



Friends of the Burchfield Nature & Art Center
2018 Annual Report
October 2017 – September 2018

Friends of the Burchfield Nature and Art Center mission statement:
*Serve community interests in art, recreation, music, history and nature
by providing a welcoming and educational facility.*

HOME AGAIN! The Volunteers of Burchfield Nature and Art Center are grateful to be back in the classroom and offices. The move in May 2018 made our annual events and day to day activities much easier to carry out. It also brought us back in daily contact with the public. Visitors to the park can stop in to get information or simply chat about their park experiences. We can see how many people come to the park from all over Western New York and how important the facility is to the community. The gallery is still closed. We look forward to filling it with art and activities in the future.

This year volunteers donated over 3,235 hours.

Events

Our theme this year was “Come Together at the BNAC”. Volunteers provided a variety of events for people to share. In May we hosted the Buffalo Creek Treaty Commemoration Ceremony. History and traditions of the Seneca Nation were highlighted in a beautiful ceremony along the creek. In June talented young people from the Music Academy of WNY entertained visitors. Gardeners came to the park for the annual South Towns Garden Club plant sale. The BNAC Summer Concert Series brought in large crowds to enjoy 4 concerts in our amphitheater setting. People came from far and near to enjoy Burchfield’s Enchanted Forest event that celebrated art and nature in a magical way. Families lined up early to play games, create themed crafts and make new friends on Wonderful Wednesdays in July and August. A new event this year brought people out to learn more about the park with a Discover the Park Scavenger Hunt. Burchfield volunteers continued to facilitate scheduling the use of the park for people planning weddings and other special occasions.



Art



Although the gallery is closed, Art continues to be an active component of the BNAC. The Volunteers held a Photography contest and exhibition at the West Seneca Senior Center in November 2017. A reception and book signing by Nancy Tomchuck Barlow, hosted by the BNAC volunteers, was held at St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church to promote her book “Charles Burchfield the Gardenville Years”. The volunteers sponsored a poster contest for grades K-12 focusing on Saving Pollinators, Bees and Butterflies. Colorful and educational posters by 165 entrants from twenty different schools were displayed at the West Seneca Senior Center. Photographers enjoyed volunteer Kenn Morgan’s diverse photography sessions where techniques and tips were shared. Artist Frank O’Connor is expanding his “Sinisteria Begins” tree limb sculpture. This has become a focal point in the park. Mr. O’Connor recently published a book about this artistic endeavor.

Community

The Burchfield Nature and Art Center presents endless possibilities. We have reached out to our extended community and welcomed their ideas. Many people now come together to enjoy the facility and offer their assistance. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Garden Clubs, wood carving groups, musicians, students, community service workers from courts, artists, workers from Day Habilitation programs, West Seneca Woman’s club,

photographers, West Seneca YES, WSW Key Club, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints missionaries, rock painters, Buffalo and Niagara Waterkeeper, the West Seneca Environmental Commission and Pokemon players share interests, time and talents. Good neighbors like the WNY Federal Credit Union, 14 Holy Helpers Church, the West Seneca Rotary and members of the BNAC provide needed support. Volunteers encourage involvement by attending promotional events and being available to interact with visitors. The website (Burchfieldnac.org) and Facebook page keep the community informed. The Facebook page now has over **2000** followers. Local TV stations, newspapers and a variety of social media outlets have focused attention on the park and events. This publicity encourages people from all over Western New York to visit West Seneca and explore the wonders of the BNAC.

Parklands

The parklands are opened to visitors every day from dawn to dusk 12 months a year. Buffalo Spree named the Burchfield Nature and Art Center as one of the best family-friendly hiking areas. The Buffalo News noted the BNAC for the quality of the playground and natural areas. **What used to be a little known park, has become a highly rated and much enjoyed attraction.** Girl Scout Troop 31024 built a Stump Garden that provides a new place to explore the magic of nature. Eagle Scout projects were a great benefit to the park. Boy Scout Troop 618 converted a large area of garden into a Pollinator Meadow and the butterflies love it. The scouts also repaired the cemetery fence and the message board. Boy Scout Troop 409 installed bird houses throughout the park using a (hopefully) squirrel proof design. This project also included installation of QR code signs throughout the park. The QR codes can be used to access BNAC brochures, Bird Guide, Tree Guide, Map and Facebook page. Guests just have to aim their phone and click. Earth Day in cooperation with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper brought over 60 people together to clean and fix up the grounds. Volunteers and community service workers made garden improvements to make the gardens less labor intensive and more beautiful. Several school and church groups joined the effort by maintaining the gardens and clearing trails. People note that this is one of the cleanest and safest parks in the area. This is because our regular visitors (from dog walkers to Pokemon chasers) set an example by taking time to clean up litter and report concerns. Simple acts like this also help keep the woodlands healthy and provide a welcoming environment for wildlife.



Making Good Things Happen in West Seneca

The BNAC volunteers extend our gratitude to the West Seneca Building and Grounds staff who attend to the needs of the park and building. Their attention to the major upkeep of the park, gives the volunteers the opportunity to focus on enhancements to the public spaces and popular events. The West Seneca Town Board has been supportive of our efforts and listened to our concerns.

In 2010, the Friends of the BNAC began their mission to assure community access to art, nature, history and music. Despite the loss of the gallery, that mission continues and has been accomplished in more ways than we ever could have imagined. ***The BNAC volunteers and the community have “Come Together” to make good things happen in this peaceful little corner of West Seneca.***



2018 BNAC Volunteers