

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

PARK HAPPENINGS

Shannon Ritzer, the Park's programming and education coordinator, spoke to the Eaton County Genealogical Society on April 17. She spoke about the Park's history, the education and public programs, the new exhibits, and the Park's special events for this year.

Claire Johnston, the Park's curator, spoke to the Delton Rotary on April 18. Her presentation addressed recent renovations to the historic village, the renovations in the stone museum building, and upcoming programming and exhibits.

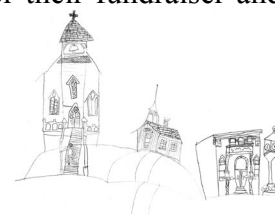
The waters have receded! After a few tense days of watching the Thornapple River crest and stretch toward the Sixberry House and the back of Mainstreet (photo), we are happy to report that the buildings are safe. The beach and much of the recreation area was underwater and that part of the Park will be closed until we are confident in the roads and the wells.



The renovation of the 2nd floor of the Museum Building is well underway in preparation for *Food, Water, Shelter: The Business of Yesterday*. Finishing touches are being completed prior to artifacts being moved in and the exhibition being mounted. Visit our Facebook page for updated photos of the project that is being funded by the Charlton Park Village and Museum Foundation!

The Park hosted the 12th South Carolina and 7th Michigan Company who used the grounds to practice Civil War Drills on March 22-23. The Barry Conservation District Tree Sale was held at Charlton Park on April 12-13. More than 300 people visited the Park to buy trees, shrubs and accessories. In addition, the Park is a proud sponsor of the 2013 Meals on Wheels Walkathon on May 18 at the Commission on Aging. Be on the lookout for Charlton Park Road during its Monopoly-themed event. Bidding is now taking place at www.barrycounty.org for the COA gift basket fundraiser. Check out the Charlton Park basket for their fundraiser and bid today!

We have a winner for the 2013 T-Shirt Design Contest! SiSi Vardell, a 2nd grader from Delton-Kellogg Elementary won, with her picture of the Church, School, and Bank (photo). SiSi and her family attended the Volunteer Luncheon, where she was introduced and described her drawing to the attendees.



UPCOMING EVENTS

The 7th Annual Charlton Park Day will be May 25th from 11 am – 4 p.m. Come out and enjoy a FREE day at the Park: includes food, drink, activities and musical entertainment! It is always a great event and honors the residents of Barry County for their support of our facility!

We are looking for additional volunteers to help make the day a success, and don't fret; costumes are not involved in all stations. Volunteers are needed:

- To help distribute food in the snack bar
- To monitor the drink/condiment tables
- To serve as event MC

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Dan Patton at 269-945-3775 or dpattton@barrycounty.org. If you volunteer in the historic village and would like be present that day, contact Shannon Ritzer at sritzer@barrycounty.org.

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EDUCATION

The school season is in full swing, and there are always sunny smiles to be seen on the faces of the visiting students, their teachers, and all of the education volunteers - even though we had a very soggy start. Thanks to Nancy Bitterling, Lois Bremer, Jackie Brod, Ruby Cairns, Bonnie David, Elaine Drury, Steve Evans, Joel Flint, Kendra Friend, Bess Gross, Wes & Georgia Robinson, and Barb Turkal for all of their help so far!

John Gallagher has joined the education team this spring as a part-time Historic Interpreter. John works with the Maintenance Department in the spring and summer, but is also proving to be a great asset to the education programs.

VOLUNTEERS' CORNER

The annual Volunteer Luncheon was held on April 20, with about 30 people in attendance (photo). Everyone enjoyed a meal of pulled pork sandwiches, macaroni and cheese, veggies, chips, pop, water, cookies, and mini cheesecake bites (cookies and cheesecake provided by Carolyn Murphy). Speakers included Vice-Chair of the Charlton Park Board David Logan, Park Director Dan Patton, Curator & Exhibits Coordinator Claire Johnston, and Programming & Education Facilitator Shannon Ritzer.



Please give a warm welcome to new volunteers Joel Flint, Kendra Friend, Jackie Brod, and Jeff VanStee. Joel, Kendra, and Jackie are all doing a wonderful job assisting with the education programs, and Jeff will be assisting the Maintenance Department.

Thanks so much to Dave Chase and family for lending us chickens this year! We have 4 hens and one rooster. They seem to be enjoying their temporary home, and oh boy, is that rooster talkative!

COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

Work in the collection is running at a fever pitch with preparations for the opening of *Food, Water, Shelter: The Business of Yesterday* on May 25th for Charlton Park Day. Many volunteers have been taken off of their normal duties to do artifact research and various construction projects. Special thanks to Roberta Meeker, Judy Mudge, Mary Brinks, Jack Boarts, Dylan Tilbury, Dave Chase, Rebecca Kyes, and Sharon Zebrowski for all of their work to make sure we are ready.

Resourceful Women opened with fanfare on April 11 with a presentation by Patricia Birkholz, former



senator and current West Michigan Director of the Michigan League of Conservation voters, and an opportunity to view the exhibit.

More than 30 visitors enjoyed conversation and refreshments provided by the Charlton Park Village and Museum Foundation. The exhibit will be on display until June 16th for the Father's Day Car Show. Thank you to everyone that came out!

Volunteer Judy Mudge guest curated a display of postcards from the Park's collection that is in the lobby of the second floor of the Museum Building. Make sure to stop and take a look!

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Roger Smith is in the process of completing his Pesticide recertification and has attended two regional training sessions. As part of Earth Day activities, community service workers helped pull invasive Garlic Mustard at the Park on April 26. With all of the water we have seen, the staff has also been removing river debris from the lawns as the water recedes.

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DIRECTOR'S SPOT

Strategic Planning and Master Planning at Historic Charlton Park

Dear Friends,

Wow, Spring has finally arrived! With the warmer temperatures and newness in the air, all of us here at Charlton Park are super excited about the coming summer season. Additionally, we are excited about a couple of processes we have going right now.

Since mid-February our staff and board have been working on developing a Strategic Plan and updating the 5-year parks master plan. Both of these processes will eventually help guide what we do into the future on a short-term and long-term basis. While this may seem to be a duplicate process, ultimately they are both equally important individually.

The strategic plan will focus on categories and visioning for our future. With a process that focuses on the Collections, Village, Museum, Recreation Area, and Administration, it will truly be all encompassing. The end product of strategic planning should help give us guidance for better governance of our resources and sustainability for enjoyment by future generations.

The master plan is primarily focused on the parks and recreational component of Historic Charlton Park. This particular planning process is required to be done every five years, to ensure our eligibility for grants and other funding mechanisms. Focusing on our environment based activities like swimming, trails & hiking, boating, and things that get people into the out-of-doors. Ultimately, the master plan will provide us guidance on future expansion, development, or renovation and improvements within our recreation area, and on the undeveloped portion of Charlton Park.

Like all things, both of these processes are only as good as the information and feedback that is given by those who are willing to give of their time or experiences. We will be conducting surveys, holding public input sessions, and soliciting information many times this year.

On May 16, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. we will be conducting a joint meeting at the Barry-Eaton District Health Department to solicit input for the Master Plan. This meeting will be focusing on parks and outdoor recreational activities at Charlton Park and those managed by the Parks Board throughout Barry County. I would encourage all to attend that have an interest in Parks and Recreation.

Beginning the last week of May, Charlton Park will begin a survey sampling to get feedback for further developing our strategic plan. This survey will be focusing on all aspects of Charlton Park operations and on what visitors want, why they came, and where they are from. Surveys will be available on-line, on-site, and through mailings if requested.

Further into the summer we will be conducting additional public input meetings seeking information for both our strategic plan and master plan, so keep us on your radar. We are eager to get your thoughts about anything and everything regarding our future, so please get involved and help support our process, as we begin to shape our future for years to come.

Visit us Soon,



Dan Patton, Director

Photos of past events and happenings are on Facebook, you don't even have to join to view them!

www.facebook.com/charltonpark

Contact Information

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Tom Campbell - Operations Supervisor
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Stacey Graham - Office Manager
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Claire Johnston - Curator/Exhibits Coordinator
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Shannon Ritzer - Programming/Education Facilitator
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Roger Smith - Grounds and Maintenance

www.charltonpark.org
(269) 945-3775 - fax (269) 945-0390

Hours of Operation:
Open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 14

“From Robins to Pines”
Speaker: Matt Dystra from
Pierce Cedar Creek
5:30 p.m. Museum
FREE

May 25

7th Annual Charlton Park Day
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Village Open
FREE

June 16

32nd Annual Father’s Day
Car Show
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Village Open
\$5/ adults \$3/children 5-12

Keep up on our events and see photos by
checking out our page on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/charltonpark