



**Friends of the Burchfield Nature & Art Center**  
**2019 Annual Report**  
October 2018 – September 2019

**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**

This year, volunteers donated over 4,070 hours to meet this mission. The BNAC volunteers assure this unique facility remains a dynamic asset and a point of pride for the Town of West Seneca.

***Parklands :***

The BNAC park was more beautiful than ever in Autumn of 2018. The colors were brilliant and people arrived from all over Western New York to enjoy the foliage. In February 2019, the park experienced significant ice jam flooding. Paths were washed out, gullies formed, trees fell, and erosion took a toll on creek banks. When the water receded, the park was covered in mud and debris. Many people took part in the park clean-up. From shoveling inches of mud out of the amphitheater to clearing dead limbs and litter, people who value BNAC stepped up to help get the park ready for spring and summer. The flood washed away weed barriers and mulch and distributed a variety of invasive weeds in the garden beds. Efforts to restore the gardens have begun, but could take years.



Volunteers work to keep the woodlands healthy and assure the wellbeing of the wildlife. White pine, maple and chestnut seedlings were planted this year in an effort to replace trees killed by emerald ash borer. These trees will eventually form a new canopy. The loss of ash trees lets more sunlight into the woodlands allowing young trees to grow quickly. The milkweed we have been nurturing has flourished this year encouraging butterflies to fill the park.

There is a constant need to educate the public about their interactions with nature. Using signage, pamphlets, direct interaction, and good example has helped assure our swimming, flying and scampering friends have a safe and healthy home. By coordinating our activities with other groups, gardens are tended, paths are raked, bird baths are cleaned, litter is picked up, dog clean-up bags are provided, and trees and shrubs are trimmed. Scout troops have added seating to the Seneca Nation Treaty area, posted poison ivy signs and added new bat boxes.

The number of visitors to the park increases every year. They come to explore the gardens, woodlands and creek. They come to learn about Charles Burchfield, the Seneca Nation and the Ebenezers. The BNAC volunteers enhance the visitor experience by providing pamphlets about the history of the area, butterfly brochures, bird guides, and tree guides. Families enjoy the scavenger hunt sheets that engage the kids in exploring beyond the playground. Volunteers are available to answer questions, interact with visitors and help coordinate activities in the park (weddings, field trips, and scout and school projects)



Of the 4,070 volunteers hours served this year, over 1,200 were spent caring for the park and ensuring that this unique urban forest remains a safe and beautiful place for all to experience and enjoy.

***Art:***

Though the gallery is still closed, art is an important element at the BNAC. Activities, events, and learning opportunities include a variety of artistic endeavors.

In November 2018, the Annual Photo Contest brightened up the concourse at the West Seneca Community Center. The photographers enjoyed coming together to share their hobby. Kenn Morgan offered photography lessons in the spring and fall. Woodcarvers Seminars returned to the center in June with a 5-day Beechnut carving seminar. Watercolor classes conducted by Pam Russel focused on Charles Burchfield's style of painting. Nancy Barlow gave two presentations on the life and times of Charles Burchfield. A presentation of Beach Glass



Treasures was given by Nancy Williams. Our yearly Poster Contest in partnership with Modern Disposal Services was themed “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.” The Exhibit was held at the West Seneca Community Center from in April. Frank O’Connor’s on-going art project in the park continues to be a major attraction.

**Events:**

In October 2018, a Tea Party was held at St. Johns’ Lutheran Church and featured Amy Burgess’ talk on “The History of the Common Button.” At the Holiday Open House, people enjoyed an afternoon playing



games, creating crafts, and engaging in conversation. Earth Day Park Clean up in May had over 50 volunteers cleaning the park. The Seneca Nation Treaty Commemoration Ceremony included a history lesson about the BNAC park area as it was over 150 years ago. Families came out in June for a chance to “Discover the Park” during the annual scavenger hunt. On July 24<sup>th</sup>,

hundreds of people filled the park for the Enchanted Forest event. They enjoyed the magic of nature with fairy house building, crafts, games and a Fairy Tea House full of treats. The Summer Concerts attracted many visitors for evenings of music in a beautiful setting. Music this year included Grandfathers Orchestra, Doug Yeoman’s Band, My Cousin Tone’ and Carnival Kids Steel Band. Wonderful Wednesdays, from July 17<sup>th</sup> to August 14<sup>th</sup>, provided a chance for families to explore art activities, play games, and make new friends.



**Community Outreach and Promotion:**

BNAC volunteers recognize that the park plays a major role in the community. We work to improve public awareness of the facility and its unique connection to nature, art and history.



To spread the word about the BNAC, the volunteers were at four West Seneca Farmer’s Markets, West Seneca Nite Out, the Health Fair held at the Community Center, the Nature and Science event and Taste of West Seneca. Presentations were given to the West Seneca Rotary Club, West Seneca Woman’s Club, and Villa Maria College. Local media, Internet recognition and our popular Facebook and Instagram pages help share information about the park and events at BNAC.

Our Chamber of Commerce membership facilitates networking and promotion. By partnering with other groups like Boy and Girl Scouts, Day Habilitation Programs, West Seneca Woman’s Club, Amana Garden Club, West Seneca Environmental Commission, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Pokemon players and others we are better able to meet our mission.

BNAC volunteers attend Town Board meetings to ensure we understand the workings of the town and the BNAC’s place in the town.

**Thanks:**

BNAC volunteers are grateful to those who have supported our efforts. The Town Highway Department and Building and Grounds staff have assured that the park is safe and beautiful for visitors and wildlife. The Youth and Recreation Department provides guidance and facilitates our interaction with Youth Engaged in Service. We appreciate the continued presence and involvement of the West Seneca Police Department.

We thank those who are Members of the BNAC for their continued loyalty. Gratitude is also extended to the WNY Federal Credit Union, the West Seneca Woman’s Club, Dolores Mendolia, the West Seneca Rotary, Gene and Nancy Hart and DMD Builders who have generously helped us to meet our goals.



**Most importantly we thank the thousands of people who visit, value, and respect, the Burchfield Nature and Art Center.**