

The Villager

BOOK YOUR EVENT

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 2016 -
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 until April

Banner photo courtesy of Photographic Memory

As the calendar turns to a new year, it's the perfect time to think of booking your spring and summer events at Charlton Park. Contact us to reserve a date for your fun filled wedding, reunion, picnic or party today. Rental facilities are available for groups and budgets of all sizes and 2016 dates are filling up quickly. Please visit our website for rental photos and information or contact Stacey in the Park office for further details.



EVENT NEWS

The Park's annual Of Christmas Past event (now in its 35th year) continues to break attendance records and this year was no exception. Approximately 1,300 people reveled in the spirit of the season, while enjoying activities in each of the historic buildings. The exceptionally dry and mild weather of December 12-13 helped to bolster the crowds.



Guests were treated to old favorites like cinnamon-sugar apples, wassail, plum pudding, candle dipping and roasted chestnuts, but also some new things – yarn doll crafts, and new Victorian holiday displays! Live music was provided by the Thornapple Wind Band and Thornapple Brass Choir on Saturday, and the Thornapple Valley Dulcimer Society on Sunday. There were also carolers in the village on Saturday as well.

Special thanks to the Charlton Park Village Foundation, Ritzer family, and the Hastings 4 Theater for their sponsorship of the event. Also, thanks to Dave Anderson, Jennifer Billings, Elsie Bush, Sandy Daniel (both days), Dave DeDecker, Elaine Drury, Michelle Duits, Walt Eavey, Steve Evans, Rick Figger, Carol and John Foley, Regina Gorham, Pat and Megan Graham, Mike Hook, Andy and Peter Johnston, Judith and Eugene Kidder, Micala Klipfer, Glen Marshall, Laura McBeth, Herb McPeake (both days), Jon and Maiya Merrick, Ellen Meyer, Jeff Van Nortwick (both days), Megan O'Kon, Jesse Osetek, Laura Payne, Joie Perry, Zach Pinkster, Ann Replogle, Brian Reynolds (both days), Wes Robinson, Doug Anderson, Darlene and Amanda Rumsey, Tim and Lisa Rumsey (both days), Emma Seif, Joel TeVelde, Barb Turkal, James and Brogan Tyler, for volunteering in the buildings and providing festive music for the event. Special thanks to Pam Tobias for the wonderful photos!



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

EDUCATION

Once again, we had a great year for the education department. We held 76 programs throughout the year, bringing in approximately 4,465 children, teachers, and adult chaperones to the Park. This is in addition to the 13 other programs we had, which included YMCA Adventure Camp, general tours, No Family Left Indoors, and a geocaching presentation at Delton Library. 2016 is already filling up, so if you know anyone who would like to schedule a program, please have them contact the office.

Thanks so much to our fall education volunteers Jennifer Billings, Christyl and Jonah Burnett-Evans, Ruby Cairns, Janice Crane, Bonnie David, Elaine Drury, Steve Evans, Dan Harrow, Nancy Meade, Wes Robinson, and Barb Turkal for all their help to make this a successful season. Thanks to everyone who helped out this year and everyone who visited. We're looking forward to a fun 2016!



COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

The last day of the 1st Annual *Barry County Artists Exhibition* was December 13. The show was successful for its first year and will be repeated in 2016!

Keep an eye on this newsletter, our website and Facebook page, as well as the Thornapple Arts Council's for application information.



In preparation for the 2016 season, the fossil display was taken down on the second floor of the museum and the Civil War exhibit on the first floor was condensed thanks to Dave Chase and Jack Boarts.



We are excited about our newest exhibit, *Uncle Irving's Attic*, which will officially open to the public on the 10th Annual Charlton Park Day! The exhibit will focus on Irving Charlton's collections and pay tribute to our founder on the facility's 80th anniversary!

VOLUNTEERS CORNER

Please welcome new volunteers Joie Perry (photo), Ellen Meyer, and Michelle Lennartz! Joie and Ellen reside in the Hastings area and we hope you were able to say "hello" to both of them at the Of Christmas Past event. Michelle is a Barry County resident and is working in collections and exhibits. Thanks so much ladies!



Our wonderful volunteers assist with event set up throughout the year, but the most fun is usually decorating and prepping for Of Christmas Past. Dave Chase, Roberta Meeker, Sharon Zebrowski, Jack Boarts, and Doug and Mary Brinks took time to cut tissue paper, string popcorn, make door swags, and help decorate trees. Thank you!

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Maintenance has been working on winterizing the Park and anticipating the coming snowfall. After wrapping up Of Christmas Past, we cleaned and closed all the village buildings and prepped them for the winter. We are eagerly anticipating and preparing for next year's busy event schedule.

If you walk the hiking trails, you may notice new bench seats placed on a couple of them. These were placed here by a local Boy Scout, Cody Hama as part of his Eagle Scout project. He did a wonderful job building the benches and they are a great addition to the trails. You will also see additional bird houses placed in the Park. These were placed with the help of some volunteers; the houses are ready to have birds nest in them come spring.

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and wish you safety and happiness in 2016!