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Thursday, Sept. 27, 2007

Core values

Apple Festival offers a little bite for everyone

by Nicole Belanger |

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Sled dogs, large birds of prey and raptor displays aren't the usual suspects at an old-fashioned apple festival, but the annual Piney Run Park festival isn't your typical event.

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With live music, animals, games and food, the festival offers a little bit of something for everyone.

"It's a really fun family event," said organizer Kelly Vogelpohl.

Scheduled from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday at Sykesville's Piney Run Park and Nature Center, the festival has been offered for more than 20 years as a way to raise money for the center.

Funds go to the Piney Run Recreation Council, an organization that supports the park and nature center through various programs.

Each year around 3,000 visitors come out to enjoy fresh baked apple dumplings and warm cider, and to paint pumpkins, make scarecrows and enjoy hay wagon rides.

Throughout the festival, families can "enjoy a variety of good old-fashioned family fun in autumn's blaze of color," said Vogelpohl in a press release.

New this year is an appearance by the Maryland Sled Dog Adventures out of Baltimore who will offer rides and demonstrations. With the warmer weather, their sleds will have wheels rather than the traditional sled runs, said Vogelpohl.

The Nature Center staff will also unveil a birds of prey demonstration, as well as live raptors to delight children and adults.

Music will be provided by the Martin Family String Band, while unique dance steps come courtesy of The Rock Candy Cloggers.

Revolving around fiddling sisters Emily, Melissa and Christy, the Martin Family String Band also includes dad and brother on guitars, mom on bass and their youngest brother joining in on a fiddle. Hailing from Pennsylvania, the band plays traditional Irish and American music and offer

Irish dance step routines.



Gazette File Photos

Folks take a wagon ride down to the nature center at last year's Piney Run Apple Festival.



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A harpist will also play soothing music in the woods during the festival, Vogelpohl said.

In addition to the music, the festival also welcomes artisans who will offer up crafts for sale, raffles, puppet shows and old-time games.

Hungry patrons can enjoy bratwursts, while satisfying a sweet tooth with apple dumplings, apple cider, and apple fritters, all available for sale.

The Piney Run Nature Center, which includes year-round exhibits, offers programs throughout the year for people of all ages.

Piney Run Apple Festival

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday

Where: Piney Run Park and Nature Center, 30 Martz Road, Sykesville

Admission: \$5 per carload for Carroll County residents, \$8 for non-Carroll County residents

For information: 410-795-6043



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