A Year's Worth of Fun WESTCHESTER Fun Guide!

Our top 20 family must-do's for every season-consider it your annual bucket list, and refer to it often! By Kaitlin Ahern and Charles Beacham

Your Indispensable

Beyond the Page

Explore our catalog of outings-venues within approximately an hour's drive or train ride-at: nymetroparents.com/outings Find great family day trip options at: nymetroparents.com/daytrips Scroll through our most popular where-to guides-including everything from carousels to nature centers, berry picking to mini-golf-at: nymetroparents.com/where-to Browse or search our calendar of events, updated daily, for something to do any day of the year at: nymetroparents.com/calendar Subscribe to our popular weekend activities newsletter at: nymetroparents.com/register

WINTER

SPRING

SUMMER

Inside:



Top 20 Things to Do in **Summer**







. Splash, Dive, Slide!

Willson's Waves water park, featuring a wave pool, water slides, and a water playground, opens at Willson's Woods Park in Mount Vernon around Memorial Day weekend. See the full list of theme parks in the area at nymetroparents.com/amuse mentparks.

2. Why to Walk Now

Kids could meet Geoffrey the giraffe from Toys "R" Us during the Westchester/Fairfield Walk Now for Autism Speaks in White Plains, which typically takes place in early June. The 2-mile walk raises funds for those affected by autism and includes family-friendly activities. For more fundraiser walks in the area, go to nyme walks

3. Old-Fashioned Fun

In early June, experience old-fashioned music, dancing, crafts, and games during Colonial Day at St. Paul's Church National Historic Site in Mount Vernon. Find a full list of kid-friendly historical sites in the NYC area at nymetroparents.com/historical-

4. Monarchs in the Meadow

Walk Among Live Butterflies at Greenburgh Nature Center (nymetroparents.com/gnc) in Scarsdale. See New York-native butterflies such as monarchs and painted ladies and learn about the lifecycle of these colorful creatures. The exhibit is hosted outside in the meadow from June through early August.

5. Music on the Water Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival, held at Croton Point Park in Croton-on-Hudson in mid-June, is the country's oldest music and environmental festival. The festival always features an impressive lineup of musical performers and includes family activities such as storytelling, crafts, boat rides, and a Green Living Expo. Proceeds benefit efforts to help preserve and protect the Hudson River and its tributaries

10. Culture Club go to nymetroparents com

11. Happy Birthday, America! Celebrate the Fourth of July at Pops, Patriots, displays at nymetroparents.com



6. Dad Has His Day Treat Dad at one of the many Father's Day

7. Sweet Summer Gather your brood and pick your own berries at Ochs Orchard in Warwick (in nearby Orange County) or another berry farm in the area. Find the full list at nymet

8. Round and Round

Take a spin on the Grand Carousel at Playland in Rye (there's also a Kiddy Carousel for little ones between 36 and 48 inches tall), or find another merry-go-round near you at nymetroparents.

9. All Aboard the Barge The Science Barge in Yonkers opens in July for weekend art and science workshops, which run through October. Cross the gangplank and board the barge, a greenhouse and educational center that floats on the waters of the Hudson River, to learn about everything from growing hydroponic plants to the dynamics of juggling. Want to keep the kids busy during the week? Check out our list of local summer camps at nymetroparents.com/

events happening in the area around mid-June. such as Father's Day Fishing at Westmoreland Sanctuary in Mount Kisco. See where else to cast your line at nymetroparents.com/fishing.

Check out Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla, which hosts cultural celebrations throughout the summer, including an African-American Heritage Celebration in June and an Italian Festival in July. For more cultural festivals in the NYC area,

and Fireworks at the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts in Katonah. Find other fireworks

12. Ahoy, Matey!

Gather ye scallywags at Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow for Pirates of the Hudson, a festival filled with bandits and buccaneers of all sorts, not to mention a ton of kid-friendly games and shows. The fest takes place in early July.

13. Beach Bums

Go swimming and visit the beach and spray park at Harbor Island Park Beach in Mamaroneck. Our full list of beaches in the area is available at nymetroparents.com/be

14. Music in the Great Outdoors

Enjoy open-air music at summer concerts held at several locations, including Cross County Shopping Center in Yonkers, Playland in Rye, and Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts.

15. Fore!

Play a round of miniature golf at Fairview Golf Center in Elmsford-which boasts two outdoor 18-hole courses—or another course in the area (see our guide at nymetroparents.com/minigolf).

16. To Be or Not to Be?

Introduce the kids to The Bard's timeless work during the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, a summer-long event that allows you to watch Shakespearean tales unfold as you picnic and lounge on the lawn of Garrison's Boscobel House and Gardens in nearby Putnam County (more info at nymetroparents com/boscobel)

17. More than Story Time

Kids and adults of every age will be enchanted and entertained at the Mohegan Colony Storytell-ing and Music Festival at Mohegan Colony in Crompond, which takes place in early August.

18. Huzzah!

The New York Renaissance Faire in Tuxedo Park's Sterling Forest (Orange County) kicks off in early August and runs through late September. Bring the kids for circus-type performances by costumed characters, a jousting match starring knights in shining armor, and lots of carnivalinspired games, all in a 16th-century setting. Find our list of top family day trips in the NYC area at nymetroparents.com

19. Horsing Around

Take a horseback riding lesson at Boulder Brook Equestrian Center in Scarsdale or one of the other horse stables in Westchester (nymetroparents.com/horseback-riding)

20. The Fairest of Them All

Head to the area's nearest county fair, the Dutchess County Fair in Rhinebeck (Dutchess County), in mid- to late August to see farm animals and pig races, watch a variety of performances, shop for crafts, ride and play the amusements, and enjoy a mind-boggling selection of food. Plus, download our mega guide to summer fun at nymetroparents.com/125.

Top 20 Things to Do in **Fall**





Search Westchester family activities at: nymetroparents.com/calendar

1. It's Apple Season! Take a wagon ride and pick your own apples throughout Septem-ber at Wilkens Fruit & Fir Farm in Yorktown Heights. Find more apple orchards and farms in our full guide at nymetroparents. com/apples

2. All Kinds of Corn-y Fun

Eat juicy corn on the cob, join a corn-shucking race, traverse a corn maze, and more at the CORNucopia Festival at Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow in early September, and check out a host of other fall festivals nearby at nymetroparents.com/ westchester-fall-fairs.

3. Busy Bees

See what the buzz is all about at the annual Honey Harvest Party at Scarsdale's Greenburgh Nature Center (nymetroparer com/gnc) in early September. You'll see beekeepers collect the sweet stuff straight from the hive and taste the fruits of their labor too.

Remembering 9/11 Take a moment to reflect at

the 9/11 Twilight Ceremony at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla,

home of Westchester's Sept. 11 memorial, The Rising. The ceremony includes remembrance activities as well as volunteer opportunities. You can find more ways to volunteer in your community at nymetroparents com/volunteer

5. A Horse-Lovers' Dream

The American Gold Cup, one of the most prestigious equestrian sporting events in the world of international show jumping, takes place at historic Old Salem Farm in North Salem in mid-September, Find more local horse farms that offer riding lessons and more at nymetroparents.com/horseback.

A Colorful Celebration

In mid-September, the Redhawk Native American Arts Council presents a Native American Pow Wow at FDR State Park in Yorktown Heights. The weekend-long event brings together Native American artists, educators, singers, dancers, storytellers, and performing groups from across the Americas. Find more cultural festivals nearby at nymetropar ents.com/festivals

7. Craft-tastic

Shop for one-of-a-kind and handmade items during Fall Crafts at Lyndhurst in Tarrytown in mid-September. The weekend also includes live music, craft demonstrations, and kids' activities.

8. Piles of Fun

Take in the glorious fall foliage at the Hudson River Valley Ramble Hike at Zofnass Family Preserve in Pound Ridge in late September. For more places to view the season's colorful leaves, go to nymetroparents.com/leaf

9. A Four-Legged Festival

Bring your pooch (and the rest of your family) to the Hounds on the Sound Dog Walk-a-thon and Festival in early October for a 15-mile stroll around Glen Island Park in New Rochelle. The event raises funds for local animal shelters, including the New Rochelle Humane Society, and includes tons of fun activities for four- and two-legged participants. Find more good causes to get moving for at nymetroparents.com/walks

10. Fall's Favorite Fruit

Pick your own pumpkins in October at Stuart's Fruit Farm in Granite Springs or another pumpkin farm in the area (see the full list at nymetroparents. com/pumpkins).

11. Pumpkins Galore Don't miss The Great Jack

O' Lantern Blaze, an outdoor walkthrough experience featuring thousands of hand-carved pumpkins, at Van Cortlandt Manor in Croton-on-Hudson. The Blaze opens in early October and runs through mid-November. Get details on tons of other Halloween events at nymetroparents.com/halloweer

12. All About Birds

Get up close with birds of prey during Raptor Day at Wave Hill in the nearby Bronx in early October.

13. Baking a Difference

Buy some sweet treats and support a charitable cause at the Great Chappaqua Bake Sale in Chappaqua in early October Started by local moms, this bake sale raises money to combat childhood hunger, and in recent years it has partnered with the Chappaqua Children's Book Festival. Learn more at nymetroparents.com/gcbakesale.

14. Kumbaya 'Round the Fire

Toast some marshmallows, tell some stories, and get cozy in mid-October during a Family Bonfire Night at Boscobel House and Gardens in Garrison (nymeparents.com/boscobel), in neighboring Putnam County.





15. Sunny Days, Sweepin' the **Clouds Away**

Each October, Sesame Street Live brings a new, interactive show for little ones to Westchester County Center in White Plains.

16. Viva Mexico!

Celebrate Dia de los Muertos in early November at the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers. where you can enjoy a festival of art, music, food, and other traditional Mexican holiday activities.

17. A Real Treat

The Chocolate World Expo, held at Westcheste in White Plains in early November, is the area's biggest chocolate-themed event, with tons of local and regional sweets to be tasted and purchased as well as a host of activities for little ones.

18. Get Ready to Celebrate!

Planning a bar or bat mitzvah, Sweet 16, or other milestone party? Check out the Celebrate! Party Showcase at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown in mid-November. For details, visit

19. Turkey, Pomp, and Circumstance

If you can't make it into the city for the famous Macy's parade head to New Rochelle for the annual Valenti Thanksgiving Day Parade in mid- to late Novem

20. Stretch Those Turkey Legs

After you've enjoyed the turkey and all the trimmings on that beloved November holiday, join a walk or hike off the turkey event the weekend after Thanksgiving at Teatown Lake Reservation in Ossining and other nature centers. Find a full list of hiking and nature trails in the area at nymetroparents.com/hike

Top 20 Things to Do in **Winter**

1. Slip 'n Glide Hit the ice for some classic winter fun at Ebersole Ice Rink in White Plains, Westchester's premier outdoor rink. The rink is typically open late October through mid-March. Find more indoor and outdoor ice rinks in the area at nymetroparents.com/ice-skating.

2. All Aboard!

Hitch a ride to tons of fun at the New York Botanical Garden's Holiday Train Show, which boasts replicas of area landmarks made entirely from plants and is definitely worth the drive to the Bronx. The show typically runs mid-November through early January. Find a full list of nearby train shows and exhibits that you can visit throughout the year at nymetroparents.

3. All of the Lights

Watch little eyes light up with holiday joy during a local **tree or menorah lighting**. If you're looking for a big event, Westchester's Ridge Hill in Yonkers holds both an annual menorah lighting and an annual Christmas tree lighting. Smaller community lightings are held throughout late November and early December. Find more at nymetroparents.com/westchester-holiday lightings.

4. There's Nothin' Like the Real Thing

Make this Christmas extra-special with a trip to cut your own Christmas tree at Stuart's Farm in Granite Springs or one of the area's other tree farms (see nymetroparents.com/ xmastrees for the full list), most of which are open from late November through late December

5. Tales of Tinsel

Create your own Christmas story in the Bronx at the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum's annual Holiday Family Day. Usually held in early December, this event includes storytelling, shopping, crafts, and of course, pictures with Santa. Learn more about the museum at nymetroparents.com/bpmm

6. You Better Not Pout, I'm Telling You Why

Start your day with a delicious breakfast, some arts and crafts, and a visit with jolly old Saint Nick. Each year in early December, the Bitz-Carlton in White Plains transforms its ballroom into a winter wonderland where kids can have Breakfast with Santa.

7. Christmas Present, Christmas Past

Travel back in time with Jonathan Kruk's masterful telling of Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol at Old Dutch Church in Sleepy Hollow. The 17th-century church offers the perfect setting for the classic holiday tale. Performances begin in late November and run through late December. For a full list of holiday shows in Westchester, go to nymetroparents.com/ westchester-holiday-shows.





8. Visions of Sugar Plums

Visit the Land of Sweets in Westchester Ballet Company's The Nutcracker at Westchester County Center in White Plains. Performances are usually held over one weekend in mid-December, Get details on all Nutcracker shows in our area at nymetroparents.co ter-nutcracker.

9. Mountains of Fun

Grab your gear and pack up the kids for a day of skiing or snowboarding at one of the area's family-friendly resorts. For details, visit nymetr com/ski

10. If You Build It...

Escape from the cold and head to LEGOLAND Discovery Center Westchester in Yonkers. Among its attractions, LEGOLAND boasts several themed building stations, rides, and MINILAND, a miniature replica of the New York metro landscape. Learn more about it at



Pull out your Flexible Flyer and get set for some downhill snow-day fun. Once there's enough snow on the ground. Westchester's six public golf courses open for sledding. For more information, see our guide at nymetroparents.com/sledwestchester

12. Howl in the New Year

Hang out with wolves at the Wolf Conservation Center in South Salem (nymetroparents com/wcc). Each year on New Year's Day, visitors can help Howl in the New Year while they enjoy hot beverages and learn all about these beautiful and endangered species.

13. New York Girls

Cheer on the hundreds of young ladies competing to be called Miss New York USA and Miss New York Teen USA at the Purchase Performing Arts Center in mid-January.

nymetroparents.com/legoland.



14. Snowshoeing at Teatown

Embrace the snow by hitting the nearly 15 miles of trails at Teatown Lake Reservation in Ossining for some snowshoeing. The trails are open from dawn to dusk, year-round. Find more hiking trails in the area at nymetroparents.com/hike

15. Give a Little, Get a Lot Give back to the community on

Martin Luther King Jr. Day in mid-January, which coincides with Westchester's countywide Day of Service. Learn more about volunteer opportunities at nymetroparents.com/volunteer

16. Tots in Tow Enjoy fine art as a family during Stroller Tours at the Katonah Museum of Art (nym ents.com/katonah). Designed specifically for families of children younger than 2, these early-hours exhibition tours offer parents the chance to engage in conversation and explore intellectual themes with tots in tow.

17. Birds of a Feather

Celebrate our national bird at EagleFest in Croton Point Park in Croton-on-Hudson in early

including guided bird walks, close-up looks, stories, and displays. Find more information at nymetroparents com/eaglefest

18. The Circus Comes to Town Revel in old-fashioned family

fun when the Royal Hanneford Circus returns to the Westchester County Center in White Plains in mid-February. With tigers, acrobats, clowns, and baby elephants, this big top show is sure to please.

19. Let's Talk Camp

Look ahead and start planning the perfect summer for your child at the Westchester Camp & Summer Activities Fair at Crowne Plaza in White Plains Meet directors, learn about a wide variety of programs, and even win a prize or two. For more information, visit westchestercampfair.com.

20. Stick Together Learn all about maple sugaring at programs held in late February and early March at the Greenburgh Nature Center in Scarsdale, Westmoreland Sanctuary in Mount Kisco, and other Westchester County orchards and nature preserves. For the full list, visit nymetroparents.

Top 20 Things to Do in **Spring**

 Erin Go Bragh! Don't miss the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Eastches-ter, featuring Irish step dancers, bagpipe bands, and more. Community parades are also held in Mount Kisco and Peekskill.

2. Farm to Table

Pick up some local produce at an outdoor farmers' market, such as the Larchmont Farmers' Market, which boasts everything from fresh baked goods and meats to plants and flowers. For details on other markets near you, visit nyme com/westchester-markets.

3. Flower Power The annual Orchid Show returns to the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx (nym com/nybg) in March and April. This exhibition boasts thousands of brilliantly colored flowers in kaleidoscopic displays and is the largest of its kind in the country, making it well worth the drive.

4. Hop, Hopping to the Bronx

Search for sweet treasures hidden by a furry friend at the annual weekend Easter Égg Hunt at



the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum (nymetroparents mm). Kids can participate in crafts, have their photos taken with the Easter Bunny, and enjoy light refreshments

The Magic of Disney

Experience the magic of Disney Live! at the Westchester County Center in White Plains, where you can catch some of your favorite characters performing in early April. For more information, visit disneylive.com





6. Get Moving for a Good Cause Join the March of Dimes' March for Babies in White Plains in mid- to late April and support research to understand and prevent health problems in infants. For details on this and other charity walks in the area, go to nymetroparents. com/walks

7. Spring Snips Take a step back in history during Sheep Shearing Day at Stone Barns Center in Pocantico Hills, held in late April. Watch and ask questions as the farmers shear the wool from the flock, and then the whole family can participate in wool and weaving activities.

8 Awesome Aviators

Also in late April, learn all about living raptors and their amazing "talons" at a Birds of Prey Experience at the Wolf Conservation Center in South Salem (nymetroparents.com/wcc). Under the supervision of a professional falconer, kids can meet and even hold one of these magnificent birds.

9. Go Green!

Help make our planet a little better during an **Earth Day Celebration** at the Greenburgh Nature Center in Scarsdale (ny com/gnc) in late April. Parents and kids will get their hands into real conservation projects that help make the grounds enjoyable for everyone.

10. Weekend Party

Party hard at **Family Fun Day** at Lyndhurst in Tarrytown, held near the end of April. This year, the two-day party featured an exhibit of Lego creations made by Westchester kids as well as a ton of fun activities.

1. Run Like Wild

Make the planet better for our animal friends by participating in the Run for the Wild 5K and Family Fun Run at the nearby Bronx Zoo (nymes.com/bronx-zoo) in late April.

com/festivals. 17. All About Astronomy Search the stars with stellar activities during Astronomy Day at the Hudson River um in Yonkers, held in mid-May. With space-themed workshops, solar

12. Bike 'n' Roll

13. Choo Choo! com/trains.

14. Celebrating Mom

15. Time to Play

Rye's **Playland** opens for the season in mid-May with rides and games for all ages. Browse the full list of area theme parks at nymetroparents.com/amuse 16. Celebrate Spring, Colonial Style

Ring in spring in mid-May during the **Pinkster** Festival at Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow, an African-American celebration filled with music, dance, and food. Find other cool cultural celebrations in our area at nymetroparents

Go for a ride during National Bicycle Month when the Bronx River Parkway in White Plains hosts Bicycle Sundays. From early May through the end of June, the parkway is closed to cars and open to all cyclists, skaters, scooters, walkers, and joggers on Sunday mornings. Learn about the benefits of balance bikes for beginners at nymetroparents.com/bal-bikes.

Celebrate National Train Day in early May with a train ride (including one on Thomas the Tank Engine!) or by visiting a nearby train exhibit or museum-see the full list at nyr

Get in some mom-and-child bonding time at The Mothers and Others Tea Musicale at the Caramoor Center in Katonah. Share a mini-concert in the magnificent Music Room, take a tour of the Rosen House, and enjoy an assortment of tea-time items in the Summer Dining Room, Find more Mother's Day activities at nymetroparents com/moms-day-westchester

system models, and exciting shows, this event is enough to make any aspiring astronaut jump for the moon.

18. Kids, Meet the Kids!

Take the kids to Meet the Baby Animals at Muscoot Farm in mid-May, when the farm's newborns greet the public for the first time. Find more petting zoos and nature centers at

19. Fun on the Farm

Take a day trip to nearby Putnam County in late May for Little Folk Farm Days at Green Chimneys in Brewster (r chimneys). Kids can ride the ponies, watch live shows, do crafts, and play games.

20. Remember and Celebrate

Join people all over the nation as they line main streets in their communities and enjoy Memorial Day parades. Towns across Westchester-from White Plains to Tarrytown, Bedford Hills to Scarsdale—host their own parades, each with a local flair. Check nym com/calendar for details as the holiday draws closer.

