



ANNUAL REPORT

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY FOUR



North American
BISON
Discovery Center

CONTENTS

From the observation deck.....	3
From the auction floor	4
Board members and staff.....	5
Financial report.....	6
Reconnecting with our roots	7
Member highlights: Growing our herd	8
Acknowledgements.....	9
2024 Statement of financial position	12
2024 Statement of activities.....	13





FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK

Dear Herd Members,

We've now closed out our first full year as the North American Bison Discovery Center!

Our mission has remained the same: We are dedicated to raising awareness of both the historical and current impact of the North American bison and helping to restore the bison population sustainably. But our new status as a discovery center better reflects our commitment to:

- educate the public, both in-person and virtually;
- raise awareness about bison in interactive, engaging, and/or hands-on ways, and;
- build relationships, partnerships, and encourage community participation.

Thus, our theme for this year's annual report: Reconnecting with Our Deep Roots. We've been working hard behind the scenes to better engage and connect with the Jamestown community, bison stewards, and the broader bison enthusiast community throughout the world.

We're building relationships because we know that like the prairie grass – to thrive, we need both a deep and wide root network..

We're investing in our educational efforts, particularly those aimed at the K-12 audience. We know that to know bison is to love them. And when we introduce children to the North American bison, we're planting the seeds for a lifelong fascination and growing the next generation of supporters with deep roots in the bison community.

We've increased and enhanced our communication efforts. We know you want more information about what we're doing and why we're doing it. And we are dedicated to providing that to you, as well as to expanding our audiences. Just as the new shoots connected to the prairie grasses lean in different directions – we know our potential audiences are interconnected.

We're also adding to the Bison Center family. Our herd continues to grow and prosper, and so does our staff. We were thrilled to welcome our new Advancement Coordinator (who is a familiar face to many of you) and to lay the groundwork for a new Curator to join us in Spring of 2025.

It requires a lot of work to have a successful growing season. We're thankful that you've put in the effort with us; that you've walked beside us as we tilled the earth, planted, and watered the seeds. Now we hope you also enjoy the beautiful display of the fruits of our success.

Thanks,

Ilana Xinos

Executive Director

FROM THE AUCTION FLOOR

As an auctioneer by trade, I'm used to speed. But I also know that quick decisions depend on trust. Bidders know me and because of that, they trust that I'm providing them accurate information. That I am knowledgeable. That I am trustworthy.

Nonprofit organizations, like the **North American Bison Discovery Center**, don't move quite as fast as an auction. They're better compared to a growing season. It takes lots of effort over time to see the results. But if that effort has built a strong root system, those plants will keep coming back year after year.



And that's what we've done in 2024. We've been ensuring that our root system is stable. The Bison Center has been in Jamestown for more than 30 years, but this year we invested in reconnecting with our local community by introducing new events like the Very Bison Christmas celebration.

We introduced a new recruitment process for Board members and added a formal Board orientation to our schedule. We want to bring in new voices and new perspectives that will help us continue to grow, but we also want to make sure we have a stable foundation. These processes may not be as visible as the bright flowers we love to see, but flowers can't bloom without strong stems and deep roots.

We're connecting our growth to the goals we outlined in our Master Plan:

- To preserve and present the history of the North American bison;
- To engage and educate visitors and deepen their understanding of bison's cultural, ecological, and economic significance;
- To showcase sustainable practices;
- To foster community involvement; and
- To strengthen staff and board leadership to ensure the Bison Center's future sustainability and growth.

The North American bison is a keystone species. Its sustainable population growth allows a variety of plants and animals in its ecosystem to thrive.

I see the North American Bison Discovery Center as a keystone species as well. When the Bison Center carries out its mission – when it spreads awareness and advocates for bison – it helps not only directly, but also indirectly to sustain the growth of affiliated organizations and industries. Those interconnected roots are what will help us grow stronger. And they are what will help ensure the sustainability of not only our organization, but the North American bison.

Thanks,

Judson Seaman
Board President

BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

BOARD MEMBERS

Judson Seaman, President

Owner, Quality Auction Services
Rapid City, SD

Paul Olson, Vice President

Executive Vice President,
University of Jamestown
Jamestown, ND

Peter Cook, Secretary

Owner, Cook's Bison Ranch
Wolcottville, IN

Joe Graham, Treasurer

Owner, Wildhorse Graham Ranch, LLC
College Station, TX

Arnell Abold

Chief of Operations, Tanka Fund
Rapid City, SD

Moritz Espy

Owner, Tres Ag Services
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Dick Gehring

Owner, Black Kettle Buffalo
Moundridge, KS

Jen Graves

Owner, JG Bison
Sheridan, WY

Ken Klemm

President, National Bison Association
Powell, WY

Rachel Short, PhD

Assistant Professor,
South Dakota State University
Rapid City, SD

Jarrold Starr

Owner, Bisun Consulting
Thornville, OH

Doug Woodall

Owner, Big Sky Ranch
Granville, ND

FULL TIME STAFF

Executive Director: Ilana Xinos

Visitor Services & Store Manager: Pat Taylor

Visitor Services Specialist: Joan Foley

PART TIME STAFF

Visitor Services Representatives:

Emily Ackerman,

Ivy Cordell,

Kaylee Hehr

Collections Assistant:

Erin Boese

Museum Assistant:

Isabel Vaca,

Savannah Williamson

Charitable Gaming Staff:

John Elhard

Josh Friebel

Herd Management Staff:

Kyle McLean

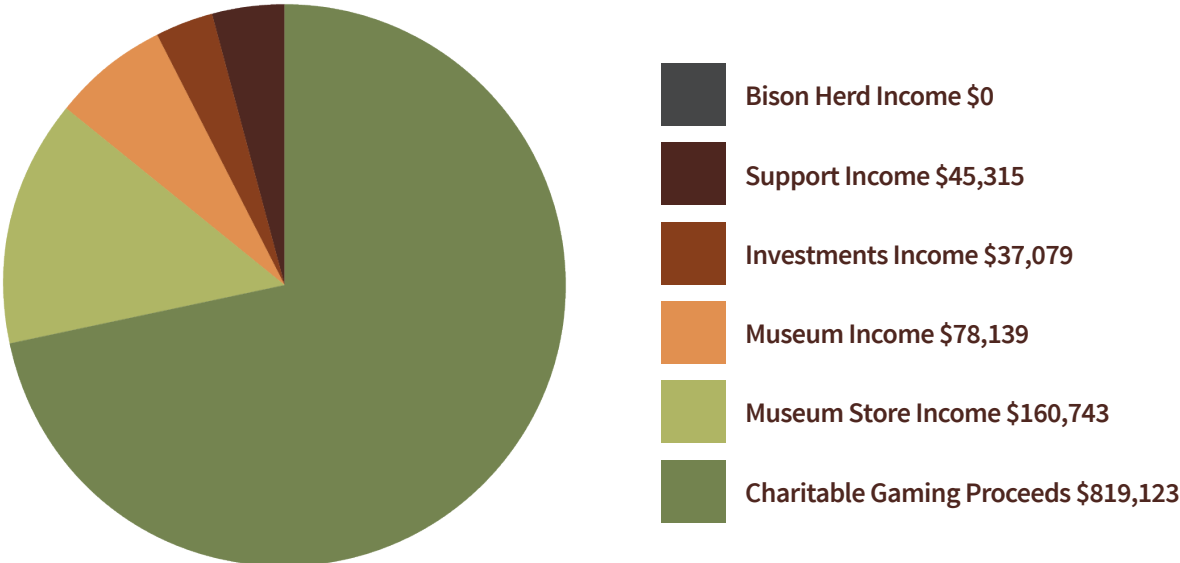
Wes Newton



FINANCIAL REPORT

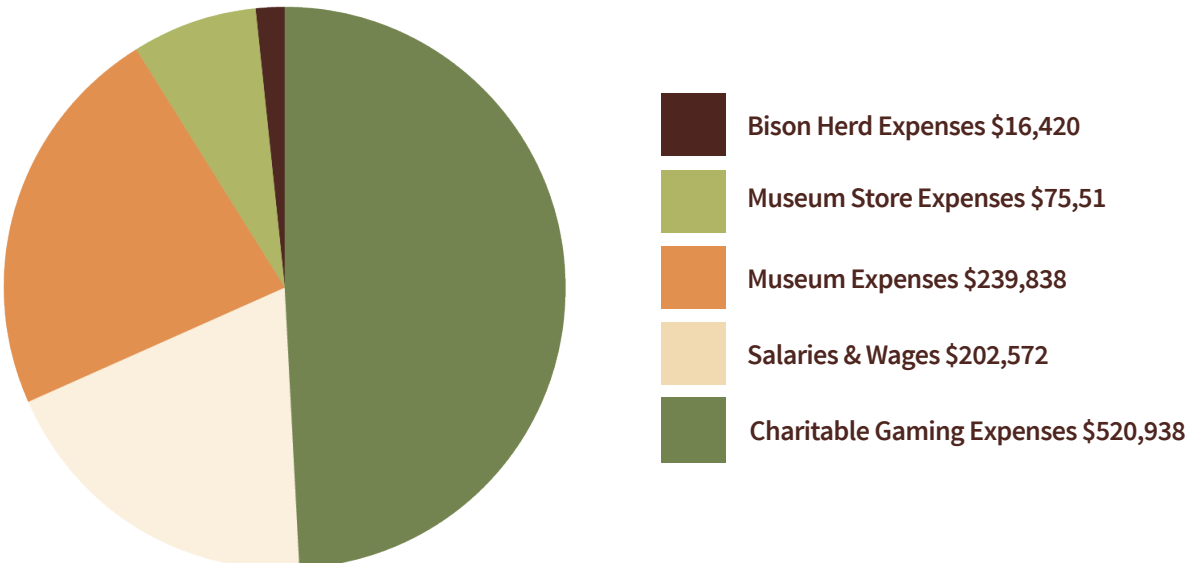
Income

Where the money came from



Expenses

Where the money went



RECONNECTING WITH OUR ROOTS

The North American Bison Discovery Center, formerly known as the National Buffalo Museum, has been raising awareness about and advocating for the sustainable population growth of the North American bison for more than 30 years. In 2024, we made a concerted effort to reconnect with our roots and establish deeper relationships within our communities.

A Very Bison Christmas

In November and December, the Bison Center hosted its first annual A Very Bison Christmas celebration. Featuring photos with Santa, a Winter Wonderland of Christmas trees, a bison-themed gift wrap station, arts and crafts, and more – this event was designed to engage with our local Jamestown community. Visitors to the museum have historically been at their lowest point in the winter season, yet this event brought in nearly 300 attendees and 20 sponsors, seven of whom were new sponsors.

Return of ‘The Great Bison Bash’

Back by popular demand: For many years, the Bison Center hosted an annual summer fundraising event, which included a bison prime rib dinner and an auction. This popular event was last hosted in 2019. We’ve listened to what the community wants! Planning began in 2024 for the event’s return in June 2025, now known as the Great Bison Bash.

Engaging our Youngest Herd Members

In 2024, the Bison Center hosted four summer Storytime Events with the James River Valley Library System. We also hosted hundreds of children visiting as part of field trips or school groups – at no cost, thanks to our generous sponsors! For 2025, we are developing sponsorship packages that would help provide bus transportation costs, picnic lunches, and other specialized materials for school groups so that we can welcome even more young bison enthusiasts through our doors.

On the Road

We took the Bison Center on the road, both locally and regionally. Ilana Xinos, our Executive Director, presented at meetings of the Jamestown Kiwanis, Jamestown Rotary, the National Bison Association Winter Conference, and the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Winter Conference. The Bison Center also hosted an outreach booth at the Custer State Park RoundUp Arts Festival for the first time. For 2025, we plan to not only increase these opportunities to raise awareness about the North American bison and the important role the Center plays, but also to develop a traveling trunk exhibit. We know not everyone can travel to us, but to know bison is to love them. The more people we can reach, the more bison supporters we will have!



MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: GROWING OUR HERD

In 2024 we:

- Welcomed more than 10,000 visitors to our physical location in Jamestown, North Dakota and thousands more virtually
- Received more than \$28,000 in donations, a 175% increase from 2023
- Increased our donor base by 240%
- Experienced a 16% increase in membership revenue

Not a member yet?

[Learn more and join the herd today!](#)

Member benefits include:

- Free admission
- Discounts to the museum store and online store
- Passes to share with friends
- E-newsletters
- Early-bird invitations to programs
- North American Reciprocal Museum Association's Admission benefits
(visit more than 1,000 museums!)

Did you know?

The North American Reciprocal Museum Association's Admission program allows members like you to visit more than 1,000 other locations, often at no additional cost! You may be interested in participating locations like:

- Plains Art Museum in Fargo, ND
- The Capital Gallery Society in Bismarck, ND
- Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, Saint Paul, MN
- Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, MN
- South Dakota Art Museum, Brookings, SD
- Adams Museum, Deadwood, SD

[Search the full list](#)

Want to show your Bison Center loyalty? We've got you covered!
New items added to the shop in 2024 included our series of branded gear.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



FOUNDER'S LEVEL DONORS

American Legion Post #126

Big Sky Buffalo Ranch, Doug & Darnell Woodall

Bisun Consulting, Jarrod Starr

Cavendish Farms, Inc.

Ed Tuccio

Great Plains Housing Authority
i3G Media
Larry & Judi Birger

MIDCO

Sunward Steel Buildings

The Jamestown Sun

Valley Bison LLC, Douglas & Darin Weddle

Vets Club of Jamestown

Walmart

TRAILBLAZER'S LEVEL DONORS

Ag Country Farm Credit Service

Dakota Territory Buffalo Association

Fidelity Charitable

Jamestown Tourism

Knights of Columbus of Jamestown

Lux Concrete, Inc., Rod & Tish Luxx

Mosquito Park Enterprises Rod & Lynnette Sather

Newman Signs, Inc.

Quality Auction Services, Judson Seaman

Sara Whitworth

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Barbara Lang	Harvey & Kathy Huber	Marie Woodall
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Char Mountain	Jean Shirek	Odean & Karen Olson
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Fred & Kay Eagleson	Dr. Larry & Letitia Johnson	
Fritha Knudsen	Larry Rolfstad	

Herd Level Donor

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Decorating by Charlie, R.	Mark & Barbara Domek	Wildhorse Graham Ranch
Gumkeb	Mark Lewis	Zack Orvis
Dianne Siekmann	Mary Jo Sogge	
Dolores Jones	Mary Lee O'Meara	

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Alan & Genny Lindberg
Arnold W. Grossman
Art Todd & Barb Lang
Beau Williams
Bill & Elaine Riebe
Brad & Barty Jensen
Brian & Diane Ward
Brian Gow & Nadine Fox
Bruce & Carol Henke
Carolyn Cichos
Carroll & Helen Wentland
Chad & Darlene Kleinknecht
Char Mountain
Chris & Barb Mikkelson
Clifford Weixel
Craig & Sherry Anderson
Curt & Rachel Liechty
Dale Redinger
Dale & Ann Marks
Dale & Cheryl Lende
Dan & Eileen Lisko
Dave Matson
Dave & Lisa Barnick
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Diann Loper
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Dwayne & Joyce Heinrich
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Elden & Mary Englund
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Eugene Rott
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Fred & Kay Eagleson

Fritha Knudsen
Garrett Clifford
Gene & Mary Van Eeckhout
Greg & Paula Spenningsby
Harvey & Kathy Huber
Hermine Van Nuis
Howard & Catherine Larson
Jackie Anderson
James Derr
James & Helain Pesis
Jason Mayer
Jason & Alana Sparling
Jason & Meghan Braun
Jean Shirek
Jeff & Shelly Andersen
Jerome Barnick
Ben & Jill Bjornson
Jim & Carolyn Exner
Jim & Darlene Trautman
Jim & Marilyn Rexin
Jim & Paulette Ritter
Jim & Rae Ann Vandrovec
Jodi Cook
John A. Meszaros, Sr.
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Jon Lindberg
Judson Seaman
Judy Dauer
Judy Wiest
Judy Collins
Kari & Leo Ness
Karl Ahrendsen
Keith Veil
Kelly & Cindy Rott
Ken Shirek
Dr. Ken & Marlys Throlson
Dr. Ken & Rosemary McDougall
Ken & Sally Wallace
Kenneth C. Fox
Kevin & Mary Casey
Kirk & Debbie Heim
Dr. Larry & Bev Hoffman
Dr. Larry & Letitia Johnson

Larry & Linda Rolfstad
Liana Miller
Lloyd Rott
Lyle Klose
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Mark Forsman
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Sharon Hasey
Shawn Goss
Sherry McGuire
Si & Martha Liechty
Steve Maier
Steven & Cheryl Steinborn
Steven & Deb Thompson
Taylor Barnes
Tex Weatherly
Dr. Thomas J. Riley
Tom & Gail Barthel
Traci & Daren Peterka
Yvonne Becker



2024 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings	\$488,973
Investments	\$464,471
Accounts Receivable	(\$167)
Museum Store Inventory	\$97,917
Undeposited Funds	\$1,164
Total Current Assets	\$1,052,358
Total Fixed Assets	\$415,776
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,468,134

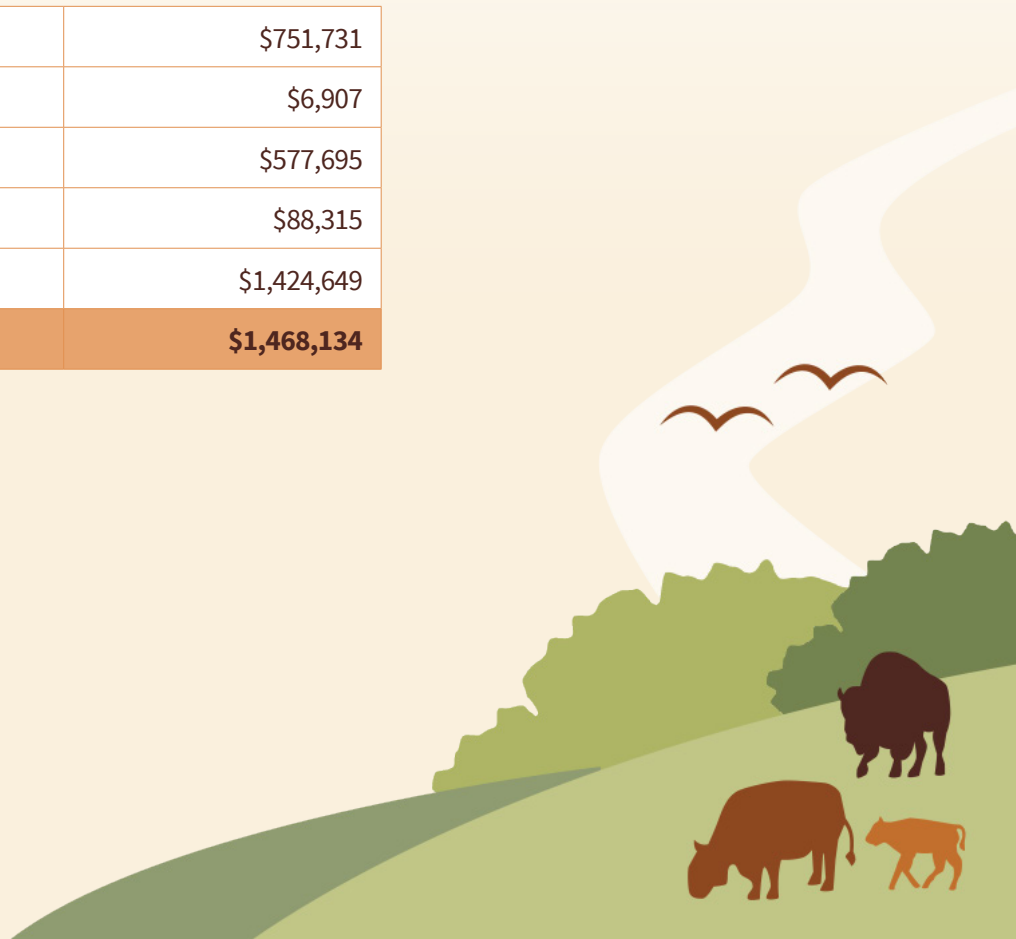
LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$19,770
Credit Cards	\$1,579
Other Current Liabilities	\$22,137
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$43,486

Equity

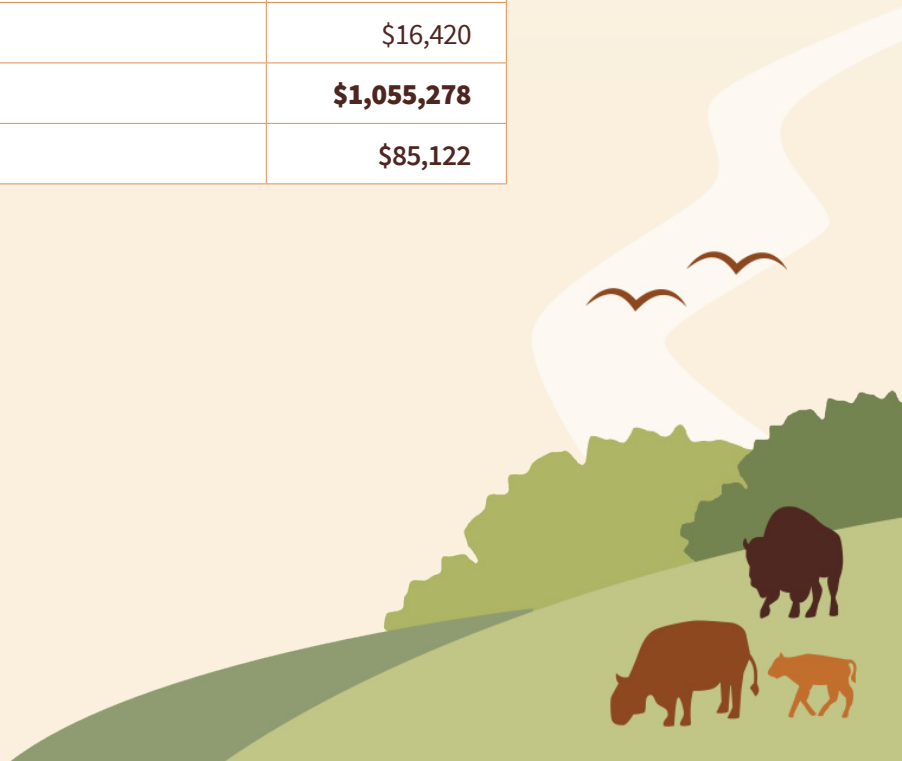
Opening Balance Equity	\$751,731
Permanent Restricted Net Assets	\$6,907
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$577,695
Net Income	\$88,315
TOTAL EQUITY	\$1,424,649
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$1,468,134



2024 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Charitable Gaming Proceeds	\$819,123	Charitable Gaming Expenses	\$520,938
Museum Store Income	\$160,743	Salaries & Wages	\$202,572
Museum Income	\$78,139	Museum Expenses	\$239,838
Investments Income	\$37,079	Museum Store Expenses	\$75,510
Support Income	\$45,315	Bison Herd Expenses	\$16,420
Bison Herd Income	\$0		

REVENUE	
Charitable Gaming Proceeds	\$819,123
Museum Store (Sales, Purchase discounts)	\$160,743
Museum (Admission, Educational programs, Membership, Penny machine & ATM machine)	\$78,139
Bison Herd	\$0
Other (Investments)	\$37,079
Support (Grants, Contributions, Capital Campaign, Sponsorships)	\$45,315
Total Revenue	\$1,140,400
EXPENSES	
Charitable Gaming Expenses	\$520,938
Salaries & Wages	\$202,572
Museum Expenses	\$239,838
Museum Store Expenses	\$75,510
Bison Herd Expenses	\$16,420
Total Expenses	\$1,055,278
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$85,122





North American
BISON
Discovery Center

BisonCenter.org
701-252-8648

500 17th St SE
Jametown, ND 58401