

EDUCATION

During the winter months, *The Villager* will be abbreviated to two pages.

The mission of Charlton Park is to provide educational and recreational opportunities, through the collection, preservation and demonstration of early rural Michigan life, artifacts and buildings, and the management of natural and recreation areas.

www.charltonpark.org (269) 945-3775

Park hours Winter 2017 -
Park Gate open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily
Business Office open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday
Historic Village closed.

Banner photo courtesy of Photographic Memory

We held 84 programs throughout the year, bringing in approximately 5,300 children, teachers, and adult chaperones to the Park. This includes programs outside of our traditional spring and fall offerings, like Spring Break Activities, YMCA Adventure Camp, scavenger hunt tours, general tours, and No Family Left Indoors. 2017 is already filling up fast!

Thanks goes to our fall volunteers: Jennifer Billings, Christyl and Jonah Burnett-Evans, Bonnie David, Elaine Drury, Carol Foley, Dan Harrow, Claire Herhold, Andrea Hiler, and Sharon Zebrowski for all their help in the fall season. Thanks to everyone who helped out this year and everyone who visited. We're looking forward to a great 2017!

COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

The *Barry County Artists Exhibition* ended on December 11, 2016. The exhibit was well received and we plan to host the 3rd annual in 2017. A big thank you to the Thornapple Arts Council for their hard work and support!

Uncle Irving's Attic will be on display through 2017 on the 2nd floor of the Museum with the addition of a couple hands-on elements to enhance the experience. The first floor will feature a new exhibit about WWI using artifacts from Historic Charlton Park's collection and will open in April 2017.

We are currently recruiting for our collections department! If you are good with computers and are interested in history, please consider volunteering. Contact Claire Johnston (CJohnston@barrycounty.org) with all of your questions.

EVENT NEWS

The 36th annual Of Christmas Past event on December 10-11 was a veritable winter wonderland for 483 paid guests as the area was blanketed with several inches of snow over the course of the two-day event. We appreciate all of our volunteers braving the wintry weather to come help spread holiday cheer, including Mark Allison, Doug Anderson, Bob Becker,

Jennifer Billings, Sarah Carroll, Grace Curtis, Sandy Daniel, Peggy Day, Dave DeDecker, Dave DeHaan, Elaine Drury, Michelle Duits, Walt Eavey, Steve Evans, Andrew Freemire, Carol and John Foley, Regina Gorham, Megan and Pat Graham, Julie Guenther, Andrea Hiler, John Jacobs, Julia McLean, Megan O'Kon, Jesse Osetek, Terry Pardue, Tim Raymond, Ann and Alexis Replogle, Brian Reynolds, Wes and Georgia Robinson, Darlene and Tim Rumsey, Emma and Rosa Seif, Barb Turkal, James Tyler, and Jeff VanNortwick. A special thanks goes out to Jack Boarts, Dave Chase, and Roberta Meeker for assisting with event setup, helping to decorate the village in all its festive splendor

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Of Christmas Past was bittersweet for the Park's staff as we said goodbye to a longtime volunteer, James



Tyler. He retired as the Park's lead blacksmith after 20 years of service to seek new adventures. James was responsible for training many of our blacksmiths, taught classes, re-stored the bellows, and always had a cinnamon roll or cookie to share.

We wish him the best of luck and hope he comes back to visit!

WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, TO RELAX, TO HAVE FUN: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

We say it all the time, but we truly have the greatest volunteers – they’re such an amazing group of people! It is always exciting to us to see them featured in local news for their various pursuits outside of the Park. Over the last couple months, FIVE volunteers or seasonal staff members were in the news!

Volunteer Rosa Seif was highlighted in an October 8 article in the Maple Valley News that discussed her “natural way to rid a yard of poison ivy” – goats!



Rosa has a flock of goats that eat the poison ivy at her family’s home to help keep the plant at bay. She goes on to describe a couple other reasons why goats are good to have, including that “they eat almost anything” and they produce great

milk! Rosa has volunteered at the Park since 2012, assisting with many of our special events and the education programs.

In the same October 8 issue of the Maple Valley News, seasonal staff member/Education Interpreter Steve Evans was also mentioned. Maple Valley 3rd graders visited the Park on October 3, the article walked readers through the kid’s experience at the Park, mentioning Steve’s wonderful presentation in the schoolhouse, with a photo. Steve has been an Education Interpreter at the Park since 2012.



Volunteer Emma Seif (sister of volunteer Rosa Seif) was in the Hastings Reminder on November 12 in an article about an activity put on by the Freeport Historical Society (FHS) on October 22. As part of a series of events to disprove the perception that history is “a dull and musty archive of disconnected

facts,” the FHS held a wake at the Freeport Cemetery. They researched the life of an early member of the

town Magdalena (Schmelcher) Reuter, and Emma portrayed her at the wake. Emma has been a Park volunteer since 2011, assisting with the special events and education programs.

Volunteer Walt Eavey was the subject of an article on WBCB.com on November 16. Walt was a trustee for the Thornapple Township for 20 years, and stepped down at the end of 2016. The article talked his service with the Thornapple Township, and the changes he has watched the township go through. It also discussed some of the many organizations that Walt has been a part of during his time living in Barry County, and his hobbies. Walt has been a volunteer at the Park since 2013, assisting with special events.



Volunteer Jennifer Seif (mother to Rosa and Emma) was featured as a “Barry County Bright Light”



in the Hastings Banner’s “Have you met?” column on December 29. The article highlighted her skills as a doula and her journey towards a career in midwifery, her faith, and her service to the local library. Jenn has volunteered at the Park since

2012, assisting with special events.

PARK HAPPENINGS

The Park distributed literature and giveaways at the West Michigan Tourist Association’s booth at the Grand Rapids International Wine, Beer and Food Expo at DeVos Place on November 18. The Park also participated in the Barry County Economic Development Alliance’s annual Barry County Economic Development Summit at the Walldorff Ballroom on November 29. In addition, Charlton Park participated in the Hastings Christmas Parade on December 3. The theme, *Light Up the Night*, was well received and the turn-out for the 5:30 p.m. parade was excellent.

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and wish you safety and happiness in 2017!