

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**Traditional Favorites and New Arrivals
at Mill Neck's Fall Harvest Festival**

Visitors to the Mill Neck Family's Fall Harvest Festival on Columbus Day weekend found plenty of returning favorites and some new arrivals too. Thousands turned out on the two days devoted to the event that helps support Mill Neck's organizations.

The picturesque Mill Neck campus, where the annual Festival is held, greeted visitors with autumn color. There was much to see and do, and naturally, a variety of foods to choose from. Beef, turkey and veggie burgers were among the grilled items, as well as bratwurst and roasted corn, a Festival favorite. Specialty cheeses, artisanal breads, pies and fudge were available too. And the long lines at The Pickle People stand proved just how crowd-pleasing those homemade pickles are!

Seeing the abundance of apple booths, it's understandable why the Festival is also called "Apple Fest." The varieties were especially welcome after a tough growing season for the fruit last year. Visitors were particularly happy that the popular Honey Crisp returned; the apple selling out by the end of the weekend.

While perennial favorites are part of the Festival's fabric, some new additions were welcomed this year, including The Clipper Ship Tea Company showcasing several of their custom-blended loose teas and specialty honey varieties. Owner Melissa Wawrzonek and Bryan Rosenbauer of the Northport-based shop also provided tastings of seasonal blends. Over in another area, West Virginia woodturner Ervin Jones had a continual audience. Using a lathe, he demonstrated the transformation of rectangular wood blocks into the petite, polished apples created especially for the Festival.

A steady stream of children explored the pumpkin patch while lots of kids kept the face painters at Agostino Arts busy, resulting in some very creative canvases on the youngsters' faces.

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Other kids created their own masterpieces over at the Sand Art by Deaf Connection booth, as more bounced around the inflatables set up by Gooseberry Amusements.

Throughout the weekend, over 20 vendors, including Red Fish Toys, The Craft Closet, and Massapequa ASL Club among them, displayed their merchandise. Visitors could choose from handcrafted jewelry, sign language t-shirts, knitwear and other crafts. On Saturday, some 90 people took advantage of free hearing screenings offered by the testing van graciously provided by the Town of Oyster Bay. Rounding out the weekend was the Festival's 50/50 drawing. Congratulations to this year's winner, local resident William Catacosinos!

The Festival once again brought together Mill Neck Manor alumni who, along with dozens of Deaf visitors, attend the event each year. The Festival serves as a homecoming of sorts, with the heart of the Long Island Deaf community looking forward to the annual gathering.

The Festival owes its continual success to the support of civic groups, local businesses, students, alumni and parents. The Mill Neck Family is grateful to them all, among them this year's sponsors: County Fair Air Conditioning (Gala Sponsors); A & Z Pharmaceutical Inc.; Hank and Celeste Pinkerton and Family (Cortland Sponsors); Joseph and Claire DiBartolo (McIntosh Sponsors); Langistics Networks, Inc. (Greening Sponsors). Many thanks also to our generous supporters: Joseph and Ann DiBartolo; Long Island Farmers; North Shore Golf Car, Inc.; Mill Neck Manor Alumni Association; Shoprite of Plainview; Thrivent Financial for Lutherans; United Apple Sales.

Mill Neck is extremely appreciative for the over 300 volunteers who signed up to lend a hand, many returning year after year. Without these dedicated folks, the Festival simply would not be possible. At the October 5 Volunteer Breakfast, the Mill Neck Family recognized the efforts of the volunteers, as well as our 2013 honorees – Mill Neck's own amazing grounds crew: Carlos Almazan, Eugene Bakke, Billy Eboli, Tim Gallart, Dave Harland and Miguel Ramirez.

Proceeds from the Festival will benefit the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, which includes Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf, the Mill Neck Manor Early Childhood Center and Mill Neck Services for Deaf Adults. The Mill Neck Family of Organizations is dedicated to serving individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing and/or have other special needs through educational, vocational and spiritual programs and services. For more information about any of its programs, please call 516-922-4100 or visit <http://www.millneck.org>. "Like" Mill Neck on Facebook at www.facebook.com/millneck

Photo Captions:

1. Without our dedicated volunteers, Apple Fest would not be possible.
2. This young lady had lots of apples to choose from this year.
3. Showcasing the creative work of Agostino Arts.
4. Gunner gets a helping hand from his grandma, volunteer Carol Koenig, Executive Assistant at Mill Neck.
5. This fellow needed a hand hauling his harvest.
6. The Clipper Ship Tea Co. joined the Fall Harvest Festival this year.
7. Ervin Jones traveled from West Virginia to demonstrate his woodturning art.

8. Hanging out in the pumpkin patch.

9. Mill Neck Manor Alumni Jean Gullo Viscardi and Laura Rosenberg at the hamburger booth.

10. Mill Neck Manor students and Doreen Bobick (2nd from left), teacher assistant at Mill Neck helped out at the soda booth.

11. At the Volunteer Breakfast, the Mill Neck grounds crew, (from left) Eugene Bakke, Tim Gallart, Miguel Ramirez, Dave Harland, Carlos Almazan and Billy Eboli, were recognized as the 2013 honorees. Congratulating them is Bill Charon, Mill Neck's Financial Director and Interim CEO, at right.

12. Looks like three satisfied customers!

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