

Immediate Release

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Introduction to Dulcimer Workshop

Garfield Farm Museum will host a Dulcimer workshop on Sunday, March 21st. During the workshop, musician Dona Benkert will give instruction on these unique stringed instruments. No experience is needed. Donna will have some instruments on hand for individuals that do not have their own. The 1:00pm session will cover mountain dulcimers and the 3:00pm session will cover hammered dulcimers.

The Mountain Dulcimer is often considered the only real American instrument. Visitors can discover the origins and evolution of this traditional, easy to play instrument during the 1:00pm session. After learning the basic right and left hand techniques, they can try their hands at playing some easy traditional melodies.

The Hammered Dulcimer is among the most beautiful sounding and oldest instruments. The fore-runner to the piano, it is a trapezoidal instrument played by striking the strings with hammers, much like climbing inside a piano to play. The 3:00pm session will explore its history, and visitors will learn basic playing techniques and a few easy tunes.

Benkert's instruction has been so effective and popular that 2 of the museum's board members have taken up the instrument and one has played with the Scantlin' Reunion, Benkert's traditional music band for over 15 years.

Reservations are required as the class size is limited. There will be a \$25 donation for each session and refreshments will be provided. Reservations are required and can be made by contacting the museum at (630) 584-8485 or info@garfieldfarm.org.

Dona is the owner of Folk-Lore Center music school in Warrenville, and founder of Warrenville Folk Music Society. She is an accomplished hammered and mountain dulcimer artist and winner of the 2003 Studs Terkel Humanities Award. She is on staff at the renowned Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago as well as DuPage Girl Scouts as a music and dance badge program facilitator. Her arrangements are rooted in the traditions of the British Isles, New England Country dance music, Appalachian fiddle tunes, and the music Irish harpist Turloch O_Carolan. She enjoys sharing her love for traditional music and helping to preserve our musical heritage.

Garfield Farm Museum is located 5 miles west of Geneva, IL, off of Illinois Rt. 38 on Garfield Road. Garfield Farm is a former historically intact 1840s prairie farmstead and teamster inn that is being restored as a working 1840s farm.