flood of 2014 for several weeks of May and June this year. The Cedarbark House floor was completed, and that house came back into use. Three spans of rock wall were carefully repaired and made stronger than ever. And, see the cover photo, our dear kitchen boat was not only more strongly supported, but it was raised 14.5 inches!

For the wannigan project, we have a couple dozen people to thank, see page -5-. For the rock walls, we mostly have Harry Hytrek and Shane Pasche to thank, plus their stellar crew of Cory and Tristan.



So the 2015 summer unfolded, this year much as planned, and about 150 happy people came and went on Mallard. An opera is being written; books and stories and poems and several songs were created; new friendships and perspectives changed lives.

Before I quit thinking back on the flood, I must applaud our board of directors. They not only brought us through that story, looking back for details of repair, but then they had the foresight to look ahead as well. Maybe it was the flood and its added upheaval that caused us all to say, "what's next, and how do we set new goals for the future?" And this group didn't stop at goals.

For some years, several board members have returned to a key historic document, Ernest Oberholtzer's *Declaration of Trust*, where he spoke eloquently about his intentions behind the Foundation that he had then just formed. In 1962, Ober wrote about his ideas of wilderness and his respect for the indigenous knowledge braided into it. Taking all this to account in late October, the board of directors not only set some goals but took a long hard look at our mission statement. In short, I think you will agree (p.-1-) that the new statement is bold and stronger, that it puts Indigenous Peoples back into our intent (as Ober designed), and that it sets us on a new path.

Five of our long-standing board members end their final terms with the organization in June of 2016. We will never exactly "replace" them, but three new board members will step in as they leave, with the board group then numbering 12. Jim talks about this in his letter, beginning on page -3-. With renewed mission and leadership, the organization is evolving in a natural and healthy way.

We could not do it without our dedicated volunteers,

*Beth Waterhouse* Executive Director

[ Email: [beth@eober.org](mailto:beth@eober.org) ]

## Accomplished by Everyone During 2015

- Raised Wannigan Kitchen Boat 14 1/2 inches and strengthened its beam structure.
- Completed and treated Cedarbark House floor after flood repairs. Open for use!
- Finished the north-side siding on Cook's House - house is completed, for now.
- Accomplished about 2/3 of the needed garden repairs after the flood.
- Managed to secure & spend federal FEMA funds, including island wall repairs.
- Re-built three major areas of rock wall damage. Now strong and beautiful!
- Welcomed two new summer program directors to share the summer leadership.
- Great recognition of volunteers, Don Maronde and Pam & Darrell Rundell in late May
- Three board meetings and strategic planning, one fall gathering, one house party...
- And a strengthened mission bringing *Indigenous Peoples* back into the guiding language.

## From the Desk of our President, Jim Fitzpatrick

**Dear Friends,** I reflect upon the International Joint Commission's decisions on water levels during the 2014 flood and what that year brought, at least to our islands. I loved the behavior and work accomplished by the amazing groups of people who came in both 2014 and 2015 and worked and left, never entirely to know what their accomplishments ended up meaning to the Foundation. To a person, every one of the folks who worked on flood restoration deserve a heartfelt thanks and a big pat on the back for putting the island back in shape.

The biggest task last spring was raising the Wannigan (kitchen boat) over a foot and replacing a rotted beam on which it sat, rebuilding the support cribs, fixing the railings that attached to the ground, rebuilding the channel side exterior, and etc. Pictures do not do the crew justice.

The Oberholtzer Foundation Board of Directors also held a Strategic Planning retreat in autumn 2015 and began a whole new strategic plan which is still currently in the edit and review process. One of the items discussed during that session was the formation of a new committee, which will deal with the infusion of Indigenous culture and participation on the island and in our thinking and planning. The name of the committee, "Anishinaabe Inaakonigewin" means "to go inward, toward spirit, to learn what our purpose is in life and to discern the life steps toward that purpose." We are proud to take on this careful process.

The year 2016 is the year that deals with our losing five long-time board members and gaining three new candidates to help lead the organization. This will be a move of historic proportion because we lose some huge participants including Jean Sanford Replinger, an organization stalwart since 1982. It was Jean who took the lead in organizing and cataloging Ober's library of over 12,000 books, and she who organized the first programs to share summer weeks on Mallard Island. While our current Executive Director Beth Waterhouse has taken the reins of the organization over the past years, it is not without numerous deep discussions with Jean who then also served on the program committee and as board secretary.

Long term board members like Jim Davis and Robin Monahan were friends of Ober's during their younger years. Jim Davis' father owned "Jim's Café" in International Falls – it is said that the banana crème pie was an Ober favorite. Robin was part of the Monahan clan many of whom new Ober. It was Robin's mother, Gene Ritchie Monahan, who got permission from Ober to build a small studio on Mallard, which we renovated and now use as a bedroom space during our program weeks. Harry Sweatt is leaving us after years of work with Ted Hall and others on the earlier Board. Harry took a special interest in building maintenance and fire prevention. The last Board member leaving in June is

**Statement of Operating (Full) Revenue and Expenses – Unaudited  
Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation - for Calendar Year 2015**

<b>REVENUE</b> (rounded to nearest dollar)		<u>% of total</u>
Transferred from Restricted Assets (spent this year)	1,959	2%
Grants from Foundations	15,600	11%
Dividends and Interest from Investments	15,100	11%
Revenue from Oil & Gas Royalties	36,000	26%
Donations from Individuals for Operations this year	18,419	14%
Program Fees for Island Use	16,775	12%
Sales of photos, prints, and books	2,171	2%
FEMA support following last year's flood	<u>30,395</u>	<u>22%</u>
Total for Year.....	\$ 136,419	

<b>EXPENSES</b> (rounded to nearest dollar)		
Staff Salary, wages and benefits (3 part-time staff)	46,826	
Organizational Excise Taxes	1,297	
Island Utilities / Organizational Storage	2,130	
Administration and Fundraising (Insurance here)	16,353	
Board Meeting Expenses and Travel	11,797	
Outreach and Education	3,297	
Archives and Collections Management	236	
Direct Summer Program Expenses	5,640	
Capital Improvements & Repairs (non-flood 2 islands)	1,234	
Flood-Related 2nd-Year Repairs, Mallard Island	7,272	
Rock Wall Repair	22,075	
Forestry Project (greatly multiplied by volunteer energy)	1,959	
Book and Archival Projects supporting this legacy	1,562	
Contingency / misc. costs	<u>898</u>	
Total for Year.....	\$ 122,576	
Designation to Emergency Fund	<u>5,000</u>	
Excess / (Deficit) for 2015	\$ 8,843	

Note: Each year, the board designates \$5,000 to a self-insurance/emergency fund. The total by year-end 2015 in that fund was \$50,000. We did not have to dip into this emergency fund for the flood. ~ In December, a third anonymous gift brought the Frances E. Andrews Bldg Endowment to \$60,000. ~ Unrestricted Net Assets and Retained Earnings at 12-31-15 were \$ 151,029.

**A Portfolio of Investments is held with Robert W. Baird & Co., Chicago, Illinois.**

*With the assistance of Ms. Rosa Ebling at R.W. Baird & Co, the Foundation manages a diverse portfolio of investments. This portfolio as of 12-31-15 was valued at \$540,133 (an increase of 13.9% this year, with many new gifts), and this figure includes \$194,066 as a board-designated endowment. We raise our operating budget afresh each year. Special thanks are extended to Rosa as well as to Rebecca Wallenfelz and Antoinette Hickey of Chapman & Cutler LLP, Chicago, for their assistance with legal and tax compliance across these many years.*

## Recognition of Volunteers, 2015

(in order of appearance)

### They Raised the Wannigan 14 inches!

Don Maronde  
Michael Reid  
Craig Fernholz  
Anneliese Stuht  
Jennie Ross  
Ross Peterson  
Janice Whitney  
Doug Kelley  
David Donisch  
Mairi Doerr  
Sue Nielsen

**\* Special thanks to Jami Schaak and crew for their equipment and assistance.**

### Two More Work Weeks

Colleen Jackson  
David Jackson  
Charlotte Klesman  
Mary Alice Smith  
Peggy Anne Smith  
Tom Balcom  
Barb Balcom  
Margo McCreary  
Peter Doughty  
Kate Weyrens  
Laura Kelly  
Janet Wilkinson  
Jennifer Folkema  
Fiona Reid  
Aubrey Donisch  
Justin Ernst  
Nate Larscheidt

**Our thanks to Nance Kunkel, Mallard Island Newsletter's layout editor again this year for two beautiful issues.**

E.C. Oberholtzer Foundation

## Mallard Island Caretakers during 2015

Mairi Doerr (\*)  
Jim Fitzpatrick  
Mary Swalla Holmes  
Jane Lund  
Elaine Thrune  
Diane Tessari  
Prudence Johnson (\*)  
Mark Granlund  
Emily Larscheidt  
Jennie Ross  
Danielle Sosin  
Kim Knutson  
Judy Blais  
(\*) *summer program directors*

### Steadfast Island Opening ~ Closing & Tour Volunteers

Pam and Darrell Rundell  
& the Rundell family  
Dave & Nancy Markwardt  
Jennie Ross  
Wesley Wallace  
Don Maronde  
Gary & Gaila Olsen  
Nance Kunkel  
Richard Paper  
Diane Tessari

### Incoming Caretakers Trained this Summer

Wesley Wallace  
Judy Blais

### Special Thanks to Forestry Volunteers on Three Islands

Tim and Mandy Youngquist  
Kevin and Amber Wagner  
Andrew Wunschel  
Steve & Elaine Thrune

## Farewell to Long-Standing Board Members, finishing 15-year terms in June 2016:

Jim Davis  
Mary Swalla Holmes  
Robin Monahan  
Jean Sanford Replinger  
Harry Sweatt

## Welcome to New Board Members, beginning in June of 2016:

\* Bob Norbie, from Great Falls Montana  
\* Laura Horton, Emo, Ontario  
\* Mark Granlund of St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Special thanks to Phil Willkie for his assistance with a House Party fundraiser at his beautiful Mpls Lake of the Isles home in mid-September.**

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**Huge thanks to stonemasons: Harry Hytrek, Shane Pasche, Corey & Tristan who donated 90 extra hours of very hard rock work this summer!**

Annual Report, 2015

## Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation Board of Directors (2015):

- **Jim Davis** Pensacola, Florida
- **Jim Fitzpatrick** Hastings, Minnesota
- **Tim Heinle** Scottsdale, AZ and Atsokan Island
- **Bob Hilke** International Falls, Minnesota
- **Mary Swalla Holmes** Madrid, Iowa
- **Pebaamibines**  
(Dennis) Jones Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **Charles A. Kelly** St. Paul and Ranier, MN
- **Robin Monahan** Shoreview, Minnesota
- **Michael Reid** St. Paul, Minnesota
- **Jean Sanford Replinger** Marshall, Minnesota
- **John Roth** Minneapolis, MN, (Jan.-June)
- **Margaret Anne**  
(Peggy) Smith Thunder Bay, Ontario
- **Harry Sweatt** Wayzata and Red Pine Island
- **Diane Tessari** Excelsior, Minnesota
- **Elaine Thrune** Sartell, Minnesota

## From the Desk of the President (continued from page three)

Mary Swalla Holmes who worked on the island for over a decade before becoming the first ever Executive Director of the Foundation. She has served as treasurer and vice president, and often as resident photographer. Each member has served the maximum of three five-year terms on the Board and must step down. And each will be missed greatly. Suffice to say we do have three strong new people coming in to replace these folks but I will talk about them in detail at another time.

I am proud to state that the Oberholtzer Foundation is a truly upstanding Foundation with a net worth of at least a half million dollars and growing. The Board is active in running the organization. We have a competent Executive Director and two talented summer Program Staff in Mairi Doerr and Prudence Johnson who will again be leading caretakers on Mallard Island this summer. The on-island season brings many exciting new opportunities.

The one thing that I might name as a failure in 2015 was that we did not reach our goal of individual donations for last year's operating budget. We think this was somewhat overshadowed by the previous year's need (and a generous response) for funds to repair the island from the floodwaters. FEMA federal funding, received due to that flood, and a diversity of other revenues helped us to end the year in the black. (See financial report, back on page -4-.)

Thank you to everyone who donated for whatever cause. We could not exist without all of your help and funding support. This letter was only a brief glance at the year just completed. Follow along with us on our website at [www.eober.com](http://www.eober.com) and watch as this new year transpires.

*-- Jim Fitzpatrick, Board President*

## Thank You, to All of Our 2015 Annual Operating Fund Donors:

Arnold Alanen  
Barbara J. Anderson  
Michael L. Anderson  
Rolf T. Anderson  
Sigurd Anderson  
Athwin Foundation  
Carol Bellanger  
Ashley & Emmanuel Benites  
Lynn Bjorkman  
Ron Bowen  
Jerry Bowker  
James Bruggeman  
Bruna Bucciarelli  
James Buckingham  
Dale & Phyllis Callaghan  
Susan Carver  
Kate Casanova  
Ann Cathcart  
Claudia Christiansen  
Joseph Conrad  
Coop Educ'l Service Agency  
Lynn & Jerry Cox  
Steven Melander Dayton  
Thomas Dean  
Thomas R. Deupree  
Dennis Donath  
Alanna Dore  
Dorsey & Whitney Trust  
Peter Doughty  
David & Alice Duggan  
James & Janet Edlund  
Tim & Marva Fairchild  
Kathryn Fernholz  
David & Barbara Fisher  
Bill Forsyth  
Kristin Garey  
Joe & April Gaus  
Tim & Lisa Gerlach  
Connie Ghinazzi  
Janet C. Green  
Richard & Jan Green  
John R. Gregg  
Lee & Carol Grim  
Sarah Gruner  
Carol & Carl Haag  
Lois Hackbarth  
Christopher Hale  
Howard B. Hanson  
Mary Harrellson  
Head Family Foundation  
Tim & Joan Heinle  
Robin & Randy Hilfer  
Bob Hilke (& Eddie)  
Ron & Georgia Hilke  
Mary Swalla Holmes

Ron & Billie Hunt  
Colleen & David Jackson  
William & Alicia Jennings  
E. Heidi Jerome  
Wendy Kay Jerome  
Kathleen Johnsen  
Byrne & Carole Johnson  
Kier Johnson  
Prudence Johnson  
William E. Johnson  
Larry Kallemeyn  
Martin & Esther Kellogg  
Charles A. Kelly  
Charlotte Kerelko  
Scott King  
Nance Kunkel  
Paul & Kay Larsen  
Longview Foundation  
(F. & E. Winston family)  
Barbara McAfee  
Thomas McCann  
Michael McCormick  
Margo McCreary  
Karla McGray  
H.G. McNeely, Jr.  
Gladys Meade  
William & Sally Meadows  
Ward & Linda Merrill  
Ken Meter  
Roy Misonznick  
Robin Monahan  
Beverly Montgomery  
Marian Moore  
Tunie Munson-Benson  
Marianne Murphy Zarzana  
Lisa Nabbefeld  
Lynn Naeckel  
Richard Niemi  
Dean & Jeri Nordaune  
Kate & Kevin O'Hara  
Kathleen Olson  
Joe & Nancy Paddock  
Richard Paper  
Thomas Paper  
Wade & Carol Pavleck  
Martha Phillips  
Helena Pohlandt-McCormick  
Constance & Roger Powell  
Daniel Ray  
J. Arlene Rhonda  
Elizabeth (Lisa) Ringer  
Jamie Robertson  
David Rolloff  
Rebecca Rom  
Jennie Ross  
John & Julie Roth  
Sandra Rufer  
S. Joyce Rupp  
Catherine Sandell  
Bill & Diane Schaefer  
Alton & Linda Shannon  
Diana Sheldon and  
Stewart Sheldon, Jr.  
Elizabeth Shippee

George & Ruth Simmons  
Steve Robert Simmons  
Wallace & Rose Simpson  
Charles W. Skrief  
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Ruth Solie  
Miriam Sommerness  
Judith L. Specht  
Jill Stoltenberg  
Miranda Stone  
Janice Templin  
Diane Crawford Tessari  
Leah Thomas  
Elaine & Steve Thrune  
Paul Van Gorp  
Jean Velleu  
James Voegeli  
Paul Walker  
Vicki & Kenneth Warren  
Rud & Timmy Wasson  
Ann Marie Waterhouse  
Beth Waterhouse  
Bob & Elaine Waterhouse  
Mary Ann Weidt  
Deborah White  
Jerry Williams  
Winter Wheat Foundation  
Tim & Mandy Youngquist  
Carol Zapfel  
Dorothy Zerbe

~ ~ ~

### *Thank you!*

Several gifts were given this year in memory of **Leo S. Anderson**: thank you to the **Coop Educational Service Agency, Barbara Anderson, Judith Specht, Kate & Kevin O'Hara, and Vicki and Kenneth Warren** for these gifts.

**Bill Schaefer** made a donation in memory of **Janet Pearson**.

**Byrne and Carole Johnson** gave a gift in memory of **Ruth Anderson**

**George & Ruthie Simmons** dedicated a gift in honor of **Tim Heinle**.

**Sheree Peterson** gave a gift in honor of **Jean Sanford Replinger**.