

EagleFest to offer more than eagles

Music, food trucks will accompany birds

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TEATOWN - With a red-tailed hawk named Blaze on hand, officials said Wednesday that next month's EagleFest will provide more than a chance to see birds.

Along with live music, including by Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Tom Chapin, the 13th annual EagleFest held Feb. 11 at Croton Point Park will, for the first time, have a screening of the documentary "The Eagle Huntress." It follows a Mongolian girl who is the first female in her tribe's 1,000-year history to train an eagle to hunt for food and fur. Screenings will be at 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. at Pace University's Wilcox Hall in nearby Pleasantville.

Food trucks are another addition. An EagleFest food court will include Walter's Hot Dog Stand, Melt Mobile — known for its variety of grilled cheeses — and souvlaki, pizza and taco trucks.

Veterans, including those at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital in Montrose, will this year be able to attend EagleFest for free with a guest each. To do so, veterans must first contact state Sen. Terrence Murphy's office to make arrangements. There will also be trained handlers



MARK VERGARI/THE JOURNAL NEWS

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino, Kevin Carter, executive director of Teatown Lake Reservation, and state Sen. Terrence Murphy chat as Lisa Kelly, Teatown's animal-care supervisor, holds Blaze, a red-tailed hawk.

If you go

EagleFest is Feb. 11, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pre-sale tickets are available now at www.teatown.org/events/eaglefest. People can also buy tickets at the event. Pre-sale tickets are \$17 for adults and \$10 for children. Day-of tickets are \$22 for adults and \$12 for children.

showing their birds of prey, including eagles, falcons, hawks and owls. And there will be bus tours in which educators from Teatown Lake Reservation in Yorktown take people to viewing sites along the Hudson River where eagle experts will be on hand with scopes for spotting the birds in the wild. There are also bird walks throughout the day.

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino and Murphy were among officials who announced

the particulars Wednesday at the 1,000-acre Teatown reservation.

"Take your family," Astorino said, "because you get to see the power of these birds."

The event "celebrates the return of the majestic bald eagle to the Hudson River," said Kevin Carter, executive director of Teatown, which has a full schedule of events online.

Carter said free shuttle buses will take people from the Croton-Harmon train station to Croton

Point Park. Metro-North Railroad will have train cars featuring on-board naturalists who will point out various kinds of birds to riders. Astorino said that, at the 500-acre Croton Point Park, some 100 acres of grassland are going to be restored with invasive plants removed. That can improve the chances eagles and other migratory birds come to that hilltop, a kind of food station for them. Over the summer, Astorino and Murphy announced that \$500,000 in state money will be used to restore the more than 100-acre meadowland by ridding it of invasive plants that choke off the food that draws the raptors.

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