

# History, nature center launches outreach, education program

Naomi Prioleau [nprioleau@marshallnewsmessenger.com](mailto:nprioleau@marshallnewsmessenger.com) | Posted: Sunday, September 8, 2013 4:00 am

To launch its outreach and education program, Port Jefferson History & Nature Center will hold a three day event at the end of the month to commemorate National Public Lands Day called “WILD Daze.”

From Thursday Sept. 26 to Saturday Sept. 28 at Collins Academy, Jefferson Transportation and Visitor Center and the new river walk park in Jefferson, visitors will have the chance to partake in volunteer opportunities, native gardening and wildlife workshops and presentations with natural science and history experts.

Gary Endsley, secondary program and maintenance director, said he thinks the large birds will be a hit and that the audience will take a liking to them.

“The big birds will be here for two days of student and public presentations, flight demonstrations and static displays that will leave the audience thrilled and amazed,” he said. “We will start our celebration of National Public Lands Day with a ‘Raptors Revealed’ presentation and flight demonstration on Thursday and end it three days later by releasing a rehabilitated owl or hawk back to nature. Being predators, raptors sit at the top of the food chain, are highly adapted to their habitat and food sources, and provide a great context for teaching biology content. Besides, birds are target beneficiaries of the City’s habitat restoration project.”

All the activities during these three days will lead up to the dedication of the new park. Endsley said it was important that the public come out so they could see what Port Jefferson had to offer to them.

“This is a three day information outreach build up to the dedication and opening, but it’s also a display of the type and quality and programming that Port Jefferson History & Nature Center is going to deliver to this region of the state,” he said.



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Port Jefferson History & Nature Center provides educational opportunities to students to learn about different things in the environment.

Activities will begin at 10 a.m. on Thursday and will include natural science and cultural history presentations, demonstrations and display. Friday's events will have volunteer opportunities to install native plantings and remove invasive plant species beginning at 9 a.m. and will also include a flight demonstrations, a workshop about installation and maintenance of native wildlife gardens and a volunteer appreciation luncheon.

To wrap things up on Saturday, there will be a friends and family nature walk, an announcement of a new project, the park dedication ceremony and the raptor release.

Endsley said he hopes residents will take advantage of the weekend as it will provide them the chance to broaden their horizons in terms of nature and its important role in the city.

“All this is driven by desire to help the community and to capture the extraordinary learning opportunities that it presents.”