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MEDIA RELEASE

The 2023 Season at the New Buffalo Railroad Museum

New Buffalo, MI: The New Buffalo Railroad Museum will re-open for the season on Saturday, April 1, 2023, and will be open through October 29, 2023, on Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00 to 5:00 pm Eastern. Additional open dates may be announced. Watch the Museum's Facebook page for postings.

<https://www.facebook.com/Newbuffalorailroadmuseum>

The Museum is grateful for special funding from The Pokagon Fund for Museum Infrastructure Needs and Upgrades. It also received previous funding from the Berrien Community Foundation, the Frederick S. Upton Foundation, the TCU Foundation and TCU for upgrades to our existing displays as well as our new Veterans Display. Many of the exhibits (photo captions and signage) in the New Buffalo Railroad Museum dated back to the original installation in 1989, 1990 and 1991. The infrastructure needs which have now been addressed and the upgrades we have made have contributed to a more professional and contemporary look.

A key element of this project involved the removal of nonrailroad specific artifacts from the depot building displays. These items, which relate to the history and development of the greater New Buffalo area, were relocated to dedicated exhibits in the C&O boxcar, opposite the Veterans Exhibit. In turn, we were able to refresh the railroad associated artifacts by replacing captions and frames and re-arranging existing displays for better viewing.

Two new exhibits are now in in the C&O/Chessie Boxcar. "New Buffalo: Founded by Chance - Built on a Dream" takes visitors on a journey through time, showcasing how the landscape and life in the community have changed over the past 189 years. Additionally, a reconditioned luggage cart donated by the Tulacz family, and a couch used at the railway depots in the 1920s were incorporated into the exhibit.

"New Buffalo High School, established in 1875" is dedicated to student life at New Buffalo High School. The exhibit highlights athletics, academics, music, and drama, as well as alumni who have made their mark on the national stage. An existing display case was upgraded to accommodate high school memorabilia dating back to the mid-20th century. Mannequins were used to display a band uniform, a cheerleader uniform, and a varsity Letterman sweater, while jerseys representing all varsity sports were also displayed. Trophies, plaques, newspaper pages, and photos round out the exhibit. Overall, the new exhibits offer visitors a unique and engaging experience and showcase the rich history and development of the New Buffalo area. We hope that they will inspire future generations to appreciate and preserve this important part of our heritage.

The Museum is also deeply grateful to our dedicated volunteer and New Buffalo Alumni, Jim Smitchger, for his leadership and hard work to make the Veterans Display and the two New Buffalo exhibits realities.

In addition, the Board of Directors of the New Buffalo Railroad Museum voted new officers and a new Board Member to its roster, each with terms beginning January 1, 2023.

Officers for 2023 are President Todd Van Buskirk, Vice President Rich Knoll, and Secretary-Treasurer/Volunteer Administrator Katha Kissman. Ongoing Board Members are Therese Donnelly, Sherri Kerhoulas, and Vanessa Thun.

The newest Board Member is long-time Museum volunteer, Joan Putzke. Joan Putzke has lived in the area fulltime since 1986 after marrying her husband, Ed Putzke, a life-long resident of New Buffalo and her children, Nicole, Kristin, Amy, and Michael. Joan attended Iowa State University and studied child development and health information management. After 25 years at St. Anthony's Memorial Health Center, she retired and is now a member of the New Buffalo Service League and active with the St. Mary of the Lake's Alter and Rosary Society. Locals and visitors alike also know her for her cheerful and dedicated service at the New Buffalo Township Public Library. She enjoys spending as much time possible with her children and doting on her eight wonderful grandchildren.

The Board extends its appreciation to Lori Schlundt Peterson for her previous Board service.

For additional information about the New Buffalo Railroad Museum, please contact Katha Kissman, Board Treasurer/Volunteer Administrator, at ask@thenewbuffalorailroadmuseum.org.

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