

ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION



"The main purpose of this Trust is to help bridge the gap, both economic and cultural, between aboriginal Indians of the continent and the ... white inhabitants of the present day—and, it is hoped, to their mutual advantage."

*—Ober's will
establishing the foundation
1962*

Above: Pebaamibines shares cultural teachings with Camp Koochiching campers in the Teaching Lodge on Hawk Island.

Photo by JR Verkamp

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



OUR BOARD

BACK ROW

Shannon King, Ward Merrill, Diane Tessari, Michael Reid (Treasurer),
Nance Kunkel (Secretary), Bill Forsyth, Pebaamibines (Dennis Jones)

FRONT ROW

Dave Rolloff (Vice Chair), Rebecca Otto (Executive Director), George
Glazier (Chair).

NOT PICTURED

Peggy Smith
Keir Johnson

The Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation

is a 501(c)3 nonprofit private operating foundation incorporated in 1964

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REBECCA OTTO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A year of new beginnings



It's hard to believe that it's been just over a year since I joined the foundation. During that year, we were able to resume programming on Mallard, including four busy volunteer work weeks preserving the buildings and archives. We could not do what we do without our dedicated family of foundation volunteers!

Our 2021 Mallard Island program weeks included the Stewards of the Wilderness, Ojibwe Transcriptions, Sustainable Psychology, and artists and individual project weeks. What was unique about 2021 is that every program week except one experienced indigenous cultural teachings and practices. The impact of this enhancement was meaningful to our guests, and led us to develop our Elder-in-Residence Program for 2022.

When reading Ober's will from 1962, he stated: "The main purpose of this Trust is to help bridge the gap, both economic and cultural, between aboriginal Indians of the continent and the ... white inhabitants of the present day—and, it is hoped, to their mutual advantage." In another section Ober said "Out of the wilderness sprang the Indians. They are an integral part of it. They were its custodians for untold centuries. Today they offer a main hope for its future—one that lies above all within the scope of their genius and traditions."

The Elder-in-Residence program has the potential to begin to bridge this gap that Ober referred to. And, we are truly fortunate to have Pebaamibines, the great-grandson of Ober's lifelong friend and exploring partner Tay-tah-pah-swe-wi-tang (Billy Magee), serving as our first Elder-in-Residence.

As one guest wrote after experiencing Ojibwe cultural teachings and practices in 2021, "Of course, any thinking person knows preserving the ecology of planet is paramount to avoid worst-case crisis, but to



experience Native sensibilities and teaching in regard to it adds another dimension.”

We are excited to continue the work that Ober envisioned - bridging the gap to our mutual benefit, along with his focus on the arts and protecting the environment, and honoring the universal principle the Ojibwe call Gi-bezhig-oomin – we are all one. Thank you for sharing your time, talent and treasure for this work. Here is to a wonderful 2022!

Tay-tah-pah-swe-wi-tang,
or Billy Magee, was
Pebaamibines’
great-grandfather and
Ober’s close friend,
pictured here with Ober.



Rebecca Otto
Executive Director

SOME OF 2021'S NEW BEGINNINGS

Passed our Minnesota Land Trust inspection

Purchased a new fire pump to replace older equipment

Tore down and rebuilt the Tool Shed

Set up our first online constituent relationship management system

Properly disposed of hazardous and flammable waste

Performed forestry work on all four islands

Installed new gutters and fascia on the Wannigan

Removed island refuse and took to the transfer station

Replaced more cedar bark siding on the Big House

Migrated our financial record keeping to accounting software

Removed and recycled the old “pie tin” aluminum boat

Reglazed the windows on the Big House

Added online credit card and ACH payments

Added our first online subscription option for communications, and a monthly sustaining donation option

Installed new smoke and CO detectors in all sleeping cabins

Held our first online silent auction and made the fall gathering both live and virtual to remove geographic barriers to participation

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



GEORGE GLAZIER BOARD CHAIR

A year of new beginnings

Greetings!

The Ober Foundation Board of Directors is growing and embarking on lots of important governance work. We recently adopted new bylaws and approved key policies including; Eligibility, Powers and Duties of Board Members, Board Member and Officer Elections/Retirement, Conflict of Interest, Expense and Reimbursement, and a Privacy Policy.

Once we complete reviewing and updating all of our policies, we will begin to draft a new strategic plan. Our current plan reflects a PT executive director and we have a FT ED. Once we have an updated strategic plan in place, annually we will work to have the right mix of planning, preparing, executing and assessing processes in place to make real progress in achieving our goals in the strategic plan.

On the board development front, we elected three new board members. We plan to align them in key committee positions to support foundation operations and the strategic planning. The new members are Erika Bailey-Johnson, Jerry Williams, and David Harrington who will all undergo onboarding and start service at the June Board meeting. Their skills and experience support Indigenous programming, youth outreach, local community connections, strategic planning, legal, finance, and fundraising.

The Oberholtzer Foundation continues to improve with every season. We would not be able to do all of this without the attention of a full-time executive director to manage volunteers, staff, supporters, programming weeks and budget, including maintaining contact with our friends who so generously provide the means to maintain and foster Ober's legacy and north woods island home.

We are truly grateful for the financial support, volunteer hours, and other ways that our supporters engage with us. Thank you!

Sincerely,

George Glazier

OUR PROGRAMMING



PRESERVING, HOSTING, EDUCATING

We preserve Ober's historic island home, including the ecology of the four islands and the many hand-built structures, as well as Ober's collection of books, maps, and other archives.

We host individual visitors in this unique, living museum.

We educate visitors and others about Ober's three main *areas of interest*.

OBER'S MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST GUIDE OUR WORK:

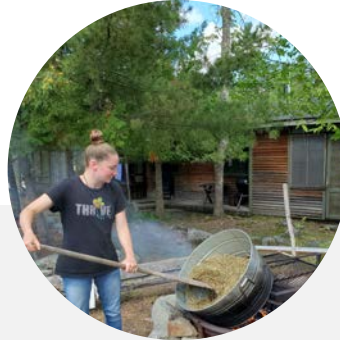
THE NATURAL WORLD



PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Ober was part of an early group of leaders working to preserve the environment through the Wilderness Society. Today, we are exploring ways to offer educational opportunities to better understand and engage with the natural environment. We want to build relationships with others working in this space. We are working to develop the environmental leaders of tomorrow through our youth programming.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



EDUCATION & CULTURAL TEACHINGS/ PRACTICES

Ober established his trust "to help bridge the gap, both economic and cultural," between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Today, we offer cultural teachings and practices to share the "genius and traditions" of Indigenous environmental stewardship coupled with Ober's legacy during program weeks. We compensate visiting elders who share their time with us. There is much exciting work ahead!

THE ARTS



HOSTING THOSE DOING CREATIVE WORK

Ober frequently hosted writers, artists and intellectuals on Mallard, and we continue this with program weeks. While on Mallard, guests can read from the 13,000+ books, wander the islands, participate in lively discussions, and explore the themes that drew Ober to spend his life in the Rainy Lake Watershed and champion the environment and Indigenous peoples.

OUR IMPACT

COMMENTS FROM 2021 PROGRAM WEEK PARTICIPANTS



Ober's massive and deep collection of antique books was my major reason for visiting the island--I felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to read texts like 'A History of the Ojibway People' as well as Pebaam's out-of-print 'Daga Anishinaabemodaa' textbook.

Any thinking person knows preserving the ecology of the planet is paramount to avoid a worst-case crisis, but to experience Native sensibilities and teaching in regard to it adds another dimension.

Hands down, the best aspect of this week was the presence of Pebaam (and Laura) and the notion of the foundation's mission tilting further toward native teaching and awareness. I imagine Ober is grinning in his grave!

Since the ceremony I have started to read more books written by Indigenous people of Minnesota and have followed more closely to treaty rights being upheld or challenged by Minnesota law.

My takeaways are - nature is precious and spiritual. The islands are alive and have a spirit. That we need to be the voices for those who do not have a voice or who have had their voices taken away. That I need to live with gratitude and share my work with others. I also want to ensure future generations have the opportunity to experience the island and foster their love of people, art and nature.

I feel that something inside has shifted for me (in a good way) since Mallard but I can't quite put my finger on it.

The ceremony offered was impossible to absorb fully, I was swimming in it all. I've not had opportunity before to be audience for such as this.

I made great use of the books, maps, and Ober's journals. It will lead to corrections and additions to my book of historical fiction on the Rainy watershed, Quetico and the BWCAW. The fellow campers were fun, and read parts of my manuscript with thoughtful comments. I enjoyed the mix of artists. Pebaam's ceremony was informative and moving. His humor and wit a plus.



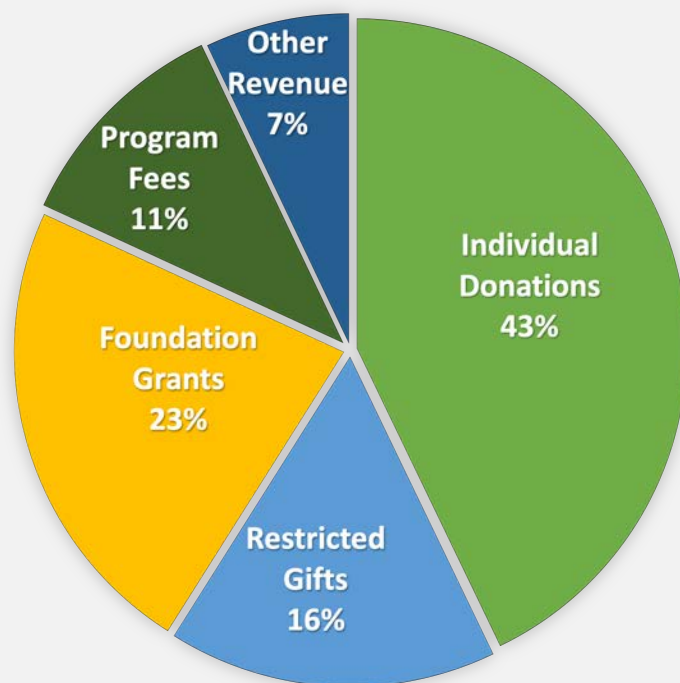
SEE DIFFERENTLY.

ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION

FINANCIALS

FUND BALANCES

Donor Endowment Fund	312,413
Frances E Andrews Building Fund	
Corpus	134,000
Accumulated Earnings	88,982
Culture and Education Fund	16,490
Board Designated Funds	
Emergency Fund	75,000
Endowment Fund	213,301
Undesignated Invested Funds	774,588



INCOME

Individual Donations	48,777	43%
Restricted Gifts	18,340	16%
Foundation Grants	26,060	23%
Program Fees	12,606	11%
Other Revenues	8,044	7%
TOTAL INCOME	113,827	100%

EXPENSES

Admin & Program Support	67,827	56%
Fundraising	5,957	5%
Programs		
Culture and Education	5,601	
Mallard Island Experience	29,074	
Preservation	5,252	
Total Programs	39,927	33%
Depreciation	7,479	6%
TOTAL EXPENSES	121,190	100%

Net Variance from Activities	(\$7,363)
Net Change to Funds	\$244,473

The Foundation uses volunteer labor for a major portion of its activities. These figures do not include the value of those thousands of donated hours.

Your sustaining monthly gift at eober.org/donate will help support our work to further Ober's vision!

ESSENTIAL VOLUNTEERS

Little happens at the Foundation without the help of our dedicated and growing family of volunteers. They share their time and talent to make good things happen on and off Mallard Island. They provide thousands of hours of labor each year, helping us to further the vision and mission of the Oberholtzer Foundation, and we are so grateful.

Opening & Closing Mallard

Pam & Darrell Rundell
Eric Rundell
Lucy Schneeman
Kelly Rundell
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Bill Thrune
Gerry Thrune
Ward Merrill

Archives Week

Kristin Eide
Nancy Haarmeyer
Inga Haugen
Laura Kerr
Tom McCann
David Rolloff
Meagan Russell
Ted Tollefson
Beth Waterhouse

Communications

Nance Kunkel
Shawn Otto
Tanya Piatz
Elaine Thrune

Carpentry Week

Alan & Amy Boelk
Mairi Doerr
Craig Fernholz
Tim Gerlach
Randy & Robin Hilfer
Doug Kelley
Gary & Gayla Olsen
Amy Nakamura
Bob Norbie
Troy Nordaune
Michael Reid
Sherri Rovig
Eric Rundell
Lucy Schneeman
Annelise Stuh
Wyman Weinbeck



Gardening

Barb Balcom
Tom Balcom
Carol Inderieden
Julie Marckel
Richard Paper

Caretakers

Daniel Anderson
Barb Draper
Mairi Doerr *
Mark Granlund
Teghan Grulkowski
Clay Gustafson
Prudence Johnson *
Nance Kunkel
Jane Lund
Laura Pawlacyk
Jenny Ross
Kelly Sassi
Danielle Sosin
Mary Swalla Holmes
Elaine Thrune
*Summer Program Directors

Buoys & Forestry Work

Mairi Doerr
Jim Kaiser
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Bill Thrune
Gerry Thrune
Richard Thrune

Event & Silent Auction

Teghan Grulkowski
Jean E Kelly
Shannon King
Barbara La Valluer
Julie Marckel
Jake Otto
Shawn Otto
Tanya Piatz-Sandberg
Michael Reid
Marj Savage
Duncan Storlie
Diane Tessari
Elaine Thrune
Jerry Williams



GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

Individual Donors

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Rolf Anderson
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Leslie Baken
Barb & Tom Balcom
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Ford Bell
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Virgil Benoit
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Brad Blackett
Henriette Blaha
Liz Blair
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Bruna Bucciarelli
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Nance Center
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Mairi Doerr
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Christine Duewel
Patricia Eaves
Rosa Ebling



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Ron & Georgia Hilke
Elizabeth Hutchins
Phillip Jemielita
Heidi Jerome
Wendy Jerome
Kathleen Johnsen
Keir Johnson
Byrne & Carol Johnson
Dennis (Pebaam) Jones
Dave Jones
Leo Jones
Catherine Jordan
Jyl Josephson
Larry & Jo Kallemeyn
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Kathryn Kysar
Douglas Kelley
Esther Kellogg
Charles & Jean E. Kelly
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Nance & Russell Kunkel
Ross Kylo
Barbara LaValleur
Leech Lake Tribal College
Anne Lewis
Robert Lewis

Jennifer Lorge
Denise Low
Becky Lucas
Jane Lund
Curtis Lundy
Jeanne Lutz
Christie Manning
Julie Marckel
Bob Marquardt
Carolyn Marsan
Sara N. Martineau
Haley McCallum
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Edie Meissner
Ward & Linda Merrill
Maralee Thomson Mood
Dale & Janice Mulfinger
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Lynn Naeckel
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Dean & Jeri Nordaune
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Bruce O'Brien
Meg Ojala
Gary & Gayla Olsen
Gerald Olson
Rebecca & Shawn Otto

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Vincent Ross
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Catherine Sandell
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Joyce & James Sidman
Dave Siebert
Sierra County Land Trust

George & Ruthie Simmons
Rose & Wallace Simpson
Charles Skrief
Trina & Barton Slepser
Peggy Ann Smith
Thomas Smith
Ruth Solie
Krista Spieler
David Sproat
Jerome Stanley
Walton Stanley
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Jill Stoltenberg
Terri Sundberg
Barton Sutter
Margaret Telfer
Diane Crawford Tessari
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Terry Vad Der Pol
Paul Van Gorp
Joseph & Eileen Vanwie
Jean Velleu
Jim & Dawn Voegli
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Rud Wasson
Beth Waterhouse
Carol Weiler
Wyman Weinbeck
Elizabeth Weir
Steve & Deborah Wilbers
Jerry Williams
Kent Williams
Michael & Mary Williams
Nancy & Gary Wincott
Fred & Eleanor Winston
Arthur Yood
Jerry & Barbara Young
Ed Zahniser

Gifts in Memory of

Buster Eaves
Tim Mudge Heinle
Mary Hille

John L. Holden
Charlie Kelly
Don Maronde
James P. Martineau
Gladys Meade
Linda Merrill
Ernest C. Oberholtzer
Robert K. Olson
Janet Pearson
James Samson Riddle
Swede Sundberg
Rich Thompson

Gifts in Honor of

Charlie Kelly
Nance Kunkel
Julia Marsan
John & Suzanne McKinney
Walter Mondale
Pebaamibines
Jean Replinger
Don Shelby
Ian Slater
Beth Waterhouse
All the marvelous people who
keep & care for Ober's island
legacy!
The Women who helped pack up
Mallard Carolyn, Mary, Lisa,
Lucy, Barbie
Hudson Bay Canoe Team- Robin,
Becky, George, John & Gayle

Foundation Gifts

Anon. Family Foundation
Grand Casino Mille Lacs
Henry & Katherine Doerr
Memorial Fund
Longview Foundation
Lenfestey Family Foundation
Pallorino Family Foundation
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux
Community Fund
Winter Wheat Foundation

In-kind Donations

Chapman & Cutler LLP
Prudence Johnson
Pebaamibines
Michael Reid
David Rolloff
Pam & Darrell Rundell
Eric Rundell
Beth Waterhouse

Silent Auction Donors

Geeg Aaker
Mary Casanova
Dan Chouinard
Bill Dougherty
Kristen Eide
Sue Foran
Nancy Haarmeyer
Bryne Johnson
Prudence Johnson
Mary Keller
Shannon King
Kevin Kling
Koochiching Museum
Barbara LaValleur
Mary Ludington
Karen MacCall
Tom McCann
Ward Merrill
Northernaire Houseboats
Shawn & Rebecca Otto
Tanya Platz-Sandberg
Rainy Lake Houseboats
Christina Hausman Rhode
Claudia Schmidt
John Schuerman
David Malcom Scott
Sarah Stonich
Duncan Storie
John Sularz
Diane Tessari
Thunderbird Lodge
Voyageurs National Park
Beth Waterhouse



ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION

ANNUAL 2021 REPORT



OUR MISSION

The Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation fosters and 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.
Gi-bezhig-oomin

LEARN MORE AT [EOBER.ORG](https://ober.org)



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