

Education Coordinator Update- Early Fall (Aug, Sept. Oct) 2019

Amanda Kucharek

Following the spring field trips, I received good feedback from teachers and students who have told me that they enjoy the spring/summer lessons, or that they are personally learning a lot of new information. I am continuing to be mindful when planning visits to the Native American gallery to make lessons personal and celebrate family histories. Students are comparing and contrasting our 2019 tools to the artifacts found and are seeing that there is a real connection to tools that their parents keep in the garage. These ideas are evolving into new and updated programs for the future. Looking towards the fall, I'm sticking with similar practices, although with new projects.

So far into the fall season I have had a few senior tour groups visit the museum, and nearly a fully booked week in October for several regular school field trips (**Oct 17** at Rockport, **Oct 22, 23, 24, 25** on site). Last year at this time I hadn't had "regular" trips at this time but had a few partnered with NEMIGLSI. It doesn't look like there will be any visits this fall, but with the Science in the Sanctuary class at the high school perhaps once more in spring.

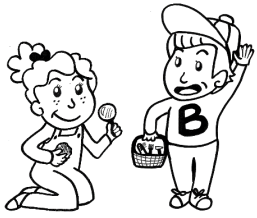
I have been doing a lot more marketing work for our events and social media and enjoying it. Depending on the content of the advertising, I move between using publisher and an online editor called "Canva". I like to use this because the templates are pre-sized for social media and it gives me access to images and clipart faster than with publisher. Below are some samples.



We have been getting ahead of the game for Giving Tuesday this year which provides me more time to plan for our upcoming Season of Light. I used Publisher for these marketing samples because there was much more text involved. Virtually all of the advertising was edited and completed in order to begin distributing information at this year's Fall Harvest (A great way to distribute info). With a focus on the historic village, we will be able to take this marketing with us past Giving Tuesday and into other fundraising opportunities. Having a focus on the village also reminds me to spend some time thinking about new ways to use the village as an educational/recreational resource.

I have been thinking a little more on decorating the village minimally to include it as part of our season of light displays. I cannot recall if there were wreaths for the village in 2018, but there have been in the past. I'd like to revisit having some luminaries or solar lights for the walkways/front steps. (See below for more Season of Light)

From my last report:



"My main focus at the present is setting up a new "Besser Buddies" educational youth visitor program who both have "B" names to represent both Besser and the ability to "B" (Be) anything. They can "B" innovative, creative, bold, kind etc.. I've identified some "Overarching Themes" or "Big Ideas" across galleries to be factored into this material: Community Occupations/Roles, Innovation + Creativity, Aspirational Attributes.

Looking towards Season of Light



After doing a little research into topics of interest for this year's season of light field trips, I began to think about some of the discussions we have had in planning last year's event. It was seeming to me that we had a lot of ideas that just weren't meshing well between the Opening event and the Field Trips that followed. The Opening night has not been a real fundraiser, and we weren't seeing young guests, even though we had included family style activity stations for a few years. The Opening also seemed to be a party for frequent guests/supporters and wasn't seeming to pull many new attendees year to year.

So in order to:

- Draw in more first-time guests
- Draw in more families
- Be more inclusive/open to the community
- Offer more activities for all ages
- Serve as a small fundraiser

I propose a few alterations for the Season of Light Opening Reception. This includes:

- Changing the time- Instead of an evening event, offer an afternoon (12:00 noon-2 or 4 pm)
- Changing the ticket price-\$1 admission/shows for each attendee (follow guidelines from LC and FH)
- Change the focus- Market this as a holiday open-house, family activity day. Planetarium shows are holiday themed, find a "Santa" or "Mrs. Claus" for the event. Crafts for kids + parents + grandparents. Instead of catering, think reception food (cookies, hot cocoa, cheese tray).

I would like to use this event as an introduction to our Besser Buddies. My goal is to use them as part of the kid-friendly interpretation for the Trees of Nations gallery space. Each tree will receive its own illustration in coloring book pages for regular museum guests. During the field trip season, there will be an activity in which students will color in their own tree, using the traditions from these pages (See rough sample above).

I would also like to feature some more traditional crafts as part of the Avenue of Shops displays. Some of these ideas have spun off into additional "adult craft days" (No Wine included). There are some holiday crafts that many people would love to do but aren't necessarily easy for all ages (think hot glue guns). I could teach these myself, or we could ask other area craftspeople.

We have an awesome and varied collection that will fulfill student content requirements. Especially as we head into the holiday season at the museum, utilizing our displays on special traditions from all over the world AND from our past and present in this community will give young learners a way to think about their connections to the community and broader world.

As a reminder, the goals of the Besser Buddies programming are to align with MI content such as:

Kindergarten – *Myself and Others*

First – *Families and Schools*

Second – *The Local Community*

Third – *Michigan Studies*

Fourth – *United States Studies*

Further broken down, for example, The History aspect of MI K-4 Social Studies focuses on:

Living and Working Together – *Use historical thinking to understand the past in the local community*

Michigan History – *Use historical thinking to understand the past in Michigan*

The following information was noted about 2019 Log Cabin looking ahead to Fall Harvest and Season of Light. Fall Harvest observations have been added and highlighted.

Front Desk/Volunteer Coordination: No major issues during event, just acclimating new/part time staff to different workflow. This year's attendees arrived in much more even fashion, not all at once, so flow was much calmer. One volunteer tasked at greeting, 2-3 working desk. YVC students had new coordinator who was good at observing/redirecting.

Notes for Future Events:

- ALL-staff meeting before major events may help to communicate between full/part time staff.
- Schedule staff at the same time for pre-meeting
- ALL Walk/tour the entire grounds before event to see locations. Walk through map.

Fall Harvest: All staff attended an 8:30 meeting to tour the building and see each station. The Bus Tour tickets were moved to a separate area to keep the front desk less congested (Free tickets getting mixed with paid tickets). This seemed to work very well on the day of the event.

Food Stations: Founders set up in garage with strawberry sundaes, cookies, water, pop, and popcorn. Steady turn-out, ran low on ice cream. Hot Dogs/water across the yard, 10x20 tent with seating in between. Garbage cans at each and a large one in between. Can for recyclables.

Notes for Future Events:

- Hot Dog griller noted that the beef franks are fattier, so there was a lot of grease running through the bottom of the grill. Chicken or pork franks might help, but hasn't tested the theory
- Potential Fudge/Fossil Day 2019- Either candy of fudge demonstrations
- Like strawberry social w/ ice cream, fudge brownie sundaes instead of pie for Fall

Fall Harvest: Founders served Brownie Sundaes in the Wilson Gallery, alongside popcorn and water/coffee. Hot Dogs were sold from the garage beside the back deck. Cider was available near the historic village, and new this year was fudge for sampling in the Trelfa gallery.

Entertainment: Harp inside the Wilson, Great Lake Effect outside on porch (returning in Fall). Face Painting under trees by the school house, well attended by families. Sun changes position, so tables were moved to the other side of the trees ½ way through afternoon. Smoke house by fire dept was fun addition. Woodworkers in Native American gallery was a good set-up for demonstrations.

Notes for Future Events:

- Music on amplifier is heard indoors, suggestions include stagnate playing/break times or moving locations.

Fall Harvest: Great Lakes Effect was situated in the Wilson gallery with the brownie sundaes, a good choice.