



October 1, 2021

### **Introducing the North Star Campaign**

The Gunflint Trail Historical Society invites you to participate in a visionary campaign to assure the future of Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center.

Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center is located on the site of Chik-Wauk Lodge (1934-1978). Visitors experience an array of historical exhibits, classes, buildings with unique architecture, special events, and hiking opportunities. A growing visitor count and membership numbers reflect Chik-Wauk's success.

Now, eleven years since the gates opened, Chik-Wauk faces new challenges and opportunities. The Board of Trustees has identified three key areas to best position the Museum and Nature Center to fulfill its mission of educating and inspiring present and future generations of Gunflint Trail visitors.

- **Housing:** Talented professional staff bring Chik-Wauk to life for visitors of all ages with fun and educational programming. The ability to attract high caliber employees is threatened by the lack of available and affordable rental housing on the Gunflint Trail.
- **Archival storage:** Chik-Wauk is the repository of memories, historical objects and documents for research and exhibits. A lack of adequate storage space threatens the ability to conserve these artifacts properly and accept more.
- **Enhanced programming:** Visits to Chik-Wauk are limited to on-site, summer daylight hours. campus-based, summer and daylight only. The pandemic increased demand for online content and opened the virtual doors to limitless access to programming. Further, designation of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness as a *Dark Sky Sanctuary* provided opportunity to bring the wonders of the night sky to Chik-Wauk's in-person and virtual visitors.

Recently the opportunity to solve the housing and archive storage problems arose. The Board was able to act, purchase a house, and secure a mortgage. With modest renovations, the house will provide climate-controlled and secure storage for museum archives and housing for three staff members. ***The North Star Campaign aims to retire the mortgage and fund renovations.***

To address enhanced programming, the foundation exists for delivering museum content and dark sky experiences to virtual audiences. The new GunflintHistory.org website, with expanded capacity easily managed by staff, launched in June. At the same time, a relationship with UMD allows streaming of Chik-Wauk's sky cam photographs of the night sky 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. ***The North Star Campaign aims to fund the development of enhanced website content.***

The ***North Star Campaign*** reflects the aspiration for Chik-Wauk to be the brightest northern destination. Like the North Star, Chik-Wauk is a guide for those curious about the rich history of the Gunflint Trail, the Northwoods wilderness, and the universe. And, like the North Star, Chik-Wauk continues touch people near and far. Thanks to generous gifts of time, talents and funds over the years, the groundwork is in place. With your help today, this is an achievable dream.

**Join the North Star Campaign.** Support Chik-Wauk today and spark the dreams for Chik-Wauk's tomorrow.