



November 1, 2024

Dear Friends,

Thanks to our community, the Boating Museum has been preserving and sharing the history of Finger Lakes wooden boating for twenty-seven years. Over the past ten-plus years, the Museum has repurposed a vacant winery into an outstanding venue for visitors from near and far to experience our boating heritage.

It has been my honor and privilege to be among the museum leaders that have led us to this point. I have served as the Museum's full-time, nonpaid Boatwright and Curator of Collections for the past 20 years securing unique wooden boats, caring for and expanding our collection, mentoring enthusiastic students, nurturing our dedicated volunteers, designing exhibits, and leading the building and restoration of boats. My passion and our journey have greatly enriched my wife Nancy's and my retirement years!

The Museum's collection of over 300 Finger Lakes built boats is unmatched, as is our core volunteer team of over a dozen individuals that help care for the collection. This team is credited with the restoration of *The Pat II* touring boat and has restored over 30 boats both for on-water programs and to facilitate story telling in our six exhibit halls.

While we have realized successes that are simply stunning, my message today is about looking ahead.

A mission-critical priority of the Board of Trustees is to grow our professional staff to include a Boatwright & Curator of Collections.

My friends, our goal this year is both ambitious and daunting! We need to raise \$200,000 over the next three years to hire and integrate a new Boatwright & Curator. This year, thanks to generous donations in memory of Dr. Mina Chung, we have initially raised \$20,000 towards that goal.

My challenge to you and to our museum community for this year's Annual Appeal is to raise double the \$20,000 already secured. A portion of your contribution will help sustain our educational programs, collections management efforts, and expansion of museum exhibits. If - through your generosity - we can meet this challenge, a significant share of your gift will support the new Boatwright & Curator of Collections position and we can begin the candidate search in early 2025.

The most important thing that I can personally do to ensure the future success of the museum is to help hire and mentor a new Boatwright & Curator of Collections, someone who will continue to grow and lead the team into the future! I hope you will entertain the Museum's and my appeal. I greatly value and appreciate your financial support for this critical endeavor.

Warm Regards and thank you!

Ed Wightman