Overview of Museum Annual Performance

The Ward Museum had a challenging year full of major institutional accomplishments. While enjoying its first year of accreditation with the American Association of Museums, museum programs were offered at the highest quality in the organization's memory. Major infrastructure improvements occurred, including the replacement of the roof over the Championship Gallery, installation of sculpture garden, refurbishment of the nature trail and renovation of two key permanent exhibits. These signals of organizational strength and vitality, although essential to the continued success of the foundation, were coupled with additional expenses and negative effects on revenue that contributed to a weaker than anticipated financial performance. The Ward Museum continues to thrive and adapt to a difficult economic climate.
American Association of Museums Accreditation
The Ward Museum earned accreditation from the American Association of Museums in August 2011. This is a 15-year accreditation with periodic review. This is the highest national recognition for a museum. Accreditation signifies the Ward Museum has met and exceeded the highest standards of the museum field and is among the best institutions in the country.

Facility Improvements
The final corrections to ongoing roof leaks to the Championship Gallery were completed in November 2011. This entailed a full removal and reinstall of the sloped roof system.

A new outdoor sculpture garden was installed on the grounds of the museum consisting of eleven artworks from national wildlife artists. This was supported by individual gifts and grant funds. These grant funds also supported restoration and additions to the museum’s nature trail along Schumaker pond.

Renovations to the backlit reading rails in the museum’s Decoy In Time Gallery were completed in FY12. The start of renovations to the museum’s Habitat Theatre also occurred. These improvements were supported with mostly grant funds, but the museum operating budget covered cost overages with the Decoy In Time project. Grant funds and private contributions also supported the upgrade of the lobby sound system and expansion of the bird feeding garden.

Events
The Museum launched a new event in FY12, the Art In Nature Photo Festival. The event exceeded all expectations for participation and revenue, creating a strong foundation for growth in this area in the coming year. It included several corporate sponsorships, most notably Nikon, Wiberley and WBOC.

The 42nd Ward World Wildfowl Carving Competition was held in April in Ocean City, MD. This year included the addition of a Falconry Demonstration, Delmarva DockDogs, and a special exhibition by the Society of Animal Artists. Attendance and competition participation saw increases over the past year.

The 14th Chesapeake Wildfowl Expo was held in October on the grounds of the museum. Involvement from the National Endowment for the Arts Carving Out Future Decoy Makers Project greatly enhanced an event beloved by the regional waterfowling communities. While the number of competitors increased, the overall number of entries was down slightly for the Chesapeake Challenge.

Changing Exhibition Highlights
Ten new temporary exhibits were presented in the LaMay and Welcome Galleries including:

- **Grow.** In conjunction with Salisbury University Art Department Glass Program, Atrium Lobby May 11-21, 2012
- **Open to Interpretation.** LaMay Gallery, April 13 – July 8, 2012.
- **Making Her Mark: A Showcase of Women Carvers.** Welcome Gallery, February 10 – April 1, 2012.
- **Maryland Masters: Edwin Remsberg’s Portraits of Maryland Traditions.** January 27– April 8, 2012.
Education and Outreach Programs

The Education program exceeded FY11 program attendance in all audience category types. More than 17,200 individuals participated in these programs in FY12, an increase of more than 4,000 contacts from the prior year. Several new partnerships and collaborations contributed to the success of programming this fiscal year, including additional funds secured from grants and foundations. The Education department expanded its educator services related to the Growing Up WILD and Pass It On curricula. The department continues to offer services to all age groups and interests; a notable expansion of the program was to support outreach excursions for Salisbury University's Living Learning Communities.

Volunteer Service

More than 18,900 hours are recorded in FY12. At $20/hr., this is a value of $379,500. This is the equivalent of 9 full-time staff members. Volunteers serve across all areas of the museum, including Visitor Service (Gallery Docents and Tour Guides), Education (Docents / Education Assistants), Curatorial and Facilities, Administration or office work including mailings.

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A list of the museum's Above and Beyond donors ($150 and above) is compiled annually and published in the Spring issue of the Ward Museum's Journal. This list reflects contributions from calendar year 2011.

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Prepared September 2012 by the Ward Museum  
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