

ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

RESILIENCY

"The fact that it stood, despite the disfiguration of the flood, has given me a tremendous lift, physically and spiritually. Now I feel that dreams and ideals are not futile."

- Letter to Ober from Ted Hall during the 1950 flood

Top: The Wannigan in the flood. Photo by Mairi Doerr.

Above: Volunteers and staff take a much needed break during flood mitigation work. Left to right: Sherry Rovig, Doug Kelley, Craig Fernholtz, and Mairi Doerr. Photo by Michael Reid.



OUR BOARD

BACK ROW

Jerry Williams, Diane Tessari, David Harrington, Ward Merrill, Keir Johnson, Peggy Smith, Nance Kunkel (Secretary), Michael Reid (Treasurer), George Glazier (Chair)

FRONT ROW

Dave Rolloff (Vice Chair), Erika Bailey-Johnson, Pebaamibines, Bill Forsyth.

The Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation
is a 501(c)3 nonprofit private operating foundation incorporated in 1964
(651) 867-4649 • eober.org • info@eober.org • TIN 41-6042619

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REBECCA OTTO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Resiliency



Mallard Island is no stranger to floods - Ober struggled with a massive flood in 1950 and we weathered the biggest flood on record in 2022. For a time we feared Cedarbark House would be swept away by the floodwaters. With your help, we faced the crisis and found opportunity and resiliency.

Old friends and new stepped up to support the foundation by volunteering and making financial donations. We were able to rewire much of Mallard so that the electrical system is flood-resilient and up to code. We can avoid having to shut the entire system down during the next flood. We were very fortunate to find a local contractor to start this work right away so that we could begin flood recovery—thanks Kennedy Electric!

The flood also got us thinking about future floods; the Board began a review of Mallard Island's resiliency: our buildings, collections and vegetation. Result - Step 1: The books that were housed in the "Library/Book House" and saved from the flood could not be returned to this low, flood-prone building. We are creating a Mallard Island Annex Library with this collection and work space/storage room at the Backus Community Center in International Falls! We are excited about partnering with the Backus staff and all of the collaboration that can happen moving forward—including new programming in town, exhibits of some of our collections, educational opportunities for the community, and so much more.

We have more flood recovery work ahead this year, and we hope to have a full summer of programming in 2023. Miigwech to all of you for your support. We could not do what we do without you!

Rebecca Otto

Executive Director



RESILIENCY.

ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2022

Reroofed Cedarbark and Winter House

Continued to develop our Board of Directors

Removed extensive flood debris from island

Developed initial plans to repair the island's extensive stonework

Took steps to create an annex library & work space in International Falls

Performed forestry work on all four islands

Restored four wood burning stoves impacted by the flood

Continued updating our bylaws & policies with an eye to the future

Replaced more cedar bark siding on the Big House

Repaired flood-damaged walls in Front House and Artist House

Refinished floors in Front House, Artist House, Cedarbark, and the Wannigan

Repainted most of the windows on the Big House

Painted and cleaned flooded buildings

Rewired much of electrical system to make it flood-resilient and bring it up to code

Repaired Caboose windows after vandalism

Successfully boxed and moved 3,500 books from the Library/Boat House before the flood waters entered the building

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



GEORGE GLAZIER BOARD CHAIR

A year of resiliency

Greetings!

The Ober Foundation Board of Directors is growing and embarking on lots of important governance work. Last year, we 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.

This year, we will begin to draft a new strategic plan. 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.

On the board development front, we elected five new board members in 2022. They are aligned in key committee positions to support foundation operations and the strategic planning. The new members are Jerry Williams, Erika Bailey-Johnson, David Harrington, Teghan Grulkowski, and Eric Rundell who all underwent onboarding to orient them to the foundation. Their skills and experience support youth outreach, local community connections, facilities management, nonprofit governance, cultural teachings and practices, and programming on Mallard.

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 all of the ways our supporters engage with us. Thank you!

Sincerely,

George Glazier

Photo of flooded Front House porch by Michael Reid

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 VALUES 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 8,000+ 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 (2022 FLOODED OUT)



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.

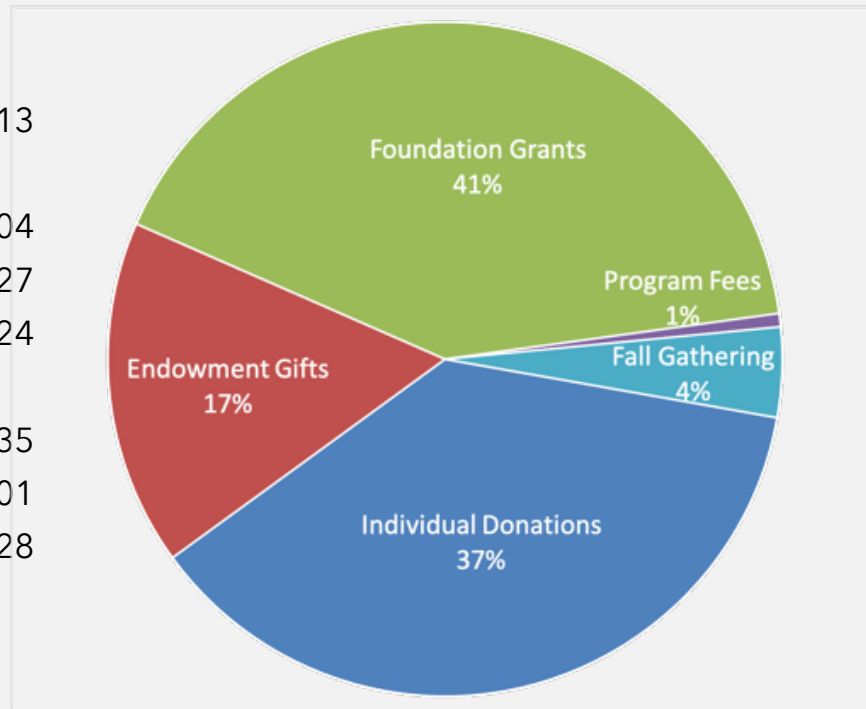


ERNEST C. OBERHOLTZER FOUNDATION

FINANCIALS

FUND BALANCES

Donor Endowment Fund	338,413
Frances E Andrews Building Fund	
Corpus	137,104
Accumulated Earnings	49,627
Culture and Education Fund	13,524
Board Designated Funds	
Emergency Fund	77,735
Endowment Fund	213,301
Undesignated Invested Funds	569,828



INCOME

Individual Donations	58,258	37%
Restricted Gifts	26,000	17%
Foundation Grants	64,600	41%
Program Fees	1,000	1%
Fall Gathering	6,752	4%
Other Revenues	549	0%
TOTAL INCOME	157,159	100%

EXPENSES

Admin & Program Support	65,922	49%
Fundraising	5,026	4%
Programs		
Culture and Education	6,001	
Mallard Island Experience	46,270	
Preservation	10,543	
Total Programs	62,814	47%
TOTAL EXPENSES	133,762	100%

Net Variance from Activities	\$23,397
Net Change to Funds	(\$216,058)

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

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

ESSENTIAL VOLUNTEERS

Little happens at the Foundation without the help of our dedicated and growing family of volunteers who share their time and talent. 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

Nicka & Alli Hanson
Pam & Darrell Rundell
Eric & Lucy Rundell
Kelly Rundell
Matthew Rundell
Bill Thrune
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Richard Thrune

Flood

Amy & Alan Boelk
Ann De La Vergne
Mairi Doerr
Rob Donish
Craig Fernholz
Tim & Lisa Gerlach
Danny Gillespie
George & Elizabeth Glazier
John Glazier

David Harrington
Randy & Robin Hilfer
Prudence Johnson
Pebaamibines
Doug Kelley
Jean E. Kelly
Nance Kunkel
Ward Merrill
Shawn Otto
Laura Pawlacyk
Michael Reid
Dave Rolloff
Sherry Rovig
Pam & Darrell Rundell
Eric & Lucy Rundell
Peggy Smith
Danielle Sosin
Gerry Thrune
Steve & Elaine Thrune
Wyman Weinbeck
Jerry Williams
Nick Zurich

Communications

Nance Kunkel
Shawn Otto
Tanya Piatz
Elaine Thrune
Beth Waterhouse

Forestry Week

Mairi Doerr
David Harrington
Prudence Johnson
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Gerry Thrune

Fall Gathering Volunteers

Dan Chouinard
Mairi Doerr
Barbara Draper
Mairi Doerr
Teghan Grulkowski
Carol Inderieden
Prudence Johnson
Jean E Kelly
Jane Lund
Jake Otto
Shawn Otto
Tanya Piatz-Sandberg
Malik Ross
Randy Sabien
Marj Savage
Diane Tessari
Elaine Thrune
Beth Waterhouse
Jerry Williams

Fall Gathering Silent Auction

Laurie Allman
Mary Axelson
Marge Barrett



Kristin Eide-Tollefson
John Gorka
Cary Griffith
Steve Grulkowski
Thomas Hall
David Harrington
Carol Inderieden
Keir Johnson
Garrison Keillor
Jean E. Kelly
Allan Miller
Rebecca & Shawn Otto
Sheryl Peterson
Margi Preus
Jonathon Slaght
Danielle Sosin
Diane Tessari
Anton Treuer
Beth Waterhouse
Stephen Wilbur



GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

Individual Donors

Arnold Alanen
Kathryn Allen
Lawrence Allen
Elise Amel
Michael Anderson
Angela Anderson
Rolf Anderson
Angela Anderson
Tracie Anderson
Mary Axelson
Erika Bailey-Johnson
Tom & Barb Balcom
Julie Battle
Catherine Beckstrand
Peter Beckstrand
Tom Bell
Ashley Benites
Emmanuel Benites
Colleena Bibeau
Lynn Bjorkman
Henrietta Blaha
Andrea Bond
Joseph Boyle
Kevin Brelie
Patricia Brophy
Dave Brunkow
Lucy Bruntjen
Steven Bubul
Bruna Bucciarelli
Garry Buckles
Chuck Calvert
Sue Carver
Ann Cathcart
Nancy Churchill
Joe Conrad
Jerry & Lynn Cox
Carol Cox
Elizabeth Cregan
Leanne Crompton
Jim Davis
Cheryl Dawson
Thomas Dean
Emily Deaver

Benjamin Dennis
Dorthea Diver
Mairi Doerr
Mayme Donsker
Alanna Dore
Barbara Draper
Carolyn Dry
Kathryn Duchene
David Duggan
Barb & Laverne Dunsmore
Janet & James Edlund
Tara Ehnes
Bruce Ehresman
Marlene Ehresman
Nancy & Larry Eisinger
Ron & Nancy Erickson
Jon Farchmin
Kathryn Fernholz
Jim Fitzpatrick
Sue Foran
Bill Forsyth
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Karen & Doug Franchot
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Nancy Haarmeyer
Chris Hale
Miranda Stone
Thomas Hall
Sheila Hart
Helen Hayhurst
Vickie Heggen
Joan Heinle
Thomas Heinrich
Steve & Jackie Henning
Larry & Ida Heuchert

Jack & Mary Hickerson
Randy & Robin Hilfer
Bob Hilke
Georgia & Ron Hilke
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Bill Howard
Craig & Mona Hunter
Elizabeth Hutchins
David Hutchinson
Dick & Susan Isenhardt
Jan Jenson
Wendy Jerome
Heidi Jerome
Keir Johnson
Anthony Johnson
Byrne & Carol Johnson
Geralene Jones
Julia Joplin
Catherine Jordan
Mary & Allan Juers
Larry & Jo Kallemeyn
Esther Kellogg
Ellie Kingsbury
Ron Kirschling
Teresa Kolar
Margaret Korthauer
Sonja Kosler
Nance Kunkel
Kathryn Kysar
John Lamb
Barbara LaValleur
Mike & Marcia Lein
Lee Lewis
Jeff Lightfoot
Frank Lockwood
Jennifer Lorge
Mary Ludington
Jane Lund
Curtis Lundy
Jeanne Lutz
Susan Maki
Christie Manning
Julia Marsan



Carol Marshall
Sara N. Martineau
Julia Martinez
Elizabeth Matthews
Tom McCann
Shawn McMahon
Ward Merrill
Sarah Miller
Mary Miller
Robin Monahan
Shannon Monahan
David Monahan
Karen Mueller
Deb Murphy
Darcia Narvaez
Rachel Neville
Richard Niemi
Dean & Jeri Nordaune
Bruce O'Brien
Nanci Oleson
Gary & Gaila Olsen
Marilyn Olson
Eric Olson
Rebecca Otto

GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

Shawn Otto
Les & Karen Oystrik
Nancy & Joe Paddock
Richard Paper
Tom Paper
Faye Passow
Phil & Sheree Peterson
Tanya Piatz-Sandberg
Wayne Potratz
Fred & Melinda Quivik
Katie Rauk
Dan Ray
Fiona Reid
Eric Replinger
Lisa Ringer
James Robertson
Dave Rolloff
J. Arlene Ronda
Anthony Rongstad
Jenny Ross
Catherine Sandell
Kel Sassi
Erika Schinler
Valerie Schooley
Rick & Cindy Schultz
Linda & Alton Shannon
Joyce Sidman
Pete Siebert
Carolyn Siebert
David Siebert
George & Ruth Simmons
Charles Skrief
Mary Alice Smith
Ruth Solie
Krista Spieler
Nora Springer
David Sproat
Walton Stanley
Sam Stenson
Jill Stoltenberg
Sarah Stonich
Annelise Stuht
Margaret-Mary Sulentic
Dowell

Terri Sundberg
Barton Sutter
Lauren Tasugi
Diane Tessari
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Ted Tollefson
Paul Van Gorp
Joseph & Eileen VanWie
Jean Velleu
Larry & Pat Wahl
Rud Wasson
Beth Waterhouse
Ann Waterhouse
Lucia Watson
Carol Weiler
Elizabeth Weir
Steve Wilbers
Sarah Wilkinson
Mike & Mary Williams
Jerry Williams
Terry Wilton
Fred & Eleanor Winston
Carol Zapfel
Jim Zarzana
Marianne Zarzana

Gifts in Memory of

J Duane Aden
Leo Anderson
Donna Axelson
Blair Borden
Clifford E. Knapp
Nelly Harding Gerber
Thomas Gipe
Ted Hall
John C. & Phyllis Hart
Tim Heinle
Mary Hilke
John Holden
Charlie Kelly
Marjorie Laughnan
Phil Lawrence
Dwayne C Mannausau

Don Maronde
James P. Martineau
Todd Miller
Hugh & Marnee Monahan
Ober
Janet Pearson
Matt Stonich
Swede Sundberg
Harry Sweatt
Butch Thompson
Sam & Stephanie White

Gifts in Honor of

Archive/Book Week Folk
Artists of these times
Pinay Boshkaykin
Lucy Bruntjen
Mairi Doerr
Louise Erdrich
Flood volunteers
Tim Heinle
Bob Hilke
Ellie Kingsbury
Anna M. McCourt
Ward Merrill
Ober
Rebecca Otto
Pebaam
Ted Schwenker
Mickey Smith
The spirits
Steve and Elaine Thrune
Jean and Randy Replinger
Sherry Rovig
Volunteers
Beth Waterhouse

Foundation Gifts

Anon. Family Foundation
Dancing Winds Sustainable Living Fund
Grand Casino Mille Lacs

Henry & Katherine Doerr
Memorial Fund
Longview Foundation
Lenfestey Family Foundation
Marshall N Knudson Community
Family Fund
Quetico Superior Foundation
Rainy Lake Conservancy
Winter Wheat Foundation

In-kind Donations

Chapman & Cutler LLP
George Glazier
Keir Johnson
Prudence Johnson
Jean E. Kelly
Nance Kunkel
Michael Reid
Sherry Rovig
Eric Rundell
Peggy Smith
Diane Tessari
Elaine & Steve Thrune
Wyman Weinbeck

Fall Gathering Host Committee

Bill Forsyth
George Glazier
Keir Johnson



ANNUAL 2022 REPORT



1954 photo of Bob Hilke by stone footbridge, which replaced the wooden bridge that was taken out by the 1950 flood. Photo from the Oberholtzer Foundation collection.

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 [OBER.ORG](https://ober.org)



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