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Sensory Saturday Family Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum on December 15

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum's new Sensory Saturday series offers a family day full of animal-themed crafts, activities, and silly songs on December 15. Families with children on the autism spectrum are invited to enjoy a family concert by BenJammin at 11 a.m., planetarium shows at lower volumes at 12 p.m. and 1 p.m., interactive story times from 1 to 3 p.m., and hands-on activities and crafts from 1 to 4 p.m. This free program is designed for families with children on the autism spectrum but is open to all visitors.

Benjamin Gauthier, better known as BenJammin, has been performing throughout southwest Michigan for more than ten years. An accomplished musician able to play a variety of genres, from cowboy style to rock and roll and opera, BenJammin allows children in the audience to guide the performance. His interactive, energetic style will have children dancing in the aisles and playing with him on stage. Join in for some of his sillier songs, such as The Potty Dance and I Don't Wanna Get Out of Bed, which will have the whole audience laughing at the funny side of human nature.

Hear silly animal stories in the Museum's second floor ThinkTank every half hour from 1 to 3 p.m. Guests may choose to be part of the story using puppets, interactive sounds, and repetitive choruses. Create a variety of animal crafts related to the stories. Animal puzzles, games, and activities will also be available in the second floor Innovation Lab from 1 to 4 p.m.

The 12 p.m. planetarium show, In My Backyard, and the 1 p.m. show, Season of Light, will be shown at a lower volume. Visit kalamazoomuseum.org for a description of other shows throughout the day, played at normal volume. Noise-canceling headphones are available for use at all shows. Tickets for the planetarium are \$3 per person.

The Museum offers sensory tools for use in the galleries, planetarium, and Theater. The Museum has a goal sheet with stickers for positive reinforcement, as well as a printed Museum guide to prepare for a visit. Stop by the information table to see what is available, and let Museum staff know which tools are most helpful.

Additional Sensory Saturday programs include family days on February 16 and April 20 and adult lectures on January 19 and March 16. Go to kalamazoomuseum.org to learn more about this series and tools available to make family visits successful.

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees.