



## First-ever Spring Farm Festival readies in Ocean View

By Ryan Saxton  
Staff Reporter

This Memorial Day weekend, Hi Point Farm in Ocean View is introducing an event to kick off the summer season. Diane Turner, owner and caretaker of the property situated down Cedar Neck Road, is presenting the first-ever Spring Farm Festival. The event will take place from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturday, May 23, with live music, food and refreshments, arts and crafts vendors and plenty of fun for the whole family.

"We're really excited to bring something like this to the community," said Turner, who acquired the land through her late boyfriend's mother, Mary Lighthipe, one of the last descendants of the James family. Hi Point Farm was part of the property that also included what is now James Farm Ecological Preserve, a 150-acre plot of land overlooking the Indian River Bay that has been protected and maintained to conserve the wildlife in the area.

Tickets for the May 23 event cost \$17 for adults and \$10 for kids. Children 5 or younger are admitted free of charge. Proceeds raised from the benefit will help out a variety of organizations, including Summer Winds Horse Rescue and the Delaware Special Olympics.

"We work closely with Summer Winds," noted Turner. In fact, there are a number of rescued animals that reside on the property, from horses and miniature horses to goats and dogs.

"The James family has really done a wonderful thing for Sussex County," said Bev Booth, who volunteers her time on the farm. "It's amazing what these people did. You can drive down the road and get a feel for the way things used to be. It's great what Diane has been doing here. She and I share the same love of horses and animals, and that's what brought me here."

The Spring Farm Festival will welcome award-winning steel drum band Plenty Problems and others. Musicians interested in participating are being encouraged to contact Turner and come by.

Formerly in the restaurant and catering industry herself, Turner knows exactly what it takes to please her guests.

"We're going to have a silent auction, dunking tank, yard-sale vendors and a lot more," she said. There's even a hot-air balloon ride in the works. "We've come up with a lot of great ideas," said Turner, "and even if we don't have them on Memorial Day weekend, we definitely want to continue with a summer series, hosting an event once a month, through the fall."

Due to the beautiful scenic view, the property has played as a host to a number of parties, including wedding receptions.

"There aren't a whole lot of events around here that can include the entire family like this," said Booth. "We're looking to let people have a good time and give back to the community."

In addition to the summer series, the Spring Farm Festival also celebrates the establishment of High Point Farm as a foundation, aimed at funding local charities and organizations in area.



*Coastal Point • Ryan Saxton*

**Hi Point Farm in Ocean View will host the first-ever Spring Farm Festival on Saturday, May 23. The event will feature live music, food and refreshments, arts and crafts vendors and fun for the family.**



*Coastal Point • Jesse Pryor*

**The Indian River Bay makes for a nice view from Hi Point Farm.**

"We're trying to preserve the mission that the James family started here," said Turner. "Long after I'm gone, it would be nice to have a place the county could hold fundraisers and support itself."

Turner hopes to use some of the proceeds from the upcoming event to assemble a few more shelters for rescued horses that are brought to the farm.

"We're getting a lot of calls from people looking to bring their horses from the Midwest, where the storms are leaving a lot of them stranded," she said. "A lot of people don't realize that in disasters and severe weather like they're having out there, animals suffer more than us."

Donations are being sought from local businesses for support towards the new shelters, as well as those wishing to participate in the Spring Farm Festival.

"We really want artisans and craftsmen to get involved," said Booth.

"It's been busy trying to get everything organized," added Turner, "but we think this will be a great way to start up the season. Once the tents go up, it really dresses up the land. We're going to have a lot of fun with this."

For more information about Hi Point Farm, visit [www.hipointfarm.com](http://www.hipointfarm.com) online. For additional information about the Spring Farm Festival, including donations of auction items, vending availability for area businesses, and volunteering to help set up, call (302) 539-7168 or e-mail Diane at [lunatuna@mchsi.com](mailto:lunatuna@mchsi.com). Hi Point Farm is located at 29556 Cedar Neck Road in Ocean View, just past the entrance to James Farm Ecological Preserve.