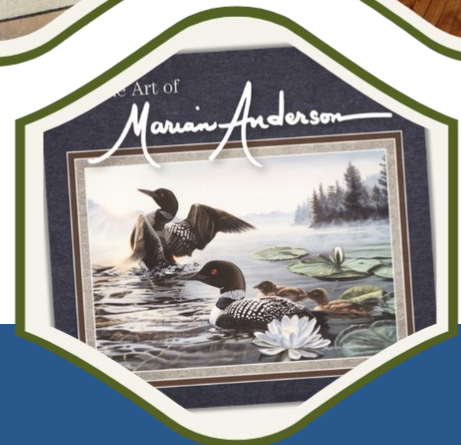


# BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



### Mission Statement

To lead in the collecting and promoting of Blue Earth County's history to ensure its preservation for the enrichment and benefit of present and future generations..

# FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022

Steve Jameson, BECHS Treasurer

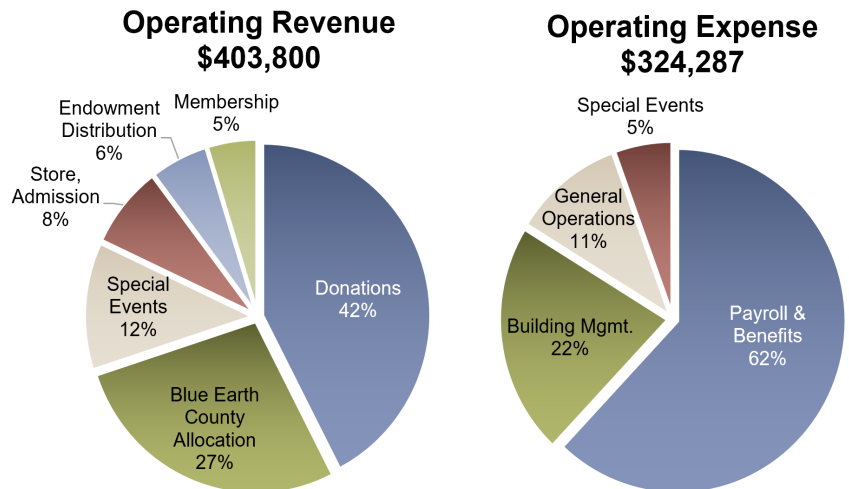
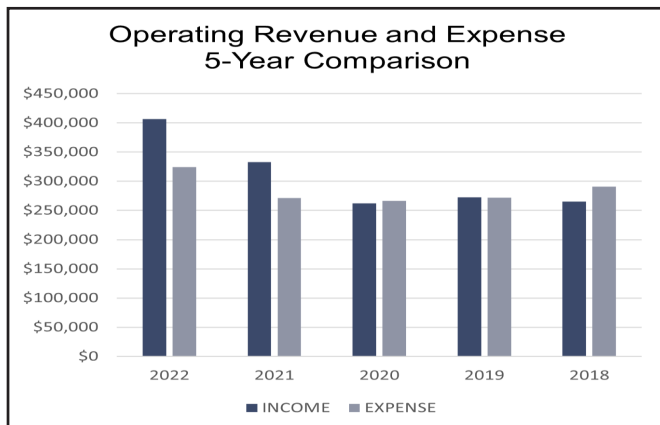
2022 was another successful year for the Blue Earth County Historical Society, and that's due to the many generous people we call History Heroes. Despite an aggressive budget versus 2021, we were able to end the year with a positive bottom line. All due to the generosity of our public and private supporters for general operations and special projects. Thank YOU to those that contributed to the success of the Historical Society in 2022!

For 2022, the Board budgeted \$342,995 in Operating Revenue and \$342,828 in Operating Expenses for a net gain of \$167.

I am pleased to say that we exceeded our budgeted Operating Revenue by \$60,805, a +17% increase, and spent less than budgeted by \$18,541 (5% decrease). Our revenue increase was due in part to donations for the BOLD vision to help us achieve our goal of purchasing the house in our lot and begin the process of reconfiguring our parking lot. The slight increase in overall expenses was mainly due to an increase in staffing and wage changes to bring our staff to marketable wages.

Year over year, our actual revenue went up by \$73,725 (+13% increase), while our actual expenses went up by \$53,268 (+19.6% increase). We budgeted for these increases and as you can see, we were able to make that budget.

All in all, it was a very successful year for our Society and a wonderful way to take steps toward our BOLD vision. Once again, this was largely due to the hard work and dedication of our BECHS staff as well as the support from our members and donors!



## Blue Earth County Historical Society Statement of Financial Position As of December 31, 2021 (UNAUDITED)

	Dec 31, 22	Dec 31, 21
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Checking/Savings</b>		
1000 · Cash/Savings		
1010 · Cash	240.00	240.00
1040 · Operating-Checking-WFB	213,172.13	135,390.68
1042 · Savings-WFB	84,837.10	84,814.63
1046 · Brokerage Account-RBC	340,175.38	372,635.49
1090 · Endowment Invest-RBC	394,434.04	433,180.11
1200 · CDs - Dedicated Funds	38,150.76	37,775.35
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>1,071,009.41</b>	<b>1,064,036.26</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>		
Total 1390 · BECHS Inventory	675,121.67	675,463.79
1600 · Undeposited Funds	544.64	522.00
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>675,666.31</b>	<b>675,985.79</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>1,746,675.72</b>	<b>1,740,022.05</b>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>332,805.77</b>	<b>332,805.77</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>2,079,481.49</b>	<b>2,072,827.82</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Total Accounts Payable	7,797.06	5,233.27
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>16,873.76</b>	<b>14,128.80</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>2,054,810.67</b>	<b>2,053,465.75</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>2,079,481.49</b>	<b>2,072,827.82</b>

Full financials are available upon request.  
BECHS' IRS Form 990 is available at [Guidestar.org](http://Guidestar.org).

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2022

## Jessica Potter, BECHS Executive Director

In January 2022, the BECHS Board and Staff embarked on a three-year strategic plan. Together, we painted the picture of where BECHS would be in three years by December 31, 2024 and what that looks like. We identified 8 key areas of growth opportunities for BECHS: Facility, Finances, Staff, Collection, Marian Anderson Art, Marketing, Audience, and Museum. Below is the three year picture (2024), what was accomplished in 2022 and what is our focus in 2023.

### FACILITY

**2024** – Develop Feasibility Study and Capital Campaign Plan for BOLD Vision to expand the History Center.

**2023** – Renovate Parking Lot BOLD Phase 1: house de-construction, parking lot construction, exterior signage. Develop comprehensive Facility Plan in preparation for a Capital Campaign.

**2022** ✓ Purchase agreement signed for 5<sup>th</sup> Street House (BOLD Step).

### FINANCES

**2024** – Development Department is supporting successful creative fundraising initiatives including the nurturing of corporate partnerships.

**2023** – Develop and implement a comprehensive annual fundraising plan with focus on corporate partnerships lead by new staff person.

**2022** ✓ Staff managed a fundraising plan based on budget measurables; many areas exceeded budget.

### STAFF

**2024** – Staff and wages have grown to support expanding needs of the organization.

**2023** – Hire new staff focused on communication and relationship building/fundraising (see Marketing).

**2022** ✓ Staff evaluation with non-profit consultant completed in April; reassigned existing staff and increased wages; new staff hired in June.



Bri Krumwiede,  
new Archives Assistant

### COLLECTION

**2024** – Archival and three-dimensional collections properly stored and expansion needs evaluated for Facility Plan. Archival resources searchable online; specifically photographs and manuscripts.

**2023** – Continue addressing short-term storage

concerns and shifting to maximize available space. Develop Finding Aides for archival resources and make them searchable online.

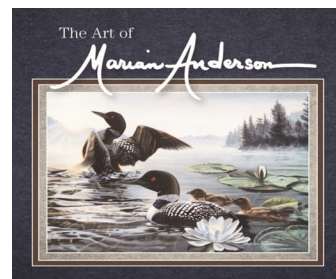
**2022** ✓ Collections management database converted to Collective Access. Large objects have been moved to new storage room opening space for shifting.

### MARIAN ANDERSON ART

**2024** – Marian Anderson fine art prints are promoted outside of History Center (online, galleries, public spaces) with annual art sales of \$10,000.

**2023** – Coordinate exhibition of Marian Anderson Original Art around Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties per Marian Anderson's estate.

**2022** ✓ *The Art of Marian Anderson* book released 11/1/11; 38% of books sold by 12/31.



### MARKETING

**2024** – Consistent institutional-wide marketing and destination management plan on multiple platforms.

**2023** – Develop and implement a comprehensive PR/Messaging/Marketing Plan to support and promote programs, events, fundraising, campaigns, gift shop, art sales, and audiences.

**2022** (see Audience Engagement)

### AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

**2024** – Consistent programming that is inclusive and contemporary within the context of the past which represents all Blue Earth County history, physically and educationally.

**2023** – (see Marketing)

**2022** ✓ New programming like Post Office tours to engage broader audiences.

### MUSEUM

**2024** – Interpretative Plan for an inclusive and contemporary museum ready for Capital Campaign Plan.

No goals set for 2022 or 2023.

Speaking on behalf of the staff, this plan and process has been both empowering and rewarding for us and the work we do. We take each annual goal and break it down into manageable quarterly bites; what can be done in the next 90 days. 2022 was a productive year for the staff, the Board and BECHS. It's wonderful to have a road map giving us a clear direction where we are heading and the momentum to get there.



# BOLD VISION, BOLD STEP, BOLD HISTORY HEROES

Nik Proehl, BECHS Chair

What an incredible year! When we think about history, we tend to focus on big moments, events that stand out and are remembered for years, if not generations. “Where were you when...” is a phrase we all have used. It helps define our lives, anchoring us in a time and place.

History Heroes, you know that single events, while important and memorable, never tell the whole story. There are always countless moments, little exchanges, and seemingly insignificant situations that all sew themselves together in that final event. The joy of history is discovering this backstory, seeing how a chain of events unfolds into a final product.

2022 was a year of small stories for BECHS, stories that slowly came together in a big way at the end of the year.

The last days of December saw BECHS Board finally complete a purchase agreement for the property adjacent to the History Center. This has been a long-term goal, several years in the making. It is the result of countless moments and little exchanges, with a final result that will help BECHS continue to grow in its mission to preserve and share our history in the form of an expanded History Center.

The BOLD Vision, first shared in November 2021, is to expand the History Center on the corner of 5th and Cherry Streets. This expansion has the potential to triple the size of the Museum allowing for more stories like those of our indigenous and new resident communities, more interactive hands-on history experiences and more objects on display like our 1925 Ford Model T (it is currently not possible to display large objects). Our dream is for the History Center to be a gathering place for all to come together to be inspired, engaged and to connect.

But history is still unfurling. While the acquisition of the property was an important first step, many little

moments lie ahead. In the upcoming year, we will be working with a local engineering firm to plan how to reconfigure our parking lot to allow the building to be more accessible with more parking spaces closer to the building. And we will work with a local construction company to deconstruct the house and salvage building materials for other’s historic preservation projects. Small stories for now, but more moments, very big moments, lie ahead.

History Heroes, you contributed your own small story, your own little moments. Your support IS the story in our eyes. The big events on the horizon would not be approaching without all of your support. In fact, since November 1, 2021, when we shared our BOLD Vision, over \$320,000 has been raised for BOLD Phase 1. And for that BECHS THANKS YOU.

Please join us as we keep moving forward towards a big event, one that you will be able to say, for all of history, that you were a part of.



BOLD Vision Phase 2 Expansion concept facing 5th Street

# IMPACT REPORT 2022

## ADVANCED COMMUNITY HISTORY DATABASE

BECHS collaborated with MN Collections to develop a customized database to manage our archival and three-dimensional collections called Collective Access. Currently, the database contains **59,582 unique records**. In addition to in-house management, right now, we have **80 records** (photographs, archival materials, and artifacts) available for public search on the accompanying website. Plus, **five archival collection finding aids** are now online:

- Brandrup Family Collection
- Esther Halverson Papers
- Mankato Commercial College Collection
- Medo Township Records
- R. L. Polk & Co. City Directories

These changes, thanks in part to our new Archives Assistant, supports the goal to have Archival collections accessible online.

## PRESERVING HISTORY: CELEBRATING LINCOLN SCHOOL

BECHS, Lincoln Community Center, and Mankato Area Public Schools, collaborated in 2022 to remember and celebrate the legacy of Lincoln School, known today as Lincoln Community Center. We believe in the indispensable value of this local landmark full of community stories and memories. In October 2022, the History Center opened an exhibit titled "Celebrating 100 Years of Lincoln School" to share the history and value of the school and building. In 2022, the History Center also hosted the exhibit "Blue Earth County: 120 Years, 120 Stories" in honor of BECHS's 120th Anniversary.

Speaking of preserving and celebrating history, BECHS released the coffee table book dedicated to "The Art of Marian Anderson" in November 2022. Proceeds from book sales supports BECHS.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, BECHS partnered and/or collaborated with **40+ groups/organizations/businesses** to enhance this place we call home. Some unique collaborations included Art of Blue Earth with Twin Rivers Council of the Arts, artist Jon Nibbe and Mankato Area Foundation, and Historic Post Office Tours with APX Construction. **At the History Center, Hubbard House and online, over 50,000 individuals engaged with BECHS; up 19% over 2021.**



**NEW ADDITIONS: 491** objects, books and photos were donated to BECHS by **138** individuals/groups for long-term preservation.

**POST OFFICE TOURS - 350+** people toured the Historic Mankato Post Office before APX Construction transforms it.



**WALKING TOURS - BECHS Staff** lead tours of Hubbard House Nooks & Crannies, Lincoln Park Neighborhood and "Hidden" Front Street for **80+** people in 2022.

**A NIGHT AT THE SPEAKEASY** **200+ people raised over \$30,000** to support BECHS at the 3rd annual Prohibition-inspired event.



**ART OF BLUE EARTH** celebrated art, history and land in this unique farm-to-table dining experience in June 2022.

**HANDS-ON HISTORY - BECHS** is committed to providing local history education opportunities for all ages, youth to seniors.





# HISTORY HERO SHOUTOUT 2022

**VOLUNTEERS** are truly the lifeblood of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. In 2022, over 90 individuals donated 3,000+ hours of volunteer time to support BECHS. There is not any aspect of work done at the History Center or Hubbard House that doesn't involve volunteers.



## MEET MARTI WEISGRAM

*Volunteer, Member and Donor*

Marti has been a dedicated volunteer and member for more than 11 years. After retirement, she found BECHS's work in collecting and saving history interesting and valuable.

*"I certainly like what I'm doing. Because of my involvement here, my interests has broadened. (BECHS) is just a great benefit to the community."*

**DONORS and SPONSORS** supported more than 35% of the Annual Operating Revenue in 2022. 302 individuals, households, businesses and organizations donated over \$188,000 for general operating and special projects. Today, we serve Blue Earth County thanks to our History Heroes and their generous support.

## MEET STEVE JAMESON

*Board Member 2017-2023, Volunteer, Member and Donor*

Steve joined BECHS Board of Trustees shortly after moving to Mankato about six years ago to serve as the *Mankato Free Press* Publisher. There has always been a long relationship with the newspaper (the recorders of history) and BECHS (the keepers of history), so it was a perfect fit. Steve has been part of much of the growth of BECHS these past six years. His parting words as he steps down from the BECHS Board:

*"Our organization is strong today because of the support we've received by the community in our donors and our members. And also the tons of volunteers who come in and help us out every day. So, thank you! And we have an amazing staff that works very hard to keep the Historical Society fresh and going. Thanks, everyone for the support and continued support in the future."*



**Because of History Heroes like YOU, we can  
collect, preserve and present the history of  
Blue Earth County! THANK YOU!**

# We couldn't have done it without YOU!

## THANK YOU 2022 DONORS & SPONSORS

Support Given  
**\$188,990**

*Thank You!*

### **\$10,000+**

William E. Lass  
Helen Jones  
Brad and Teresa Pratt  
Dennis & Carole Dotson  
Michael & Jane Kearney  
Page Jones Richards  
Family Foundation

### **\$2,500-\$9,999**

Helen Balcome  
Peg Bindner  
Joe Farnham  
Stephen Hodapp  
Mankato Free Press  
Marcia Richards  
Tailwind Group

### **\$1,000-\$2,499**

Chuck and JO Guck Bailey  
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Cambria 4th of July  
Curt and Debbie Fisher  
Harley and Janet Goff  
Bernadette Herzog  
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### **\$500-\$999**

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### **\$100-\$499**

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**Thanks to the additional  
118 donors who  
contributed under \$100!**

# BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Kristin Fisher, Vice Chair

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Nikolas Proehl, Chair

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## **2022 STAFF**

Jessica Potter

*Executive Director*

Heather Harren

*Operations Manager*

Shelley Harrison

*Collections Manager*

Bri Krumwiede

*Archives Assistant*

**INSPIRE. ENGAGE. CONNECT.**

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