



# New Windsor Community Day is much more than a one-day event

By Matt Veronesi and  
Patrick Mangan

**T**his year's New Windsor Community Day is the 11th annual event and it keeps growing every year.

Last year 45,000 people walked around Kristi Babcock Memorial Park enjoying so much family fun entertainment and attractions as well as delicious food and drink. Families are such an important part of all of our lives and we in New Windsor care about bringing families together. If you are looking for a fun filled affordable family day there is not a better option than New Windsor Day Community Day. Parking, admission, and all attractions are free! With entertainment for all ages and 200 vendors of all types including food vendors. A beer and wine tent for the adults and an amazing fireworks show to end the night.

And this is all made possible because of our sponsors. Families come from all over to go to Community Day including from other states. The best part of New Windsor Community Day is that it is a whole lot bigger than a one-day event. When Community Day is said and done and all of our expenses are paid, there is money left over. And that money does not go into the general fund, it goes right back towards supporting community events.

The New Windsor Special Events Committee which oversees New Windsor Community Day is comprised of Pat Mullarkey, Susan Scheible, Debbie Green, Lenore Kissel, Ray Sharo, Patrick Mangan and Matt Veronesi. The Committee comes up with ideas for new events and how we can support existing town events with funds from Community Day.

This year alone the Committee has given \$10,000 towards the Town of New Windsor Nancy Pullar Summer Concert Series to pay for all of the bands of the eight concert series. We have given \$2,500 to the Memorial Day Parade to pay for the Marching Bands, \$2,500

towards our Summer Camp Program for extras for the campers like special guests including magicians, musicians, jugglers, superheroes, etc. Some of the money goes towards making existing events better such as the Christmas Tree Lighting, the Hanukkah Menorah Lighting, the Easter Egg Hunt, the Halloween Party etc.

As for new things for this season, the committee purchased a huge inflatable movie screen and projector allowing us to launch the all new Friday Night Flix Movie in the Park Series which is a six movie series being held at Kristi Babcock Memorial Park. And for the first time this year the Special Events Committee awarded two scholarships to High School students from New Windsor who have had positive impacts on our community. The scholarships were created in memory of former Town Councilwoman and co-founder of New Windsor Community Day Sue Weyant, and were given to Deeva Modhwadiva who received \$1,000, and Mohamed Es-Sabir who received \$750. Both students who attended Newburgh Free Academy and graduated in June were presented the scholarships by Deputy Town Supervisor and New Windsor Community Day Co-Founder Pat Mullarkey at the schools end of year scholarship program.

So as New Windsor Community Day continues to grow and we continue to have support from our sponsors, the New Windsor Special Events Committee will continue to make Community Day all about bringing families together by giving back to the community.

We hope everyone has a great time this year, and we thank all of our sponsors including our Premier \$5,000 sponsors Knox Village Apartments, McGoey, Hauser, & Edsall Consulting Engineers, Tool and Parties By Durant's, Gentech LTD, and Naninni & Callahan Excavating.

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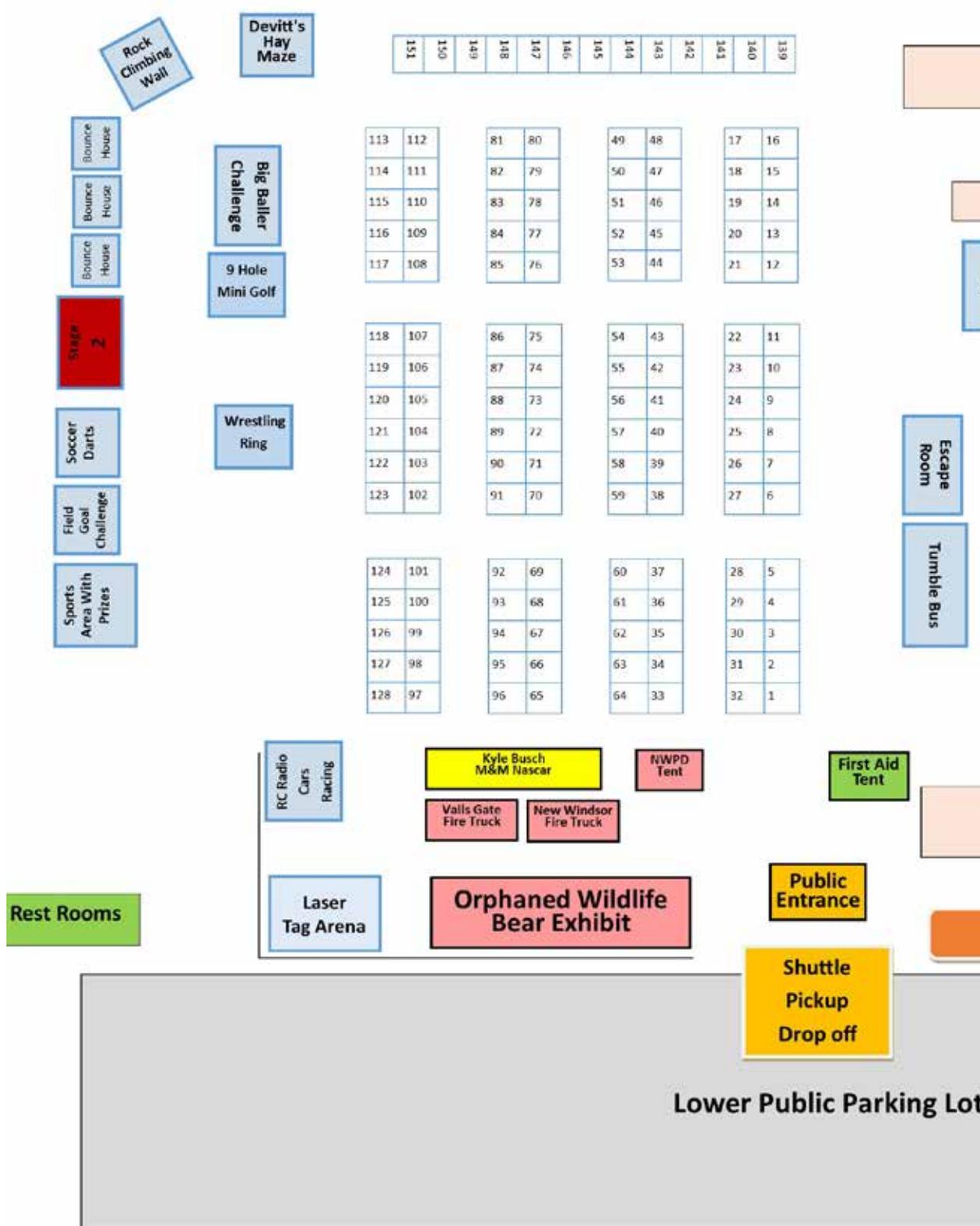


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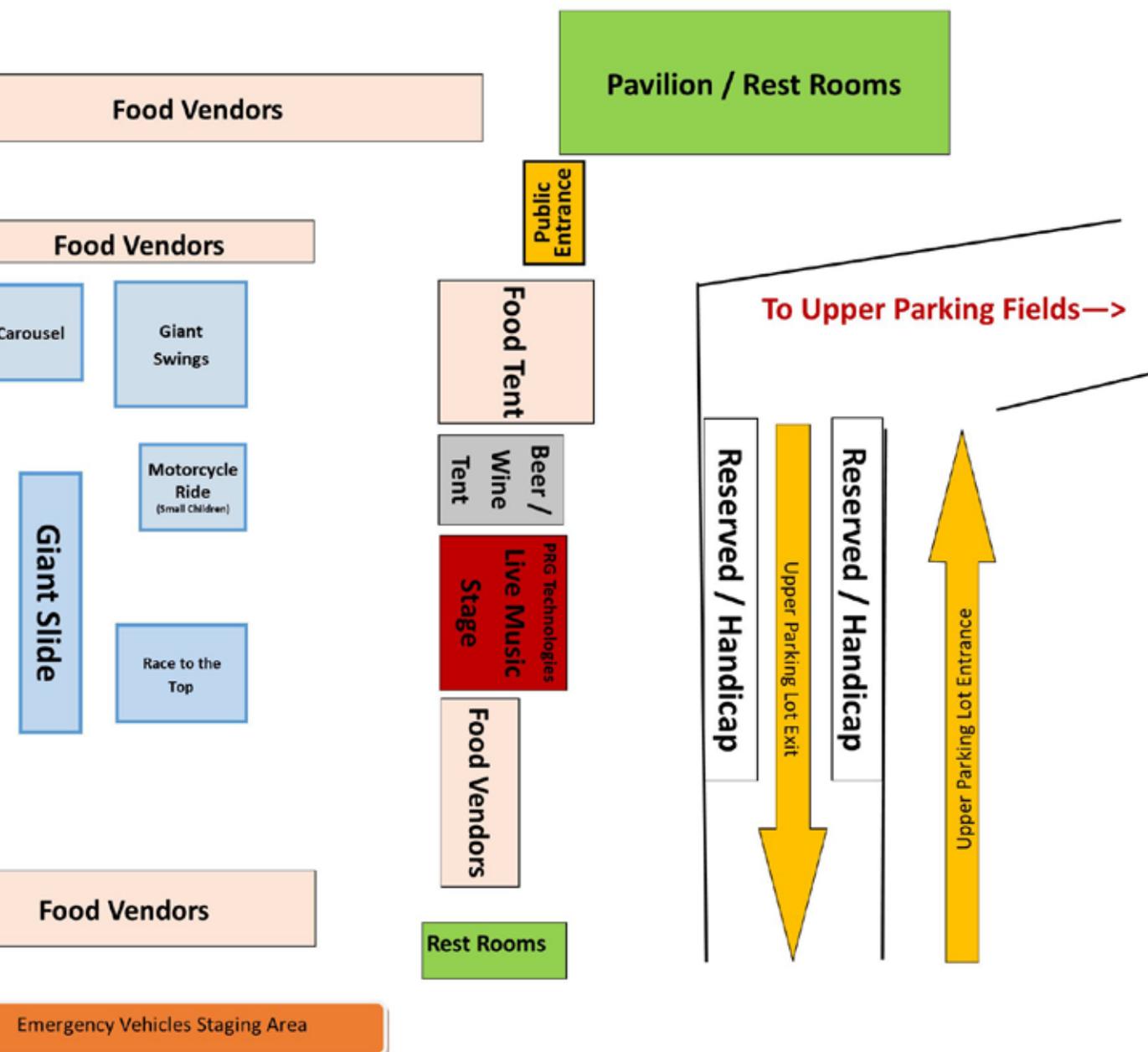
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# Orphaned Wildlife Center returns

By Matt Veronesi and  
Patrick Mangan

**W**e are very excited to once again have the Orphaned Wildlife Center from Otisville, NY at New Windsor Community Day this year.

The Orphaned Wildlife Center is run by Jim and Susan Kowalczyk whose mission is to provide safety and nurturing love to animals that are truly orphaned and to prepare them to be returned to a life in the wild. One of the main animals they help are bears. Jim and Susan have 10 bears of varying species living on their property. Some of the bears are part of their educational program called "Bear Country" where they have a big tractor trailer that has a walk through section where you can get up close with the bears and learn all about them. This year will be the third year having Bear Country at Community Day and it is definitely one of our most popular attractions.

We have seen people come from as far away as Maine come to New Windsor Community Day just to see the bears.

The previous two years we have

had the Orphaned Wildlife Center at Community Day there has been some negative feedback on social media and we have received some phone calls and emails from a few people saying that they are outraged that these bears are in captivity and are being used for purposes other than what they do in their natural habitat. Let us make one thing very clear there is nothing further from the truth. What Jim and Susan do for these bears and the other orphaned animals that they care for such as baby squirrels, baby deer, and even baby possums is truly an amazing thing. These animals would not have survived if Jim and Susan did not take them in.

The animals that are able to be released back to the wild are, and the ones that are not able to become part of Jim and Susan's family. They care about these animals like they are their children. None of the animals are taught tricks or to do anything. Jim and Susan live on a 100 acre property in Otisville not far from Middletown.

Most of their bears are rescued as



Matt Veronesi with Jimbo.



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cubs. They have Kodiak Brown Bears, Syrian Bears, and Black Bears. One of their bears, Frankie, a black bear, was hit by a car in 2012 and had to have his leg completely rebuilt. He has made a full recovery and is doing great.

Susan has worked with bears all of her life. Her father Albert Rix was a well-known circus veteran from Germany who raised Syrian Brown Bears. Jim who met Susan in 1992 and they married in 1995 got into bears once they met. Jim is a retired corrections officer who currently works in excavating.

Jim said "the bears are like our children that is how much we love them, and they give a lot back to you too. They love you just as much."

According to Jim and Susan, out of all of their life's experiences, the time that they have spent in the company of their bears has been the most rewarding. Their unique relationship with them is based on endless trust and caring. And this relationship can also lead to heartache when one of the animals they are caring for gets sick and passes away.

In March of 2018 they lost Jimbo a Kodiak bear, who was 24 years old, to liver cancer. Jimbo had lived with Jim and Susan since they rescued him as a cub.

Then in late June they lost another bear named Maddy to cancer as well. Both of these loses and the loss of three bears in previous years all to cancer really devastated Jim and Susan. To them they were losing one of their children.

What Jim and Susan do for these bears and for the other orphaned animals they have on their property is truly a great thing and takes very special people. They have very big hearts and what they do costs a lot of money. Though they have been licensed wildlife rehabilitators since 1996 they just became a not for profit 501(c)(3) in 2015 which means people can make tax deductible donations which helps Jim and Susan care for so many animals. For years they have spent countless dollars caring for these wild animals on their own out of the goodness of their hearts. The bears feast on 30 pounds of food a day including a mix of meat, pet food, fruit, and an occasional marshmallow as a treat. Imagine trying to feed 10 of these bears and other animals.

If you would like to meet Jim and Susan and some of their bears up close come out to New Windsor Community Day on Saturday August 24th at Kristi Babcock Memorial Park from 10am to 9pm and say hi. They would love to meet you!

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