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## **HARVEST FESTIVAL CONTINUES WITH THE ANNUAL ALPACA FESTIVAL THIS SUNDAY!**

BETHEL, NY (September 2, 2009) – The Harvest Festival at Bethel Woods continues with its 9th annual Alpaca festival this Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. The Alpaca Festival will include exhibits that feature live alpacas and explain the history of alpaca farming, while spinners and weavers demonstrate how the fiber is made. The event will also include wine tasting and, an alpaca obstacle course. A boutique will offer scarves, shawls, gloves, hats, jackets, dresses, skirts, sweaters and teddy bears.

This year marks the eleventh anniversary of the Harvest Festival at Bethel Woods, an annual event celebrating the bounty, talent, and beauty of Sullivan County and surrounding areas. Over the years, the festival has grown from a small farmer's market with a handful of vendors and a few guest musicians, to a full festival featuring close to 100 vendors each week as part of the farmer's market, craft village and festival food areas. The Festival also presents artist demos, corn & hay mazes, pony rides, art and education programs, a Woodstock and '60s themed table auction, "gathering of the scarecrows" and more.

A sense of community is reflected throughout the Harvest Festival. The corn and hay mazes are operated each week by volunteer organizations that are able to benefit from this fundraising opportunity as well as the chance to share information about their group and possibly recruit new volunteers. The Children's Area features various activities each week that are presented by community organizations that also have the opportunity to educate others about their mission.

Activities held in the Children's Area this week will include a fiber art activity with Matt Sherman, face painting with Girl Scout Troop 731, a peace pole project with The Museum at Bethel Woods Education Manager, Margaret Hughes and a demonstration performance by The Janice Center. The Corn and Hay Mazes will be operated by, and proceeds will benefit Girl Scout Troop 777 and Girl Scout Troop 731. The Sullivan County SPCA will also be on site with adoptable dogs.

The Peace Pole Project with Margaret Hughes, Museum Education Manager, will engage children in decorating small banners with their wish for world peace. The banners will be hung on the peace pole and will decorate the Children's Area for the rest of Harvest Festival.

The Janice Center will provide demonstration classes for "Music Together" program, a national program which introduces the joy of music to children ages 0-5years. They will also promote the arts and music in general. They will conduct three demonstrations at 11:30am, 1:30pm and 2:30pm.

Don't miss live folk music by Erin & John Slaver at 11:30am and Somerville at 1:00pm. Barry Lewis and Alan Lewis will be at the festival signing their books - *From Brooklyn to Bucolic* and *I Grew Up on A Farm*, respectively.

This year a Table Auction of handcrafted oak tables will benefit community and children's programming. The auction takes place for the duration of the Festival, ending Columbus Day Weekend. The tables which will be on display each week, were handcrafted of oak by Catskill Outdoor Furniture and are uniquely decorated by area artists with themes from the '60s and the Woodstock Festival. Many of these artists also participated in the bench auction last year.

The Harvest Festival at Bethel Woods occurs every Sunday from 11am - 4pm, August 30 through Columbus Day weekend, rain or shine. Located approximately 90 minutes from New York City at the site of the 1969 Woodstock festival in Bethel, NY, Bethel Woods is the perfect day trip or weekend getaway. Harvest Festival attendees can also add a ticket for The Museum at Bethel Woods, which explores the '60s and Woodstock, and make a full day of their visit. Take the free museum shuttle bus between the museum and the Harvest Festival, from 12:00 – 5:00.

A \$2.00 per car parking fee has been implemented to help offset costs to operate the Festival, and permits Bethel Woods to continue to present this important quality community event. Admission to the Festival is FREE.

The Harvest Festival schedule is as follows, for more information please visit [www.BethelWoodsCenter.org](http://www.BethelWoodsCenter.org)

**September 13 – Taste of Sullivan – A Bicentennial Event**

**September 20 – Earth Day in Autumn**

**September 27 – Mountain Music Festival**

**October 4 – Chili Day in October**

**October 11 – Rustic Home Craft Festival**

**About The Harvest Festival at Bethel Woods:**

The Harvest Festival is one of several programs that reflect the commitment to community that serves as the fundamental mission of the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts. The festival reflects our mission to support sustainability and continued regional economic development through this annual commitment to provide a venue for our local farmers, artisans, community organizations and businesses. A visit to the Festival offers the opportunity for people to gather and form relationships in ways that are absent from traditional retail/buyer transactions. We connect local and regional growers and artisans with the community and provide an opportunity for shoppers to buy local and support a regional economy. The benefit of being able to interact with the hard working families who produce and harvest their food and the thrill of watching artisans create their wares keeps Festival goers coming back week after week; year after year. The grown and harvested food and crafted items are acts of personal inspiration, and the festival offers visitors the opportunity to learn more about this process and to better appreciate and understand its value.