Superintendent Losquadro Announces Summer Programs At the Holtsville Ecology Site and Safety Town
posted on 5/16/2016 1:40:00 PM

Holtsville, NY – Superintendent of Highways Daniel P. Losquadro is announcing the opening of registration for children and teen summer programs at the Holtsville Ecology Site & Animal Preserve, as well as Safety Town.

Visitors to the Ecology Site & Animal Preserve are invited to walk through the Info Center, greenhouses and animal preserve, home to more than 100 injured or non-releasable wild and farm animals, free of charge (parking fees do apply). Beginning May 28 through Sept. 25, the animals, ranging from peacocks and bobcats to bears and American bald eagles, are available for viewing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m, seven days a week.

For those interested in learning more about the animals who reside at the Ecology Site, tours are available, including self-guided, guided, behind-the-scenes, and group tours. In addition, from July 6 through Aug. 31, tour guides are available every other Wednesday at 11 a.m. to take visitors on a guided tour; cost is $5 per person. Call 631-758-9664 to schedule any other tours.

The Ecology Site and its staff also host several fun and educational summer programs, including “A Day with an Animal Caretaker” for children entering 4th through 6th grade. Participants are invited to spend time with the caretakers as they feed and care for the animals on either Tuesday, July 19, or Tuesday, August 9, from 8 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.; cost is $50 per child.

On Thursday, July 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., children entering 2nd through 6th grade can attend “Flight of the Butterflies” to learn about the lifecycle of a butterfly and create a butterfly/caterpillar craft; cost is $10 per child.

Children interested in learning about the American bald eagles, falcons, red-tailed hawks, owls and kestrels can attend “Predator Birds” on Thursday, July 28, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. The cost for this class, for children entering 2nd through 6th grade, is $10 per child and will include making an owl planter to take home (participants are asked to bring an empty vegetable can).

“Honey & Pooh Bear” is a program for children entering 2nd through 6th grade who are interested in learning about where bears are found, hibernation and other fun facts. During this class, which will be held on Thursday, Aug. 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., participants will make a bear planter to take home; cost is $10 per child (participants are asked to bring an empty vegetable can).

All participants must pre-register for the summer programs at the Holtsville Ecology Site; space is limited and classes will fill quickly. Call 631-758-9664 for more information.

In addition, Safety Town, a miniature village with an indoor and outdoor educational facility, is located at the Holtsville Ecology Site. Visitors to Safety Town are instructed in traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety while using bicycles and miniature electric vehicles for a hands-on experience. Throughout the year, Safety Town hosts bicycle rodeos, car seat inspections, teen distracted driving programs, and defensive driving classes.

During the summer, classes are available for local Boy and Girl Scout troops, as well as individual groups. Summer open enrollment for children seven and older is available on Tuesday and Thursday, during July and August. Children should wear sneakers (no open shoes) and bring a water bottle or other drink. Classes begin at 10 am; pre-registration is required.

On Wednesday, July 27, and Wednesday, Aug. 24, Safety Town will offer open enrollment for a teen driver safety program. On these days, teenagers 15 and older are invited to participate in a two-hour, interactive experience exhibiting the dangers of texting or drinking and driving. Certified instructors from the Highway Department’s division of traffic safety will talk with participants about the importance of developing safe habits when traveling the roadways. Teens will then use electric cars to complete obstacle courses designed to simulate driving while texting and impaired. Pre-registration is required.

The next Child Safety Seat Check will be held Saturday, June 4, off-site, at the Selden Fire Department. Highway Department certified technicians and members of the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Office will inspect car seats and
provide parents with essential information about child passenger safety. The event, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., is free to attend and by appointment only; call 631-363-3770 to reserve your spot today.

The next Bicycle Safety Rodeo will be held at Safety Town on Saturday, June 18 (rain date, Saturday, June 25), from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. During this free event, children are invited to complete a non-competitive skills course and learn safe bicycle-riding skills, while representatives from the Highway Department's Traffic Safety division conduct safety inspections on their bikes and helmets.

For more information on Safety Town programs or events, call 631-363-3770.

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