

Raptor Fest draws large crowd, birds



MARCH 28, 2015 1:11 PM • [CHRISTINA SCANLON](#)
CSCANLON@POSTSTAR.COM

FORT EDWARD □ While the cold and blowing winds kept owls and other birds from making much of an appearance for the guided bird walks as part of the Friends of the IBA Winter Raptor Fest, guests still turned out for the indoor presentations and activities.

Vehicles lined Black House Road for a good mile leading to Gallup Ridge Farm, where the event was held.

Inside, Natalie Tiff, 5, and Trey Ayala, 6, were just starting to make their rounds to see the different birds of prey on display. But Ayala had already decided one thing.

“I want a pet owl. I want a pet owl,” he said after looking at just two. He decided he liked the snowy owl better. The first, a great horned owl, came with a description of how his talons were large and strong enough to hurt a human arm.

Instead of a real owl to take home, the pair created some pinecone owls and owl scenes at a booth set up by Queensbury Girls Scouts

Troop No. 3392.

Seven seventh-grade Scouts were working on earning their cadet community service bar for their work at the event.

The popular craft spot had the Scouts running out of pinecones just two hours into the day.

Owls were popular with two Vermont fifth-graders, Isabel I. and Nikolina V., long before they attended the event Saturday.

They were quite familiar with birds in general, which they proved while playing an interactive game presented at the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society booth.

Matching birds with their descriptions was a breeze for the girls.

“The eagle was easy,” Isabel said. It was the answer to which bird is seen on the emblem of the U.S.

“Most of these I’ve seen at home,” she added, pointing to photos of robins, cardinals and other common birds.

Started in 2011, the two-day Raptor Fest moved to its current location after outgrowing its inaugural site at Little Theater on the Farm.

Linda Hermans, founder and owner of Little Theater on the Farm, was on hand conducting a bake sale and quilt raffle, but had some exciting news for bird enthusiasts.

Though no longer the site of the event, a birding kiosk is in the works at her farm at 27 Plum Road in Fort Edward. Birders are always welcome to view and photograph birds on her property.

Friends President Laurie LaFond estimated about 1,000 people attended Saturday, but the group expected fairer weather would bring more visitors Sunday.

LaFond was excited to announce the completion of a video piece produced by Junda Video Enterprises featuring the work of Friends of the IBA. The five- to six-minute video is expected to be shown several times Sunday.

A shuttle bus will be available Sunday to take people from Washington County Municipal Center on Broadway to the farm for events that continue from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information, visit www.IBAfriends.org.