

Here at the Castle Museum, there are several ways to volunteer; here are just a few of the exciting ways you can help.

Library and Archives

The Society is fortunate to have an extensive archival collection and a reference library. This year we have added a computer dedicated to the archival work that has strengthened our documentation of those collections. Work in this area of our collections aids not only in the preservation of the collections themselves, but also increases the accessibility of the information for researchers.

Volunteers in this area may:

Inventory materials and transfer the information to the Past Perfect computer database. [Past-Perfect is a really user-friendly computer program designed specifically for museums our size.]

Inventory photographic materials, scan the images and transfer the information to the database.

Outreach and On site Programs

As part of our mission to tell the story of the history and heritage of the people of Saginaw County, we seek opportunities for outreach throughout the entire county. These tasks are diverse and may include:

- Acting as docent for tour groups at the Museum
- Preparing materials for children's programs
- Assisting with the 'hands-on' activities and programs for children either onsite at the Museum or at an offsite location
- Pulling the Castle Museum float in a community parade
- Presenting a program at a local service club or community organization
- Developing and presenting a puppet show
- Putting mailing labels on promotional materials
- Helping at our Castle Museum Cookie Hut during Holidays in the Heart of the City
- Walking in the parades to distribute information and "prizes"
- Working at the Museum booth at Friday Night Live

Historical Research

The Society principally conducts two kinds of historical research, internal and external.

Internal research is for our own purposes: exhibitions, publications, public programs, identification of objects in the collections and other similar projects. It is usually a long-

term project (ranging from several weeks to several months, depending on the project and its deadlines) and may involve research at the Museum and at outside institutions/sources. Volunteers engaged in internal project research usually do not have set schedules but accommodate their research tasks with their own schedules. They are expected to provide informal periodical reports and updates.

External research is conducted for people who contact the museum for information related to the history of Saginaw County. These information requests usually are answered by the use of materials available at the museum. These tasks are assigned usually to the volunteers who work a regular schedule in the archives.

Exhibitions Work

There are many tasks connected with exhibitions for volunteers who like to be right in the middle of the action. These tasks include:

- Research and planning for development of storyline and design.
- Initial setup: This can include everything from painting and ironing to stapling, cutting and hammering.
- Installation of artifacts and labels: This includes preparation and mounting of text panels; label preparation and placement of artifacts. It can also include those little extras that really bring the exhibit to life - sound effects, footprints, greenery, furniture, et al.
- Lighting design, placement and adjustment.

De-installation is the process of dismantling an exhibition after its closing date. In a process that is as painstaking as the installation, artifacts are removed and returned either to lenders or to collections storage; text and props are removed and stored; the framework is dismantled and either stored or prepared for reuse in another exhibition.

Archeology

The Society is proud to operate the only county museum in the state with a full-time archaeologist on staff, an active archaeology program and a nationally recognized repository of archaeological objects relating to the Saginaw area. Much of our progress in this area is due to the hard work and countless hours of many volunteers. These volunteers help us in two different areas:

In the laboratory onsite at the Castle Museum, volunteers may assist in washing, sorting and labeling artifacts; recording additions to the library collection; organization of records; data entry of records.

After gaining some experience and training in the lab, volunteers may also have opportunities to participate in archaeological fieldwork including surveys and excavations.

Volunteers in education

There are different ways volunteers can help in the area of education; here are just a few of the ways:

- Going into the classrooms and help “teach” a lesson about Saginaw
- Help with tours at the Castle Museum
- Help with Scout days at the Castle
- Help with home school days at the Castle
- Help send out information to principals and teachers
- Help organize and manage traveling trunks
- Help with field trips
- Help with community events (pride parade, arson watch, etc.)