

Discover Manitowoc Grant Application

900 Quay St, Manitowoc, WI 54220 - (920) 686-3508



Please email completed applications to chansen@manitowoc.org by March 24, 2025.


Name of event:	Ghost Ships Festival 2026
Date and time of event:	February 27 - 28, 2026
Name of organization:	Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association
Federal ID number: EIN: 39-178513	Tax status: 501c3
\$ Amount request:	\$10000
If you received funding from the Discover Manitowoc Grant in the past, how many years, which years, and how much each year? We received a grant for \$2500 in 2024, which was used as startup funding for the 2025 Ghost Ships Festival, just held February 28 and March 1st, 2025.	

Event Coordinator Information

Name:	Brendon Baillod
Address:	311 N. Stevenson St., DeForest, WI 53532
Phone:	608.438.7246
Email:	baillod@gmail.com

Estimate the expected attendance of participants and visitors. Include attendance from Manitowoc County as well as outside of Manitowoc County. Provide specifics on total estimated daily attendance, historical attendance data, and how you came to these estimations.

The Ghost Ships Festival was held annually in Milwaukee from 2000 to 2017 and received 800 - 1000 attendees from around the Great Lakes region. The event was essentially priced out of the Milwaukee market due to facility changes.

Last year's reboot of the Ghost Ships Festival in Manitowoc was a resounding success. We had planned for about 200 attendees, but received around 400 in all. Ghost Ships consists of a Friday evening show that is free to the public as well as a full day Saturday for which registration is required and an entry fee of \$25. For this year's show (2025), around 350 people were paid or volunteer registrants for the full two day event. Our Friday night shows are free and sponsored by the 

Priority will be given to events that generate overnight stays. How many room nights will your event generate and at which lodging establishments? Include how you measure room nights and came to this estimation.

We sold about 150 rooms each night at the Inn on Maritime Bay, generating \$21,000 in hotel revenue according to Pat Reilly. We know that people also stayed at the Holiday Inn Express, the Lighthouse Inn and some VRBO/B&B establishments, per their report.

Project Summary

Attach a detailed description of the event including goals, target demographics, how this event will bring overnight visitors to Manitowoc, and the plans and timeline for marketing. List the roles of key team members and their experience. Include how you will measure the success of this event (surveys, room night tracking).

Budget Information

Attach the event's budget showing the use of anticipated funds and sources of those funds. The budget must show all resources required for the event and indicate who is responsible. The budget must also demonstrate the need for financial assistance. If total funding is not awarded, be prepared to prioritize financial needs.

Sign below certifying that all information in this application has been provided truthfully and in acknowledgement of Discover Manitowoc Grant policies.

Event Coordinator: Brendon Baillod
Date: 3/19/2025

Attach a detailed description of the event including goals, target demographics, how this event will bring overnight visitors to Manitowoc, and the plans and timeline for marketing. List the roles of key team members and their experience. Include how you will measure the success of this event (surveys, room night tracking).

2025 saw the second year of the revived Ghost Ships Festival, held in Manitowoc at the Inn on Maritime Bay. The two-day event welcomed over 400 attendees from across the Great Lakes and Canada. The festival is organized by the Wisconsin Underwater Archaeological Association (WUAA) that works with local, state and federal partners to bring the latest shipwreck discoveries on the Great Lakes to a wide audience.

Founded in 2000, the Ghost Ships Festival attracts explorers of all ages who wish to learn more about the nautical time-capsules preserved in the cold, fresh water of the Great Lakes. The Lakes have preserved the remains of thousands of lost ships, including everything from working tugboats to giant four masted sailing schooners and lavish passenger steamships. Today, their remains lie in the clear depths of the Lakes, often undiscovered for centuries.

The Ghost Ships Festival treats attendees to a wide range of technologies, exhibits, artists, musicians, scuba divers and explorers whose work focuses on Great Lakes shipwrecks.

- Take a virtual walk down the deck of newly discovered lost ships through the magic of 3D virtual reality headsets.
- Pilot an ROV (Remote Operated Vehicle) in the hotel swimming pool.
- Visit exhibits and attend performances by Great Lakes maritime artists and musicians.
- See hands-on exhibits of the technologies used to locate, document and tell the stories of lost Great Lakes ships. Exhibits feature side scanning sonar, remote operated vehicles and 3D photogrammetry.
- Attend presentations from professional underwater archaeologists whose job it is to record, preserve and tell the stories of historic shipwreck sites.
- Hear talks by the explorers and wreck hunters who spend their summers on the water searching for and finding historic lost ships on the Great Lakes.

Advance tickets for the full, two-day event are available at www.ghostshipsfestival.com for \$25 or can be purchased at the door for \$30. **People under 18 will be admitted for free.**

All events will be held at the Inn on Maritime Bay, 101 Maritime Dr., Manitowoc, WI.

The Ghost Ships Festival taps into an existing community of people who attend an established circuit of Great Lakes maritime history and scuba diving events around the Great Lakes region. These shows include the Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival in Detroit, Shipwrecks & Scuba in Sandusky, Ohio, The Gales of November conference in Duluth and the Evening Beneath the Inland Seas show in Holland, Michigan. This demographic is mostly over 60 retirees and former shipwreck divers. A secondary demographic that is growing are younger underwater archeology professionals and students as well as social media influencers in the underwater exploration space.

Because this market is established, we have an extensive mailing / contact list from the previous incarnation of the Ghost Ships Festival, which was held in Milwaukee from 2000 to 2017. The Ghost Ships Festival is held by the Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association, a 501c3 with over 200 members, so we also get substantial support from our own membership.

We generally begin planning the next year's Festival in November of the previous year by holding monthly Zoom meetings of the Festival Committee, which is a formal sub-committee of the WUAA. The first two months are spent planning the program and speakers. Our first media blast on Social Media and through our bulk emailing program goes out in November as well. We generally announce the speakers and put out the provisional event flyer in January with a second media blast. This also goes out to statewide media outlets and we frequently get news coverage of the event. This year, we had several reporters in attendance, including Caitlin Looby from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and we had a live morning news broadcast from the hotel swimming pool where we did a live on-camera demo of our ROV experience station for WLUK TV news.

We do our final blast in February, two weeks before the event and we distribute vendor booth assignments and finalize the volunteer roster.

Our social media community includes the 6000 member Great Lakes Shipwreck Research Group of Facebook and YouTube, which also give us strong support.

In should be noted that all our marketing materials this year prominently featured the Visit Manitowoc logo. This was included on our program flyers, social media posts, program brochure and website. We also provided Visit Manitowoc with a booth at our event at no cost.

Our event team includes the following members:

- Brendon Baillod: I have been coordinating volunteers, managing the ROV station, the VR/Tech booth, getting speakers, coordinating the program, coordinating booths/sponsors and generally managing the entire event at a project level. I will

continue to do this, but I will be delegating more tasks next year. This past year, I shed responsibility for creating the program brochure, which was a big help. I also handle most of our marketing, media, social media and publicity, although Kevin Cullen and Alyssa Saldivar also help significantly with local Manitowoc outlets. I am a professional project manager and the founder of the original Ghost Ships Festival as well as the president of the WUAA.

- Alyssa Saldivar: Alyssa is the WMM's operations manager and a WUAA board member. She is our main liason with the hotel and with the museum and is one of our key planners.
- Caitlin Zant: Caitlin is our main liason with the WSCNMS and is also in charge of our Ghost Ships merchandise planning. She works closely with Bob Lijewski, our online merchandise manager. Caitlin is a program coordinator with the NOAA WSCNMS.
- Bob Jaeck: Bob is the WUAA VP and coordinates the front of the house (e.g. ticketing, will-call, registration). He works closely with our Treasurer, Russ Leitz and his assistant, Gene Nisler, to do budgeting and strategic planning. Both are retired professionals.
- Rich Laiacona: Rich is our webmaster and does our graphic design for the event. Rich is a software engineer, graphical designer and WUAA board member.
- Scott Riemer: Scott is our A/V guy and coordinates the sound and video. Hi is an IT professional
- Brian Bangert: Brian is a licensed contractor and he coordinates day-of facility setups such as signage, electrical, booth layouts and general troubleshooting.

We have a post-mortem after each year's event and review what went well and where we have opportunities to improve. During the post-mortem, we evaluate our attendance and profitability by:

1. Determining how many wrist bands were distributed. This tells us how many paid attendees and volunteers we had. Although we may have had only 268 direct ticket sales, we also give 2-3 tickets to each booth holder and we had 30 booths. We also admitted our 17 volunteers for free as well as 10 of our speakers and we admitted 8 volunteers for the WSCNMS for free. As such, we had around 360 people who were registered for the event in some way. We also had free Friday walk-ins, which we estimated at around 100 people. As such, the main hall usually had around 300 people with another 50 or so browsing the vendor booths or participating the exhibits.
2. We also use an electronic Point of Sale system (Zettle) to track our income from merchandise, admissions and memberships. This, as well as cash income is represented in our financials (attached.)

Ghost Ships 2025, Income

Date	Name	Ticket No.	Price	Paypal fee	Income
	Total				
10/17/2024	George Michel	2	\$ 20.00	\$ 1.89	\$ 38.11
10/21/2024	Jeffery Bauriedel	2	\$ 20.00	\$ 1.89	\$ 38.11
11/23/2024	Tim Pranke	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
11/23/2024	Kelly Nehowig	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
11/25/2024	Lois Stonehouse	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
11/27/2024	Anna Angus	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
12/4/2024	Rick Rickter	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
12/11/2024	Scott Reimer	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
12/24/2024	Jim Robinson	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
12/28/2024	David Peifer	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
12/2/2024	Mary Volmer	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
12/31/2024	Ann Stanton	5	\$ 25.00	\$ 4.85	\$ 120.15
1/3/2025	John Strom	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/3/2025	Emily Roth	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/13/2025	Peter Kastella	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/14/2025	Michele Hagerman	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/15/2025	Daniel Fountain	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/16/2025	Rick Rickter	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/17/2025	Jim Robinson for Gene Norby	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/17/2025	Debra Menk	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/18/2025	Ashley Lemke	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.14	\$ 23.86
1/19/2025	Michael Hansen	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.37	\$ 23.63
1/19/2025	Tobi Lackowski	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.03	\$ 23.97
1/23/2025	William Hess	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/24/2025	Robert Lijewski	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/25/2025	Pat Olson	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/26/2025	Mary Lillemo	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/26/2025	Jon Billman	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/26/2025	James Laven	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/26/2025	Rebecca Nowak	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/27/2025	Paul Ehorn	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/27/2025	Brad Acker	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/28/2025	Kathy Ihde	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/28/2025	Gretchen Dominowski	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/28/2025	Dennis Bowers	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
1/28/2025	Shane Martin	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76

Ghost Ships 2025, Income

1/29/2025	Kevin McConnaughay	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/29/2025	John Gerty	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
1/30/2025	Greg Kent	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/2/2025	Mary Ann Luessi	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/2/2025	Sandra Marks	4	\$ 25.00	\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
2/2/2025	Wayne Pratt	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/3/2025	Barry Smith	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/3/2025	Kathleen Wald	4	\$ 25.00	\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
2/3/2025	Michael Loescher	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/4/2025	Chloe Pokovich	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/4/2025	Peter Groh	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/4/2025	Kenneth Merryman	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/6/2025	Laura Bond	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.03	\$ 23.97
2/7/2025	Ryan Smith	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/7/2025	Allen Brown	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/7/2025	Brendan Groh	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/8/2025	Ann Stanton	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/8/2025	Howard Veregin	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/9/2025	Brian Vaccaro	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/10/2025	Joseph Watermolen	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/10/2025	Emily Schmit	3	\$ 25.00	\$ 3.11	\$ 71.89
2/10/2025	Patrick Durkin	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/10/2025	Charles Perry	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/11/2025	Gregory Hill	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/12/2025	Nancy Halloran	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/12/2025	Nicholas Sommers	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/13/2025	Lillian Golbach	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/13/2025	Jon Connolly	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/14/2025	Corey Jaskolski	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/14/2025	Katherine Haag	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/16/2025	Cheryl Kirby	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/16/2025	Stiles Meredith	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/18/2025	Mark Gammage	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
	Gerald Van Wagnen	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/19/2025	Christina Giudici	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/20/2025	Mya Welch	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/21/2025	Todd Gordon	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/21/2025	Jeremy Saunders	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/21/2025	Michael+Karen Tock,Lakeshore	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76

Ghost Ships 2025, Income

2/22/2025	Christopher Sztukowski	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/22/2025	Pru Palecek	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/22/2025	Laura Lokken	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/23/2025	Jennifer Starin	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/23/2025	Chris Jensen	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/23/2025	Dan Koski	6	\$ 25.00	\$ 5.73	\$ 144.27
2/23/2025	Kathi Kresol --Haunted	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Mark Crosby	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Bradley Kiehl	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Gayle Orner	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Tyler Wallander	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
2/24/2025	Karen Mann	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Melissa Saunders	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/24/2025	Katie Michaud	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64
2/25/2025	Patrick J Knapp Jr	2	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.24	\$ 47.76
	Christopher Winters	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 1.36	\$ 23.64

147

\$ 171.36 \$ 3,483.64

Ghost Ships 2025, Income

Date	Name	B8'	B4'	H.S	F.S	Price
12/19/2024	Scott R. for Chicago	1				\$ 200.00
1/1/2025	George Michel		1			\$ 100.00
1/2/2025	Next Stage Gauges		1			\$ 100.00
1/11/2025	Michigan Underwater Pres	1				\$ 200.00
1/11/2025	Daniel Friedhoff	1				\$ 200.00
1/13/2025	Michael Passwater(Sh-8)		1			\$ 100.00
1/13/2025	WI Historical Society	1				\$ 200.00
1/13/2025	Diversion Scuba	1				\$ 200.00
1/14/2025	Todd Gordon	1				\$ 200.00
1/15/2025	Bob Vincent			1		\$ 100.00
1/15/2025	DESCO Corp. Christian K.	1				200 Ck.
1/25/2025	Gerald Guyer	1		1		\$ 300.00
1/29/2025	Plum and Pilot Islands		1			\$ 100.00
2/6/2025	GLSPS	1				\$ 200.00
2/7/2025	Anthony Strubic	1				\$ 200.00
2/11/2025	Jean Prevo	1				\$ 200.00
2/11/2025	Jeffrey Grinther	1				\$ 200.00
2/17/2025	Double Action Dive Charters	1				\$ 200.00
2/25/2025	Below the Grade Scuba			1		\$ 100.00
		13	4	3		

Ghost Ships 2025, Income

Paypal fee	Income
---------------	--------

\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
	\$ 200.00
\$ 10.96	\$ 289.04
\$ 3.98	\$ 96.02
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 7.47	\$ 192.53
\$ 2.99	\$ 97.01
\$116.02	

\$ 3,183.98

Ghost Ships Expenses/Income 2025

Date	Item	Cost
1/4/2025	WI Maritim Musuem-room,bar service, tours	\$ 500.00
12/24/2025	Ric Mixter--flight fare	\$ 438.95
2/5/2025	Edmond Fitzgerald glasses	\$ 879.20
2/5/2025	Pint glasses	\$ 1,032.00
2/5/2025	Ghost Ships pens	\$ 150.00
2/5/2025	Ghost Ships Stickers	\$ 24.00
2/5/2025	WUAA magnets	\$ 29.00
2/12/2025	Table runners	\$ 400.38
?	Wrist bands 400	\$ 41.48
2/12/2025	Inn on Maritime Bay (down payment- 1/2)	\$ 1,788.00
2/6/2025	Shirts down payment--\$585 to pay	\$ 500.00
2/24/2025	Final payment for shirts	\$ 585.00
3/1/2025	Valerie Van Heest #233	\$ 250.00
3/1/2025	Bruce Lynn/Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum	\$ 200.00
3/1/2025	Lee Murdock #234	\$ 200.00
	Brochures	\$ 1,000.00
3/1/2025	Inn on Maritime Bay (rest of down payment)	\$ 1,788.00
3/6/2025	Alcohol charged to Museum	\$ 332.00
3/6/2025	Domino's Pizza charged to Museum	\$ 342.50
3/6/2025	Chips etc. charged to Museum	\$ 150.00
3/6/2025	Cleaning fee-soiled linen--charged by museum	\$ 25.00
3/1/2025	Charge for drinks by John Jensen	\$ 12.66
3/1/2025	Signage paid to Brendon	\$ 276.59
3/1/2025	Inn on Maritime Bay coffee and water bill	\$ 1,014.00
3/15/2025	\$179.89-2 models, \$9-4 binders, \$29.48 snacks	
	\$37.61 outdoor displays, \$50 tablet for zettle to Bob J.	\$ 305.98
3/19/2025	\$25.32 chargers for zettle, \$25.35 100 badges,lynards	
	\$106.61 food and supplies	\$ 157.28

\$ 12,422.02

Ghost Ships Expenses/Income 2025

Income from	Amount	
Pre-registration	\$ 3,483.64	
Booths, Sponsorship	\$ 3,183.98	
Charged income	\$ 5,047.05	Includes \$325 from Such
Friday Cash	\$ 1,132.00	
Saturday Cash	\$ 2,740.00	
Check for membership	\$ 20.00	
Total Income	\$ 15,606.67	

Expense Total \$ 12,422.02

Profit \$ 3,184.65

Does not count gran \$2,500

Paid admissions	
Prepaid	147
Paid at door	129
Total	268