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Sisters Lexi Brinkman, left, and Lizzy Brinkman, enjoy the petting zoo at last year's Barlow Fair.

Barlow Fair a tradition

Old-fashioned family fun fills the four-day schedule

By Jackie Runion
 The Marietta Times
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Summer is officially over, but by tradition the Barlow Fair is ready to round off the summer fair and festival season beginning Thursday.

The 144th annual Barlow Fair kicks off for four days of

fun Thursday with a weekend packed full of fair favorites.

Billed as the State of Ohio's oldest independent fair, the Barlow Fair aims to continue to do what it does each year — to provide a family-friendly atmosphere that brings people back to what a traditional fair is.

Barlow Fair schedule
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"It's still one of the best fairs because it truly represents what fairs were," said Denise Tessum, a fair volunteer and former board member. "We're not commercial. Everyone that participates is from our local community."

Those in the community

that are used to attending can expect most of the staples from years past, with a few exceptions.



Brackenridge

"We're doing all the ground work now getting everything ready," said fair

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HISTORICAL ISLAND

Blennerhassett State Park has been entertaining, informing for 35 years

By Brett Dunlap
 Special to the Times

For more than 35 years, the Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park has showcased the history of the Mid-Ohio Valley and its people.

The park, which commemorated 35 years of operation on July 27, has been a place where the past has come to life through tours and programs centered around the reconstructed Blennerhassett Mansion on the island. The history of the area is presented through various programs at the Blennerhassett Museum of Regional History in downtown Parkersburg and the resources that have been available to the area in chronicling and presenting the area's history since the park opened.

From the Blennerhassetts and their mansion to the connection with Aaron Burr and his supposed treason, the island has always had a unique aura about it.

"There is no other place like it in the U.S.," said Ray Swick, historian for Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park and the museum.

Surrounding the island is the love story of Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett, the supposed Burr treason which Swick said more and more historians are questioning and the mansion itself, which had originally been recognized as one of the finest homes west of the Appalachian mountains.

In 1806, Harman became entangled in a mysterious military enterprise with Aaron Burr. As a result, President Thomas Jefferson accused both men of plotting treason in attempting to establish an empire in the Southwest, according to the



Reconstruction of the Blennerhassett Mansion was begun in 1984 with work well underway in 1985. Over the next few years parts of the mansion were worked on as money became available. On July 4, 1991, the final part, the interior of the central house was completed and opened.

Blennerhassett Island website. Some have said Burr plotted his supposed treason at the mansion.

"I think Blennerhassett Island has always been a cultural landmark for West Virginia," Swick said. "It put western Virginia on the international map by having the 'Burr Conspiracy' connected to it."

The park on the island is actually the third park to operate on the island," Swick said.

A park was on the island from 1886-1912 and was wiped out in the 1913 flood, Swick said. Another park, owned by Amos Kilgore Gordon Sr. was private and people needed permission to go there while it was on the island from 1935 to 1955.

Initial efforts in the 1950s tried to get Blennerhassett Island designated as a federal

park. It was a cattle and corn farm for a number of years in the mid-20th century. The island has always been a site for recreational activities and people have regularly called for the establishment of a park on the island since the late 19th century, Swick said.

"Our current park has lasted longer than any of the others," he said. "It was the only one that was state run. It is still going strong 35 years later."

The park officially opened July 27, 1980. In its first season, attendance was represented by all 50 states and a number of foreign countries.

The push to establish the current park came as a result of "Bicentennial Fever" which was sweeping across the nation in the 1970s as federal and other money was



The Blennerhassett Museum in Parkersburg.

available for areas to develop their historical sites.

State-funded archaeological excavations were begun on the island in 1973 and continued in 1974, resulting in the discovery of both prehistoric Indian burial grounds and villages and the original stone foundations of

the Blennerhassett Mansion which had burned 162 years before, Swick said.

A lease management contract was worked out in the 1970s for the establishment of a park with DuPont, who

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Armory's grand opening Nov. 11

By Janelle Patterson
 The Marietta Times
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With the grand opening scheduled for the conclusion of the Veterans Day parade Nov. 11, the ground floor of the Armory is expected to soon be occupied with information kiosks, nonprofit offices and community outreach organizations as renovations wrap up in the coming weeks.

"We've got this space, now let's use it creatively and educationally," said Armory, Inc. president Jane Tumas-Serna. "It will be a real asset to the community as one of the cornerstones of the revitalization district."

According to the city engineering department, contractors are expected to conclude ground floor renovations by Oct. 7. Following the final work on energizing the electricity within the building, the city will advertise for bids to

See ARMORY, Page A7

What's next

- Make A Difference Day - Oct. 24, Marietta College students will participate in a day of service across the city. Some students will be tasked with window and grounds cleaning at the Armory.

Source: Jane Tumas-Serna.

By the numbers

- Current Expenses to date of Phase 3 - armory ground floor renovation: \$558,455.12.
- Estimated Engineering, design and bidding for phase 4 - armory elevator: \$61,540.
- Engineering and design - \$61,540.
- Construction - \$268,850.
- Administrative - \$62,085.

Source: Marietta City Engineering Department.

Pope gets warm greeting in US

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
 WASHINGTON — Pope Francis arrived Tuesday on the first visit of his life to the United States, bringing his humble manner and his "church of the poor" to a rich and powerful nation polarized over economic inequality, immigration and equal justice.

According to a rare honor to the pontiff, President Barack Obama and his wife and daughters met Francis at the

bottom of the stairs on the red-carpeted tarmac at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland after the pope's chartered plane touched down from Cuba. Presidents usually make important visitors come to them at the White House.

Emerging from the plane to boisterous cheers from a crowd of hundreds, the smiling 78-year-old pontiff removed his skullcap in the windy weather and made his

way down the steps in his white robes.

He was welcomed by a military honor guard, chanting schoolchildren, politicians, and Roman Catholic clerics in black robes and vivid sashes of scarlet and purple. Joe Biden, the nation's first Catholic vice president, and his wife were among those who greeted him.

Eschewing a limousine, the pope climbed into the back of

a modest little Fiat family car and promptly rolled down the windows, enabling the cheering, whooping crowds to see him as his motorcade took him to the Vatican diplomatic mission in Washington, where he will stay while in the nation's capital. The choice of car was in keeping with his simple habits and his stand against consumerism.



The Associated Press
 Pope Francis, left, greets children as he is escorted by President Barack Obama, center, and first lady Michelle Obama, right, after arriving at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Tuesday. The pope is spending three days in Washington before heading to New York and Philadelphia. This is the pope's first visit to the United States.



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Kathryn Abicht, Manchester, Tenn.
 Patricia Aeberli, Marietta

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