

SPIRIT OF THE RIVERS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

THE SPIRIT OF THE RIVERS (SOTR) BOARD IS A VOLUNTEER LED ORGANIZATION. FOR OVER TEN YEARS THE SOTR BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS RELIED ON COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE THIS MAGNIFICENT SCULPTURE REALITY.

NOW THAT THE SCULPTURE IS COMPLETE, WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST IN BASIC MAINTENANCE OF THE SCULPTURE THAT INCLUDES SUCH TASKS AS SWEEPING, SPRAYING DOWN THE SCULPTURE AND REMOVAL OF DEBRIS PLEASE CONTACT THE SPIRIT OF THE RIVERS BOARD VIA THE PHONE NUMBER LISTED IN THIS BROCHURE.



VOLUNTEERS CARRYING THE CLAY AND FOAM CANOE IN THE STUDIO BEFORE IT WAS CAST IN BRONZE.



Photo Taken by Patty Keuck

Please make checks payable to *Spirit of the Rivers* and mail to address shown below. Contact the Spirit of the Rivers Board about recognition of larger donations.

\$ _____
 Donation \$ _____
 This is a gift. Please send acknowledgement to: _____

Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____ Contact Information _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____



Spirit of the Rivers
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 Two Rivers, Wisconsin 54241
 (920) 793 - 7214
 spiritoftherivers@gmail.com

All donations will be used to for maintenance of the sculpture and to support the arts in Manitowoc County.



THE CONCEPT

The Spirit of the Rivers monument grew out of one local citizen's idea that R.T. Wallen, born and raised in Manitowoc and now an internationally-known artist, should return to Manitowoc to create a work of art for his home town. Working together, the two men settled on a theme that commemorates no great battle, no historic discovery or event, just a peaceful scene of bygone days depicting a group of American Indians going about everyday life, portaging their birch bark canoe from a Lake Michigan beach. The elegant technology that allowed the making of a birch bark canoe ties the monument to the Lakeshore Area maritime tradition and to the culture of the first people in the region, whose canoes allowed transport, exploration, and ways of life much as the horse did in the American West.

THE SITE

The site for Spirit of the Rivers is along Mariners Trail, on the lakefront at the boundary between Manitowoc and Two Rivers. The location offers a spectacular Lake Michigan backdrop, with enough open space for proper viewing both on-site and from Memorial Drive. Parking, picnic area, and restrooms are conveniently available at the nearby Woodland Drive wayside, just south of the sculpture. Forget-Me-Not Creek, located at the sculpture site, would be a fitting name for the monument's park.

DESCRIPTION

Spirit of the Rivers is a monumental bronze sculpture consisting of three American Indian figures: an elder, a woman, and a young man portaging a canoe. Each figure is approximately ten feet tall and the canoe is about 20 feet long. The monument will honor American Indian cultures of the Great Lakes region, using tribal designs in both canoe construction and clothing. Sculpting took place in Manitowoc, where the public had the opportunity to visit the studio to see the work in progress. The finished pieces were shipped to a premier fine art foundry in Oregon for mold-making and casting in bronze. The finished sculpture group weighs approximately two and a half tons and was trucked from Oregon to Wisconsin for dedication at the site on September 16, 2018. An all-volunteer board raised \$1,000,000 of private funding to complete the overall project. This collaborative endeavor between the cities of Manitowoc and Two Rivers will serve as an educational resource for the communities and bring visitors to the area as the monument becomes a regional destination point in the future.

THE ARTIST

R.T. "Skip" Wallen was born and grew up in Manitowoc. After graduating from Lincoln High School in 1960, he attended UW-Madison. During his college summers, he worked on archeological excavations in the Aleutian Islands. He moved to Alaska permanently after graduation to become a wildlife biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. He later was appointed staff artist for the department, eventually leaving to become a professional freelance artist. Working in charcoal, watercolors, and original printmaking, he became best known for his stone lithographs of Alaska wildlife and native people. He turned to sculpture in 1984. His first bronze was Windfall Fisherman, a life-size Alaska brown bear that stands near the Alaska Capitol in Juneau. Twenty five years later, Wallen was chosen to commemorate the 50th anniversary of statehood by creating a life-size humpback whale in bronze for the capital city. Wallen's monumental bronze sculptures are located around the world in such as the World Bank, the Carter Presidential Center, and the World Health Organization.

