

FEATURED

Visitors 'fall' for Everhart Museum in Scranton at Rakin' in the Fun Community Day

BY JIM LOCKWOOD STAFF WRITER

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Chloe Torres, 8, of Scranton, paints a pumpkin Saturday during the second annual Rakin' in the Fun Community Day at the Everhart Museum at Nay Aug Park in Scranton. CHRISTOPHER DOLAN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SCRANTON — Starr Ortiz of West Scranton returned Saturday to the Everhart Museum and brought her sister and nephew visiting from Florida.

While Ortiz previously visited the Everhart, her sister, Illyanna Santiago, and Santiago's son, Rodjer, were newcomers to the museum during its second annual Rakin' in the Fun Community Day.

"I thought it was awesome," Illyanna said of the museum.

The trio readily found something for each of them to enjoy.

The stegosaurus exhibit on the first floor was the favorite of Ortiz and her nephew, while his mother really liked the paintings and artworks on the second floor. Rodjer also got to have his face painted.

"This is cool and something free to do," Ortiz said. People can "come here and have some fun."

The free-admission event took place both inside the museum and outside under a large tent that offered cover on a gray, rainy day. Various fall-themed activities included arts and crafts, science demonstrations, live music and a free photo booth.

A crowd of at least 330 people had turned out, with over two hours still to go.

It was the museum's latest free-admission day, partly geared toward attracting families bringing their children.

"We want to be able to get families in the door and get them exposed to the programming we have," said Camille Dantone, the museum's community and family programs manager.

Dating to 1908, the Everhart is one of the oldest museums in the region and its only natural history, science and art museum.

Enduring as a cultural gem of Scranton, the museum this year marks its 115th anniversary. Community events throughout the year have had the theme "Everhart 115."

In May, the museum held a Community Day and honored its namesake, Dr. Isaiah Fawkes Everhart, with a "Founder's Gallery" exhibit that traced his life from childhood in Southeast Pennsylvania through his time as a Civil War medic to settling in Scranton and establishing the museum at Nay Aug Park.

A naturalist, Everhart studied natural history and the flora and fauna around him, particularly ornithology. Establishing the museum allowed him to share with the public his taxidermized birds, natural history specimens and more, which formed the institution's original collection.

Everhart also conceived the museum as a place that would serve its immediate city and all of Northeast Pennsylvania.

The museum's offerings now include a wide variety of paintings, sculptures, rocks and minerals, to name a few. Permanent galleries include Fossil, Rocks and Minerals, Bird, Regional Art, Fine Art and Dorflinger Glass. The museum also hosts and curates special temporary exhibitions that change regularly.

For more information, visit everhart-museum.org.

Contact the writer: jlockwood@scrantontimes.com 570-348-9100 x5185

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