

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

EVENT NEWS

Of Christmas Past was held the weekend of December 10th and 11th from noon – 5pm both days. The weather was unseasonably warm, which likely contributed to the fantastic attendance numbers - 1,500 people! Visitors



Photo by Andrew Freemire

were treated to wassail, plum pudding, chestnuts, cookies from the Charlton Park Foundation, popcorn and cinnamon apples. Adults and children made corn husk dolls, sachets, candles and cornucopia ornaments before taking a wagon ride or visiting St. Nicholas. Live music could be heard in the church both days from the the Thornapple Wind Band Friends, the Thornapple Brass and the Thornapple Valley Dulcimer Society. Considering the almost overwhelming attendance numbers, the volunteers for the event did an amazing job! Thanks to Glen Smith, Dave Leavitt (both days!), Herb McPeake (both days!), John and Carol Foley, Elaine Drury, Barb Turkal, Kerri Steward, Bess Gross, Pam Tobias (both days!), James Tyler, Dan Harrow (both days!), Jon and Maiya Merrick, Christyl Burnett, Jeff Van Nortwick (both days!), Lois Bremer, Jamie Bowman, Andy Johnston, Ann and

Alexis Replogle, Shannon Ritzer and Brian Reynolds (both days!). What a fabulous way to end the 2011 season!

The 2012 event calendar is available! Follow the link to print a copy: <http://ow.ly/8gP51>.



We hope you had a fabulous holiday season and wish you the best in 2012!



DIRECTOR'S SPOT

In with the old and in with the new! While keeping 2011 and our 75th year celebration close in our minds for being another spectacular year here at Charlton Park we are excited to embark on 2012.

2011 once again proved to be a record breaking year for several of our special events in terms of attendance, and our education programs are growing exponentially. This is a wonderful sign for our future and reflective of the hard work and dedication of our staff, numerous volunteers, Park Board, and Foundation. As we continue to grow in many areas we strive to remain true to our roots in providing educational and recreational opportunities to the citizens of Barry County and the surrounding area.

2012 looks to be another great year with many amazing opportunities for young and old to learn about our history and just enjoy some wonderful family entertainment. We have many events already scheduled and are adding more each month. We look forward to serving you and all our supporters in 2012, and please consider joining us in making 2012 another year to remember.

Many Thanks,
Dan Patton, Director

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 maintenance of natural and recreation areas.

www.charltonpark.org (269) 945-3775



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PARK HAPPENINGS

On December 15th, curator Claire Johnston gave a presentation for the Vermontville Historical Society. About 30 people attended VHS's annual Christmas program, learning about Charlton Park, Matthew Baird and how he celebrated Christmas while in the hospital during the Civil War. To learn more about the Vermontville Historical Society, visit their website http://www.migenweb.net/eaton/hist_vermontville.htm. To read about Matthew Baird's Christmas in 1861, take a look at our blog <http://ow.ly/8gPgR>

OPERATIONS UPDATE

The Maintenance Department has been busy this fall splitting wood, trimming trees and winterizing equipment. In preparation for winter all of the picnic tables, benches and trash barrels were brought into storage to be sealed. They also hung all of the swags and garland for Of Christmas Past! Another project was finding and placing new trees throughout the village. Larger trees were chosen in hopes of them surviving the winter after transplant, they are all supported and ready for the snow (photo).



EDUCATION/COLLECTIONS

The education programs were hugely successful this year! We held 76 programs throughout the year, welcoming approximately 4,000 students and adults. The numbers are the highest since 2005! The 2012 season promises to be just as busy with 29 groups booked for the spring and 6 for the fall. We are always looking for volunteers to help with the programs, if you are interested get in touch! Thanks to Judith Kidder, Lois Bremer, Marlene Simon, Crystal Harris, Nancy Bitterling, Bonnie David, Glen Smith, Roger Smith, Ruby Cairns, Bess Gross, Kerri Steward, Lorena Wright, Elaine Drury, Joe Medendorp, Wes Robinson, Shirley Barnum, Barb Turkal, Carol Foley and Jessica Smith.

Thank you to Judy Mudge for her tireless efforts to computerize the archives and Rebecca Kyes for taking on the inventory and computerization of our Native American holdings!

The temporary clock display that was in the museum has been taken down and the clocks returned to storage with the help of Jack Boarts and Dave Chase. A display of hats will take its place for the 2012 season. Volunteers will spend the winter conducting the inventory and computerization of the Park's clothing collection.



Below are a couple of "Thank You!" notes from local elementary students who participated in our education programs. Just wanted to share...

