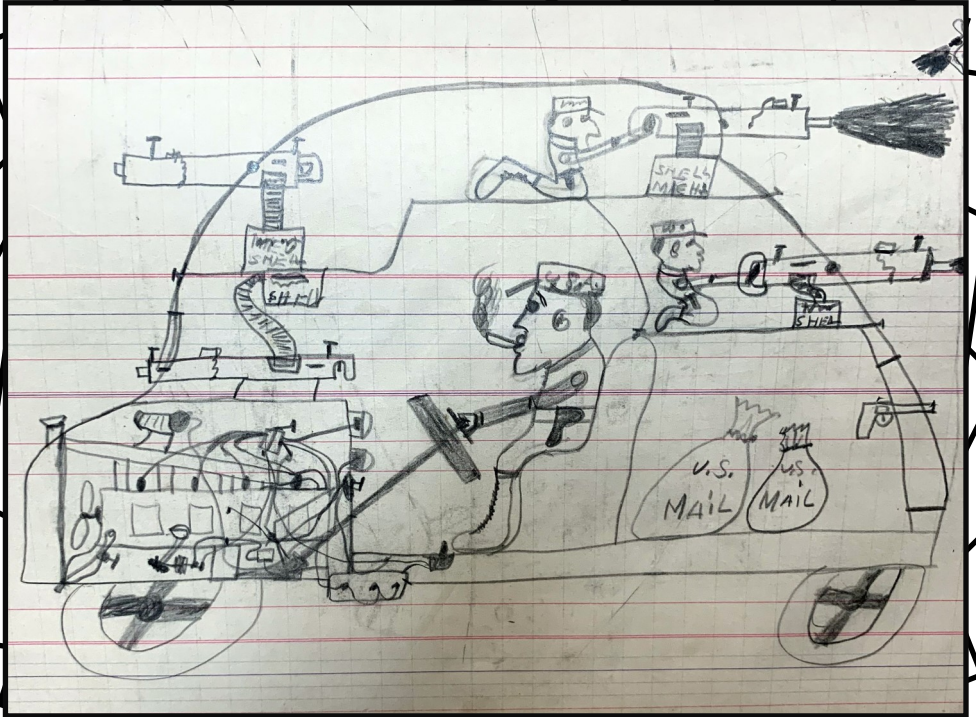




® ANOKA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Believe it or not, we're rounding the corner on my five-year anniversary already. It's not untruthful to say that myself, the Board, staff, and even ACHS as an organization have all grown during this time.

We have succeeded at big projects like the TPT production, expanded old favorites like the Ghost Tours, and continued to create exhibits with academic rigor. We've added a gift shop and written research booklets, created new programs and updated old ones. We've made new friends who have given us new opportunities while maintaining hard-earned relationships with loyal partners and members. We've moved our data to a new content management system and improved the accessibility of our collections online. New website? Check. Social media presence? Check. Updated bylaws, policies, and investments? Check.

Through it all, you've stopped in with doughnuts, chocolate, coffee, cards, letters, ornaments, books, and doodads to make us smile. You've made us feel loved and appreciated in so many ways, reminding me (and all of the staff!) why we work at a nonprofit.

*So **THANK YOU** for the last five and here's to the next five!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Ebnet-Desens".

Rebecca Ebnet-Desens

ACHS Executive Director

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In reviewing 2019 I'm happy to report the staff has done an excellent job of again closing out the year with a balanced budget. This year's unbudgeted expense of \$8,000 for a humidification system, paid for out of our maintenance reserves, accounts for the negative balance on the financials found on page 17.

Our success in fundraising this year was limited to completing the Veteran's Voice project, which had a goal of not only covering the TPT contract of nearly \$45,000, but also financing the collection of oral histories and creation of an exhibit. I'm happy to report "mission accomplished!" To date we have taken in a little over \$58,000. Now six months after the premiere, the donations continue to come in along with heart-felt thank you notes from the public.



The health of Anoka County Historical Society relies on you—talking about the interesting things we're doing, the events you've attended, and how ACHS has impacted your life will continue this momentum and help us grow.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Berg".

Dennis Berg, ACHS President

# THE 2019 ACHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Al Pearson, *District #1 Representative*

Kim Hogdal, *District #2 Representative*

Orville Lindquist, *District #3 Representative*

Lotus Hubbard, *District #4 Representative (Vice-President)*

Richard Oxley, *District #5 Representative*

Dave Bartholomay, *District #6 Representative*

Bart Ward, *District #7 Representative*

Steve Florman *At-Large A (Treasurer)*

Dennis Berg, *At-Large B (President)*

Mike Scott, *At-Large C*

Johannes Allert, *At-Large D*

Jim Rootes, *At-Large E*

Paul Pierce III, *At-Large F*

Allison Schmitt, *At-Large G (Secretary)*

Mary Nolan, *At-Large H*

Mandy Meisner, *Anoka County Commissioner Liaison*

## ACHS STAFF

Rebecca Ebnet-Desens, *Executive Director*

Audra Hilse, *Archivist & Collections Manager*

Sara Given, *Volunteer Coordinator*

Carol Dordan, *Facilities Manager*

Don Johnson, *Office Staff*

Karen Johnson, *Office Staff*

## TOUCH TABLE



Courtesy of funding from the Shavlik Family Foundation, we installed two multi touch tables at the museum this summer. The devices, which patrons can use standing or sitting, tilted or flat, are programmed by students from the Hennepin Technical College under the instruction of Richard Oxley.

They have raised engagement with historical facts through games, increased our flexibility during program events, and provided for exhibit enrichment. When we displayed cameras and other filming artifacts from the 1939 tornado, the actual film played on the table for people to experience. When Anoka Ambassador Karen George displayed her crown and gown, a series of photos from her year of service gave a depth to the exhibit we simply didn't have physical space for otherwise.



### FUN ON THE TABLE

- History Games
- Puzzles
- 1939 Tornado Video
- Halloween Photo Slideshow



**MISSION:**  
**ACCOMPLISHED!**



How exciting to check things off a never-ending to-do list! This year we turned our collections software public on our newly designed website. It feels like everything is coming together!

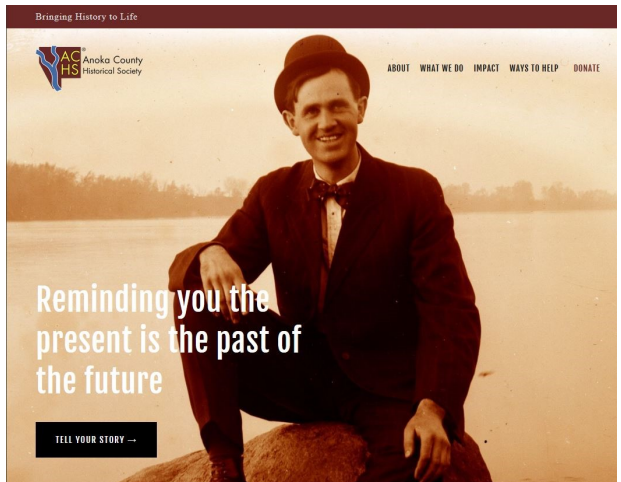
Removing a barrier for our researchers who either live too far away or can't visit during office hours drove the decision to turn much of our collection loose on the internet. While this will remain a never-ending project, every day more and more items are searchable at **AnokaCountyHistory.org**. Just click "What we do" and "online collections database".

Just donated a treasure to us? After it is processed, you and your family now have the ability to see it, double check the information, and even add more details about how it fits into Anoka County History.

**June** 

**14,000**

PAGE VIEWS IN  
FIRST 6 MONTHS



Thanks to the hard work of our interns and volunteers as well as staff we finished processing several large donations. The benefit of our new database is that you can see all of it from the comfort of your home.

**Audra Hulse, Archivist & Administrator**



## TEAM PRESERVATION

The cliché says “Teamwork makes the dream work” and in this case, it sure held true! Thanks to a partnership with the League of Women Voters—ABC, we hosted a year-long exhibit showcasing the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage and the creation of the League. Now a part of their travelling toolkit, you can find the banners and artifacts wherever League members attend expos or fairs, presentations or events.

Our ability to help organizations organize, document, and present their story is a valuable asset for any business or group. The history center adds the artifacts and information to our database for future research, but (in this case) LWV-ABC maintains ownership and control of them. Together we can preserve more of Anoka County heritage!

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## LOBBY EXHIBIT—LESLIE COWDEN

Specialist Cowden began his tour in Vietnam on March 1, 1968 as a replacement with the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division known as the “Tropic Lightning” Division. On January 8, Cowden saved the life of Jon Hovde with his medical training and quick thinking. Tragically, Cowden was killed in action a few weeks later and is buried in Forest Hill Cemetery, Anoka. Cowden was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for “Meritorious Achievement in Ground Operations Against Hostile Forces”, the Silver Star for extraordinary heroism while engaged against an enemy, and the Purple Heart. Read more in “Left for Dead” by Hovde.



## 2019 COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHTS

Giving all flags in the collection the spa treatment with fresh photos and brand new rolled storage.

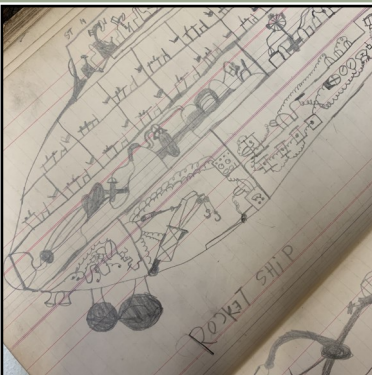
### Before



### After



Hidden in the back pages of a business ledger, Arlan Rathbun's interpretation of what cities, rocket ships, and even Mail Trucks [front cover] in Anoka County would look like in the future.

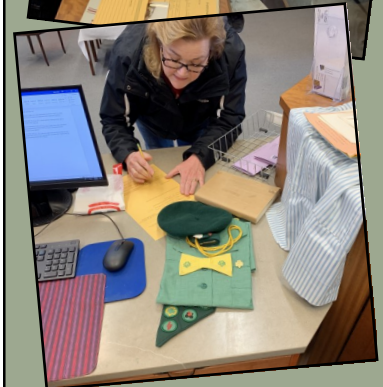


## RECORDING THE STORY

Are you ready to donate a treasure of yours to ACHS? Visit our website, click "Ways to Help" then "Contribute to the Collection".

Here you'll find guidelines, suggestions, and other FAQs as well as the artifact donation form we use to capture the story.

*(below) Skip and Christine took the time to give us some good details about their items.*



## **ANOKA COUNTY: THANK YOU**

It is with deep gratitude that ACHS acknowledges the role played by the County in continuing to fund a large portion of the History Center operations: **the equivalent of 43 cents per resident.**

Without this core support, ACHS couldn't maintain the professional standards of research, preservation, and heritage we're known for. These funds help us maintain outreach and educational opportunities, as well as operational tasks.

## **ANOKA COUNTY**

### **LIBRARY**

ACHS continues to be a part of the County Library system. Patrons can choose ACHS as a pick up location for library books, and for a significant number of people, the public computers here are the only access they have to the internet. Those that visit for these services become "regulars," friends, and part of our community.

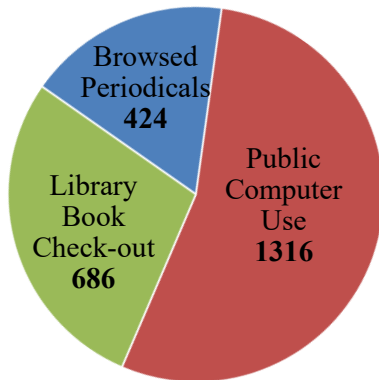
*Our partners provide ACHS with new connections to the community and a wider audience reach as well as a fresh approach to storytelling.*

# 12,335

## **HISTORY CENTER VISITORS**



A multi-generational moment of research at the microfilm machine.







## Senior Community Service Employment Program

is a federally funded, subsidized work program through the Anoka County Job

Training Center. Senior (55 +) workers are eligible to work up to 20 hours per week at a public or private non-profit agency and are paid directly by Anoka County. Two volunteers are placed at ACHS through this program and worked **1,087 HOURS** at the front desk helping our visitors and staff with a wide variety projects.

Businesses that play together, stay together! Chema Malu, located on Main Street in Anoka, agreed to some cross-promotion on the bags their customers receive at check-out. We appreciate the visibility and Chema's customers appreciate the interesting packaging and history.



## BREWERS



**HAMMERHEAD**  
BREWING COMPANY

- HAYES' PUBLIC HOUSE
- JUNKYARD BREWING
- BAUHAUS BREW LABS
- KLOCKOW BREWING
- FAIR STATE BREWING
- DANGEROUS MAN BREWING
- NORTHBOUND SMOKEHOUSE & BREWPUB
- BENT BREWSTILLERY



## TRADITIONAL ALE & LAGER FESTIVAL

The skill of remaking (and sometimes remodeling) a heritage recipe received a spotlight at our first annual festival held on the Nowthen Threshing Show grounds in September. The afternoon included brews made especially for the event, plus programming, music, and food.

**Look for this fundraising event again this year!**

# 2019 PARTNERSHIPS



## WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

*I honestly don't think there was a dry eye in the room during the premiere showing!*

*Julie Braastad*

*Anoka County Commissioner*

The stories of Anoka County live in the memories of each and every resident, buried in day-to-day survival. This project took time to capture the fears, joy, and challenges that make modern-day deployments so vastly different than any other military experience in our history. Launched in August of 2019, the documentary continues to appear on TPT-MN several times each month, as well as online at [www.tpt.org/were-in-this-together](http://www.tpt.org/were-in-this-together).

**THANK YOU** to our donors and sponsors who raised not only enough money to cover the production of “We’re In This Together” but also funding to get ACHS started on an exhibit, artifact storage, and oral history collection.



Thank  
you



Spring Lake Park Lions  
Vietnam Veterans of  
America Chapter 470  
Dennis and Darlene Berg  
Signature Wealth  
Management  
Bank of the West

**VOLUNTEERS GAVE:**

**Volunteer Hours**  
**5,386**



EQUIVALENT OF  
PAID STAFF TIME  
**\$107,720**

\* Based on reported  
volunteer hours.



At the end of the year we calculate one big number totaling the amount of volunteer hours given [see above]. While it's interesting to see the grand total, the year is about so much more than that. It is about the time people carve out from their busy lives to help at the History Center, the shifts that they take at the Anoka County Fair or Nowthen Threshing Show in the heat, rain or shine, and the unique skills each person brings to the table. These are all invaluable gifts and cannot be easily quantified.

**Volunteers bring life and love into the museum!**

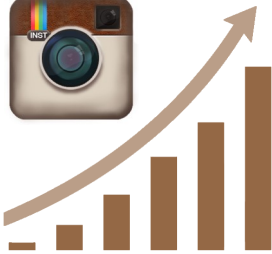


I learn and laugh so much with each volunteer that comes in to help at ACHS. We compare cat stories, sneak cookies from the kitchen, and connect about the highs and lows of the week all while tackling projects at the History Center. History is about people—the living as much as the dead.

**Sara Given, Volunteer Coordinator**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

We continue to connect and grow our engagement on all of our social media platforms. For some, the ACHS Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram account is their first introduction to us, and for others it's a way they can connect with local Anoka County history after they move from the immediate area.

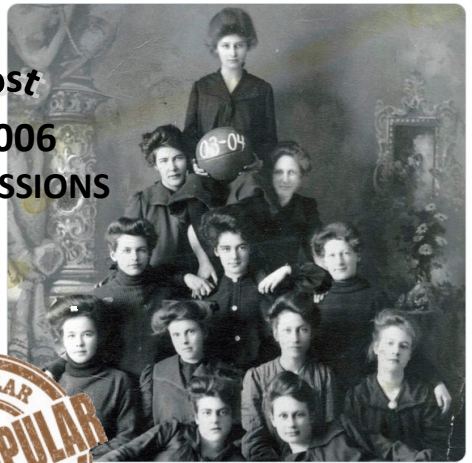


**DOUBLED**  
# OF FOLLOWERS  
ON INSTAGRAM



The Anoka High School girls basketball team of 1903-04. Beware their dribble and their hair.  
#nationalwomensportsday #anokacountyhistory #basketball P1700.5.26 @AHSchools

**This post**  
**4,006**  
**IMPRESSIONS**



**This post**

**11,101 PEOPLE**  
**REACHED**

**2,046 Engagements**

**83 Shares**



**Anoka County Historical Society**

Published by Buffer [?] · March 13, 2019 · 🌐

Dirt street - or mud river? It depends on the season. Main street in Bethel, MN, from the west, undated. #anokacountyhistory 570.1.01 #bethelmn #dirtroads #localhistory Bethel, Minnesota

# 16TH ANNUAL GHOSTS OF ANOKA WALKING TOURS



1,655  
TICKETS SOLD



\$ \$14,975  
EARNED



The Ghost Tours celebrated their sweet 16 this year. Nearly 1,700 people attended the 76 volunteer-led tours we hosted over the course of two months. Many came from Anoka County, but others traveled from across the metro area, and a few even from beyond the state.

Each \$9 ticket purchased directly supports our organization, is an opportunity to make new friends, and introduce them to the fun at ACHS.



## JELL-O HAS A STORY

With 10 different entries to taste, selecting “Best in Fluff” or “Best Suspension” became a challenge for some. But the real fun? Hearing all the stories of holiday desserts or family meals where a Jell-O salad resided as a staple on a special presentation plate. Entertainment included a Jiggler Toss, Jell-O art mural, and naked Jell-O (thumb) wrestling.



## TEEN COUNCIL

What would we give to know the minds of teenagers

from 1910? Even 1950? This group is making sure that doesn't happen for 2019. Every other week, they discuss school, home, and current events, expressing their thoughts on paper through doodles and other journaling techniques. Those pages will join other artifacts in the ACHS collections as a reminder that stories of every age should be preserved. Know a young person who'd like to join?

## Cool stuff with cool people:

- ◇ AARP– Tax Services
- ◇ Alexandra House
- ◇ Anoka American Legion Post 102
- ◇ Anoka Chamber of Commerce and Discover Anoka
- ◇ Anoka County Genealogical Society
- ◇ Anoka County Fair Board
- ◇ Anoka *UnionHerald*
- ◇ Andover YMCA
- ◇ Arfstrom Foundation
- ◇ Blaine Festival
- ◇ Breaking Bread Nonprofit coalition
- ◇ Centerville Festival
- ◇ CTN
- ◇ Hammerheart Brewing
- ◇ League of Women Voters-ABC
- ◇ MetroNorth Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Minitex
- ◇ MN Digital Library
- ◇ Nowthen Threshing Show
- ◇ Nowthen Heritage Festival
- ◇ PEO Society
- ◇ Philolectian Society
- ◇ QCTV
- ◇ RSVP
- ◇ Multiple Lions, Rotary, and Kiwanis
- ◇ TCART
- ◇ Vietnam Vets
- ◇ Wargo Nature Center

*History is an action verb in our lexicon and ACHS works with groups across the county—sometimes at the history center and sometimes in the community. Here are some of our fun adventures this year...*



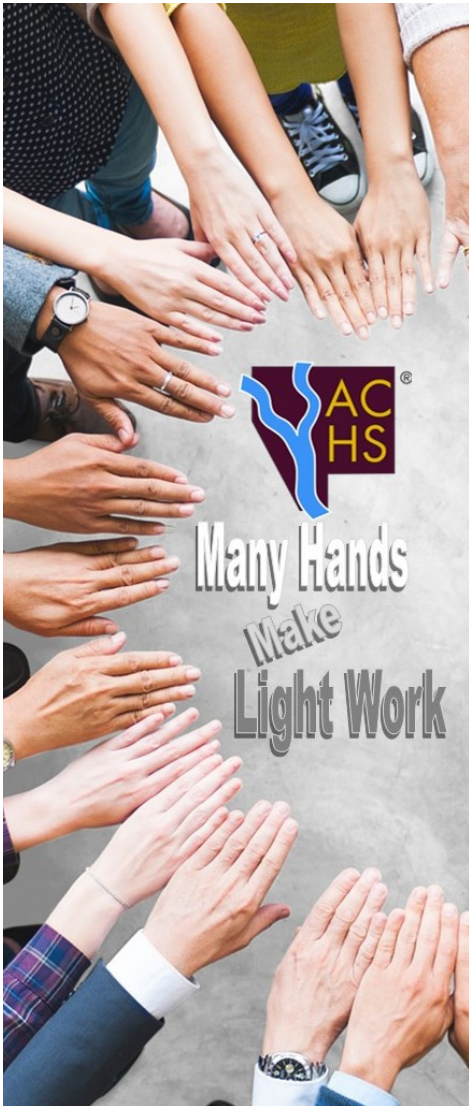
*ACHS enjoyed introducing ancient 3D technology to kids at the Anoka County Fair [top], meeting people on the street at Anoka's Riverfest [middle] and slowing down to enjoy the beauty of our county at Fridley's Home and Garden Tour [bottom.]*



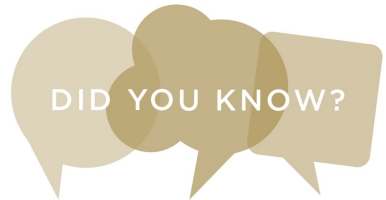
## MEMBERSHIPS

Your membership is not just a financial donation, but a declaration that you believe local history plays a vital role in the community by preserving the story of the path we walk together. We thank our current members who continue their commitment to the operation of the History Center and look forward to welcoming new members.

**Help us double our numbers by inviting a friend to join today!**



**532**  
**members**  
**SUPPORT**  
**LOCAL HISTORY**



### **YOUR MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES**

**Free Group Tour** - All members are entitled to bring up to 15 friends for a guided Museum tour of your choice once per year (\$30 value). Tour choices include one of the following: A) Guided Gallery Tour of current exhibits; B) Behind-the-Scenes Tour of the ACHS Collections; or C) Kids' Scavenger Hunt Tour. Tour must be scheduled in advance.

**What other member benefits would you like to see?**





While donations of money are essential to the operating budget of ACHS, contributions made in-kind cannot be understated. The City of Anoka’s support includes providing office space for our collection and exhibits within walking distance of the downtown excitement. We extend sincere thanks to the City of Anoka for their continued support of local history!



### Facing Change:

Advancing Museum Board  
Diversity & Inclusion

## FACING CHANGE

The Anoka County Historical Society was selected as one of 50 museums nationwide to participate in a pilot project called Facing Change. Led by consultants hired by the American

Alliance of Museums, during the next two years, the Board of Directors will work to craft a policy relating to diversity and inclusion at the governance level of ACHS. The long-term goal includes expanding our organization to better reflects the population demographics of Anoka County in our leadership, membership, and collections archive.



## SIGNIFICANT DONATIONS

ACHS treasures each and every donation that arrives in support of local history. Collectively, every dollar adds up and makes an enormous difference. Larger gifts, however, make a special impact for a project’s success. Thank you so very much to everyone who gives according to their ability!

**\$500 & Over**  
Steve Florman  
League of Women  
Voters  
Orville Lindquist  
YMCA—Andover

**\$1,000 & Over**  
Anonymous  
Bank of the West  
Federal Cartridge  
Gloria Given  
Signature Wealth  
Management  
Tim & Rose Talbot

**\$5,000 & Over**  
Lyle Bradley  
Spring Lake Park Lions  
  
**\$10,000 & Over**  
Anoka County  
Connexus Energy

# 2019 FINANCIAL GROWTH

## Anoka County Historical Society

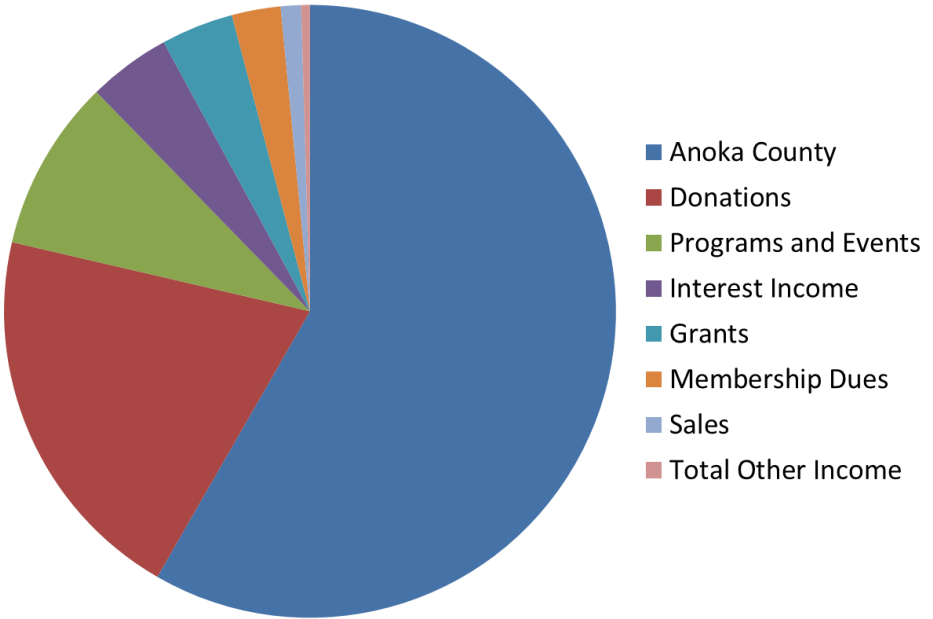
### BUDGET VS. ACTUALS: BUDGET FY2019 - FY19 P&L

January - December 2019

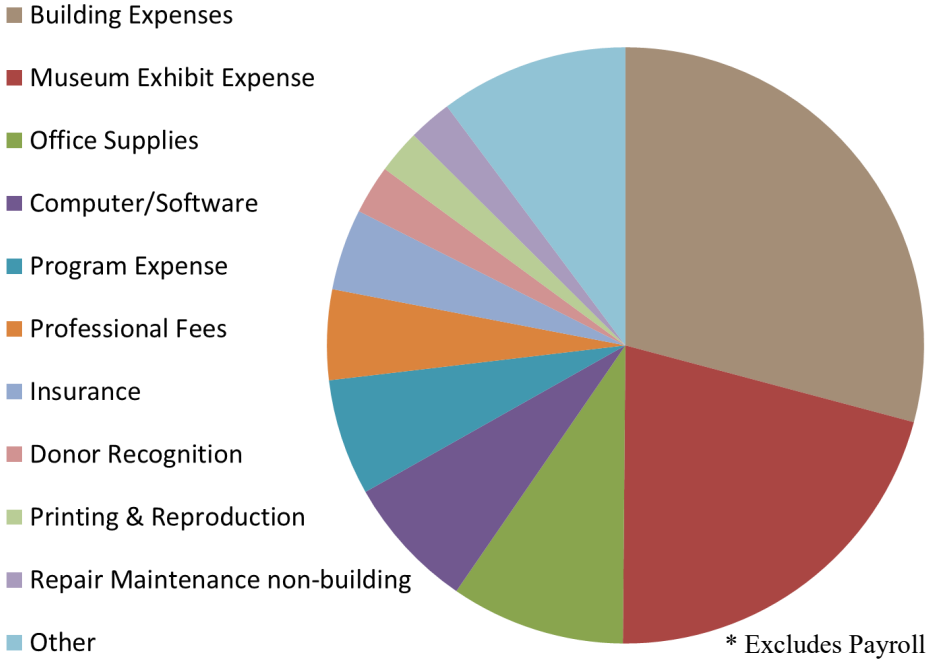
	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
Inkind Revenue	80,000.04		80,000.04	
Sales	100.74	5,000.00	-4,899.26	2.01 %
TOTAL SUPPORT				
Admissions		600.00	-600.00	
Anoka County	152,623.00	152,623.00	0.00	100.00 %
Donations	53,162.21	67,635.00	-14,472.79	78.60 %
Grants	10,000.00		10,000.00	
Interest Income	11,423.50	2,489.39	8,934.11	458.89 %
Membership Dues	6,755.00	7,200.00	-445.00	93.82 %
Other Income	1,209.98	1,198.79	11.19	100.93 %
Programs and Events	23,751.14	31,224.53	-7,473.39	76.07 %
Sales	2,807.05	3,573.23	-766.18	78.56 %
<b>Total TOTAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>261,731.88</b>	<b>266,543.94</b>	<b>-4,812.06</b>	<b>98.19 %</b>
Uncategorized Revenue	68.21	271.60	-203.39	25.11 %
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$341,900.87</b>	<b>\$271,815.54</b>	<b>\$70,085.33</b>	<b>125.78 %</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$341,900.87</b>	<b>\$271,815.54</b>	<b>\$70,085.33</b>	<b>125.78 %</b>
Expenditures				
Advertising	221.21	662.00	-440.79	33.42 %
Auto Expense	17.00		17.00	
Bank Service Charges	275.97	992.37	-716.40	27.81 %
Building Expenses	32,546.27	33,039.65	-493.38	98.51 %
Computer/Software Expense	8,082.27	4,800.00	3,282.27	168.38 %
Donor Recognition	2,959.28		2,959.28	
Dues and Subscriptions	2,140.18	1,720.00	420.18	124.43 %
Food	309.50	900.00	-590.50	34.39 %
Furniture & Other Equipment	340.00	960.00	-620.00	35.42 %
Gifts	424.31	300.00	124.31	141.44 %
Human Resources Expense	736.00	1,500.00	-764.00	49.07 %
Inkind Rent	80,000.04		80,000.04	
Insurance	4,920.66	4,716.53	204.13	104.33 %
Museum Exhibit Expense	23,436.52	18,700.00	4,736.52	125.33 %
Networking	35.00	360.00	-325.00	9.72 %
Office Supplies	10,549.22	9,661.07	888.15	109.19 %
OPERATING EXPENSE	181.09		181.09	
PAYROLL	154,389.13	164,908.44	-10,519.31	93.62 %
Postage and Delivery	2,485.63	2,700.00	-214.37	92.06 %
Preservation Supplies	1,583.54	3,600.00	-2,016.46	43.99 %
Printing and Reproduction	2,651.48	2,400.00	251.48	110.48 %
Professional Fees	5,465.00	7,450.00	-1,985.00	73.36 %
Program Expense	7,042.60	6,400.00	642.60	110.04 %
Purchases	398.15	900.00	-501.85	44.24 %
QuickBooks Payments Fees	0.54		0.54	
refund	25.00		25.00	
Repair/Maintenance-Non-Building	2,621.12	720.00	1,901.12	364.04 %
Research Expense		360.00	-360.00	
Travel Expense	2,175.63	3,000.00	-824.37	72.52 %
Uncategorized Expenditure	37.97		37.97	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$346,050.31</b>	<b>\$270,750.06</b>	<b>\$75,300.25</b>	<b>127.81 %</b>
<b>NET OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -4,149.44</b>	<b>\$1,065.48</b>	<b>\$ -5,214.92</b>	<b>-389.44 %</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -4,149.44</b>	<b>\$1,065.48</b>	<b>\$ -5,214.92</b>	<b>-389.44 %</b>

*Unaudited 2019 expenditures exceeded revenues by \$4,149. This is the result of an unbudgeted expense of \$8,000 to replace the humidification system. If this project expenditure is excluded, the operational revenues exceeded operational expenditures by \$3,851.*

## REVENUE



## EXPENDITURES



Thank you for your support!



2135 Third Ave North  
Anoka, MN 55303  
Phone: 763-421-0600  
Email: [achs@AnokaCountyHistory.org](mailto:achs@AnokaCountyHistory.org)  
[AnokaCountyHistory.org](http://AnokaCountyHistory.org)



Anoka County  
Historical Society



AnokaCoHistory



AnokaCoHistory