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The Firehouse Chat

Message from Mike Snyder, Vice Chair

Preserving the Past, Building for the Future

As another museum season draws to a close, it is worth taking a moment to consider how far the Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum has come, and where we are headed next.

What began with Jimmie Dobson's passion for collecting fire apparatus and toys has grown into something much larger. Today the museum is not simply a collection of historic objects. It is a place where the stories behind those objects can be preserved, shared, and passed from one generation to the next.

That responsibility becomes increasingly important as we continue the restoration of historic Fire Station No. 3 on Washington Street. This remarkable building gives us an opportunity to connect the Great Lakes Bay Region's firefighting heritage with the future of the museum and create a year-round place where history, education, and community come together.

Preservation is an active process. It takes volunteers willing to turn a wrench, research a story, organize an exhibit or welcome a visitor. It takes donors who recognize the value of saving something today so someone else can experience it decades from now. And it takes a community that understands that local history is worth keeping.

As we look toward 2027, there is still much work ahead. But each project completed, each artifact preserved and each visitor welcomed brings us closer to the museum Jimmie envisioned and to a museum our community can enjoy for generations to come.

Thank you to everyone who has visited, volunteered, donated, or shared our story. **Together, we are not simply keeping history. We are giving it a future.**

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Washington Street Station No. 3

Status of the Washington Street Fire Station

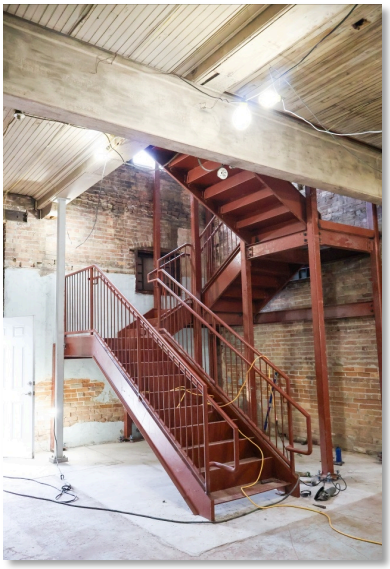
The Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum is thrilled to announce that Phase 2 of the Renovation of Fire Station No. 3 is making great progress! Many unexpected conditions arose that needed attention now rather than in a later phase. Fire Station No. 3, located at 115 Washington Avenue, Bay City, Michigan, aspires to bring history and entertainment together to offer an exciting and interactive experience to visitors from all over the Great Lakes Bay Region and beyond. The restoration of this 1890's Victorian Era Fire Station will not only ignite increased tourism to the region, but will also allow us to collaborate closely with other museums and organizations to create exhibits that are visually compelling as well as deeply informative. The development of interactive, STEM-focused displays, will educate and inspire students and adults alike. Some of our progress thus far includes:

- ⇒ Completed structural masonry repairs and restoration.
- ⇒ Constructed new roof structure on ground and set with crane.
- ⇒ Installed new window on the third floor.
- ⇒ Installed new vents near the top of the tower.
- ⇒ Installed new steel stairway including concrete foundations and concrete treads & landings.
- ⇒ Completed third floor wood flooring repairs and tied into new stairway.
- ⇒ And much more still in progress…

The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation awarded a grant in the total amount of up to $250,000, payable over two years to support the renovation of the historic Washington Street Station into a public museum.

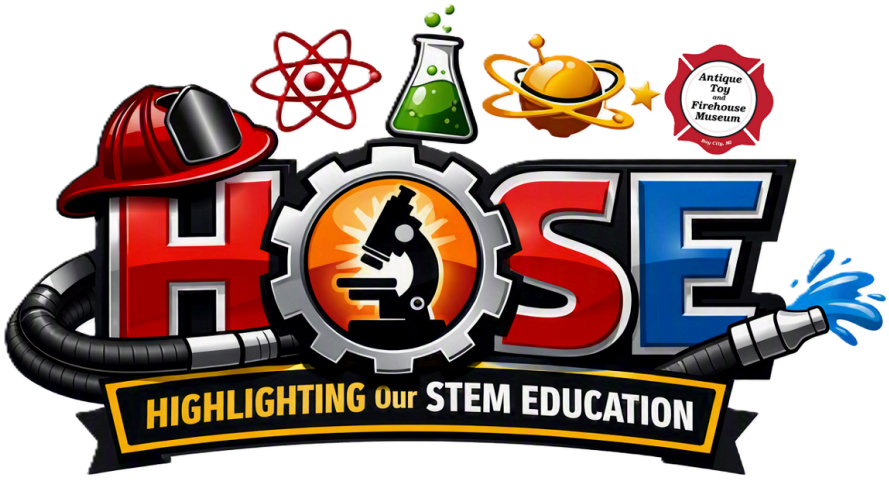
Help bring our historic 1890s Fire Station No. 3 back to life. Contributions support restoration efforts and are eligible for a matching grant through the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. This is a matching grant opportunity available through the end of 2027.

We would like to extend a sincere 'Thank You' to our donors and contributors who have made Phase 1 and Phase 2 possible. We are accepting donations for Phase 3 which will begin in Fall 2026.









The Fire Triangle: Science Behind the Flames

Welcome to the inaugural HOSE section—**Highlighting Our STEM Education**! This new feature explores the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math behind the museum's exhibits and firefighting history.

This edition starts at the beginning. **What is fire?** Every flame tells a story of chemistry and physics in action. At the museum, visitors see gleaming fire engines and antique equipment, but the science behind firefighting begins with something much simpler—**the fire triangle**. This triangle shows three ingredients every fire needs to burn: **heat, fuel, and oxygen.** Remove just one, and the fire goes out. Heat starts the reaction, fuel provides the material to burn, and oxygen keeps the chemical process going. It's a perfect example of how energy changes form—from stored chemical energy in wood or gasoline to light and heat energy in the flame.



Firefighters and engineers use this triangle every day. When a crew sprays water, they're cooling the heat side. When foam blankets a blaze, it smothers oxygen. And when teams clear brush or shut off gas lines, they're removing fuel. Understanding this simple model helps museum visitors see how science saves lives—turning abstract chemistry into real-world action. The next time you stand beside a vintage pumper truck or the extinguishers on display, remember: behind every

Connecting the concept—Removing oxygen is why you Stop, Drop, and Roll if your clothing

Featured Firetruck

1926 REO Speedwagon

This 1926 REO Speedwagon served in Petoskey, Michigan from 1926 to 1963. The truck was built by firefighters from the department. It was initially outfitted with two American LaFrance Chemical Tanks. The Barton pump and windshield were added in 1938.



It was purchased by Donald Greenwell in 1963. Mr. Greenwell was Michigan Firefighter of the Year in 1965 to recognize his heroic actions at a major commercial fire in December 1964. The truck was donated to the Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum in 2021 by Sheryl (Greenwell) and Randy Weston.

Since 2021, volunteers have completed numerous restoration steps to the 1926 REO Speedwagon. The truck was torn down to the frame and painted. The motor was rebuilt using custom-made pistons. The entire truck was rewired with new rear lights, front headlight bulbs, and break pressure switch. The pump was rebuilt with custom parts being machined by Joe Stearns. All brass and chrome were cleaned and polished along with the two water tanks.

Through the work of various volunteers the truck has undergone the following improvements in 2026:

⇒ Petoskey painted in gold leaf on the hood.

⇒ Painted wheels and white lettering on tires.

⇒ New seat created and recovered.

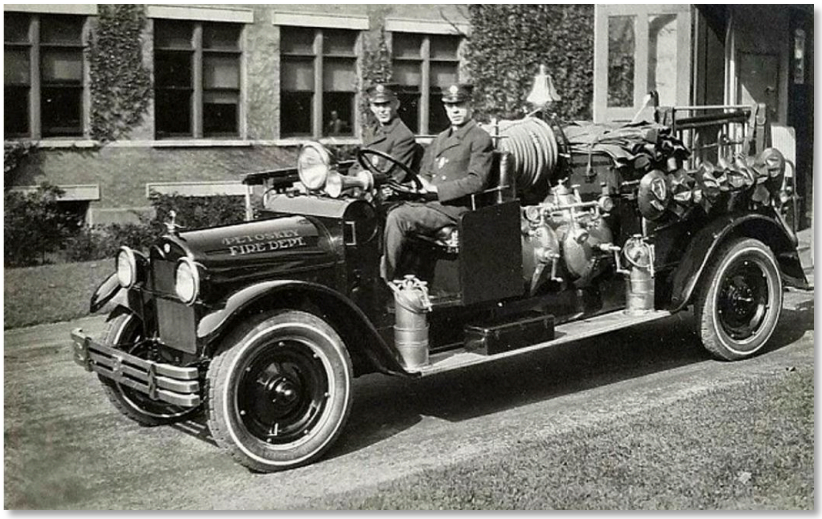
⇒ Installed hose reel.

⇒ Drive shaft installed on front pump.

⇒ New temperature gauge.

⇒ Flag holders installed.

⇒ New brakes and cables.



BINGO & Bags Fundraiser

On September 14th, the museum hosted its first charitable **BINGO & Bags fundraiser**. This event was held at the Bangor Township Hall with 100+ people in attendance. Friends, families, neighbors, and co-workers came together to support the museum's fundraising efforts.

It was a night of endless fun with games of BINGO, 50/50 drawings, basket raffles, and a grand door prize. Miss Bay County, Katelyn Morris, presented all the designer handbags and drew the winning raffle tickets. We are incredibly grateful for the support in making this event such a wonderful success. A huge thank you to all who participated.

We will be organizing a themed BINGO & Basket Bonanza event for early next year that will feature trendy gifts she will adore, and prizes guys will love to win. Watch for the date and details on the ATFHM Facebook page.

The night was more than just games—it was community coming together with the shared goal of making a difference.











Another Successful Season!

This season proved to be a remarkable one for the Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum located on Patterson Road in Bay City, Michigan with visitor numbers rising by over 12% reflecting the growing community interest. We continue to increase visibility to the museum with weekend visitors, weekday tours, special exhibitions, parades, community events, media coverage, and presentations to clubs and organizations. Building on this momentum, the museum will continue offering its educational tours, which spotlight both historical milestones in firefighting history and evolutionary technology thru the years. These engaging experiences not only depend on an understanding of the past and present but also spark curiosity, making the museum a dynamic destination for learning and discovery across all age groups.





The ATFHM brought several fire apparatus to this year's Frankenmuth Muster. On the left is a 1976 Mack CF/Baker 75 foot aerial scope that originally saw service at Dow Chemical in Midland, MI. It later saw service at Pinconning Fraser Fire Department. The white and teal rig in the middle is a 1990 Spartan/Darley foam tanker from Dow Corning; it is equipped with a 2000 GPM pump and a 3000-gallon foam tank. On the right is a 1962 Willys Jeep built by the Valley Fire Truck Co. of Bay City, MI. It was originally delivered to Fremont County Fire Department, Riverton, Wyoming.



Support the Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum

Every gift brings history back to life. Every donation—**no matter the size**—helps preserve our community's history and is **DOUBLED** through a generous matching grant from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation (see below for more details).

You may designate your donation toward one or more priority needs:

- ☐ **Capital Campaign—Restore Fire Station No. 3**

  Your contribution directly supports the restoration of our 1890s Fire Station No. 3 and improvements across our museum campuses. With the matching grant from the Dow Foundation, every dollar you give becomes two dollars of support.

- ☐ **Update lighting and displays at Patterson Road Museum**

- ☐ **Where Needed Most**

Please make checks payable to:

Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum

Mail donation and this form to: PO Box 742, Bay City, MI 48707

- ☐ I would like to receive future editions of **The Firehouse Chat** newsletter via **Email** or **Mail** *(circle one choice)*

- ☐ I would like to volunteer with the museum. *Please contact me!*

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Our museum foundation is a qualified charitable 501(c)(3)organization.
All contributions are tax-deductible. EIN: 37-1468256

More information about the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation:

Founded in 1936 by Grace A. Dow in memory of her husband, Dr. Herbert H. Dow, the foundation is a long established, mission driven philanthropist in Michigan, with a strong record in education, community services, and cultural enrichment, and a well defined grant making process for eligible organizations. The foundation is the oldest charitable funding organization in Midland, MI. Witt the motto "Let Service be our Motto and Good Deeds Our Badge", the foundation's charter directs it to improve the educational, religious, economic, and cultural lives of Michigan's people.

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Contact Us

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Website: www.toyandfirehousemuseum.org

Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn: Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum

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Thank you for helping us preserve the Antique Toy and Firehouse Museum. Your doubled donation keeps history alive for everyone.

Hours of Operation

Closed for the winter season.

We look forward to seeing you in May 2027.

Contact us to schedule weekday or off season tours.