



Peter Zak shares stories of his apple orchard with Highland Lake Inn visitors Jeff and Stephanie Mulreed of Shelton, Connecticut. Photo: Anne Hewitt

It's AppleFest Weekend At Highland Lake Apple Farm!

By Anne Hewitt
Beacon staff

Have you ever tried a Highland Lake Apple? The only place you can sample one is at Peter Zak's orchard in East Andover, along with Macintosh, Liberty, Freedom, and many other varieties. A closer look at the branches in this orchard will reveal that more than one kind grow on a single tree!

The Highland Lake Apple Farm's annual AppleFest Weekend is the perfect time to take that closer look. The orchard will be open for picking and enjoying on Saturday, September 30, and Sunday, October 1, and the farm stand will also offer bags of apples, fresh cider, homemade jams, and honey, all produced right on the farm.

There were no apple trees at 50 Maple Street when Peter and his wife Mary arrived in 1987. Peter brought with him decades of farming experience and the desire to create sustainable agriculture. As a young boy, post-World War II life required supplying your own food. The family farm in rural Massachusetts produced many crops along with sheep, pigs, and horses. Today, the smaller East Andover farm provides enough for the Zaks' table and an annual roadside farm stand.

Peter is self-taught; what he knows and does comes from reading and experience. Today he shares his knowledge, hosting local school groups and teaching classes. Regular visitors to his farm include students from Proctor Academy and East Andover Village Preschool. As a Master Gardener, Peter shares his knowledge with regional garden clubs, and serves on the town Conservation Commission.

This year's excessive rain and lack of sunshine affected many crops in New England. Although Peter keeps his own bees for pollinating fruit blossoms, there's no guarantee that Mother Nature will cooperate.

"We've been hit hard in the last three years. Bears, mites, a weak queen, running out of food are some of the reasons beehives can fail. This spring the bees

only flew three days," Peter said. "The lack of pollination along with a poor spring reduced our crop this year to about half."

There's still plenty of harvest for the annual Apple Fest. Apples can be picked fresh from the trees or purchased in various bagged quantities. One of the favorite treats at the annual event is a recipe concocted from ingredients you probably already have on your pantry shelves.

Simple AppleFest Cake

- 1 box of yellow cake mix
 - 10-12 apples, peeled, cored, sliced
 - 1/2 cup raisins
 - Sugar to taste
 - Citrus juice (orange or lemon)
 - Seasoning and topping as desired (cinnamon, nutmeg, granola, rolled oats)
- Combine raisins, apples, juice in large cook pot. Add sugar and/or water as needed or desired. Simmer on stove until the apple are just soft. Add sugar and/or spices to taste.

Preheat oven to 350. Prepare cake mix. Pour apple mix into baking dish. Pour cake batter over apples. Add toppings as desired (granola, spices).

Bake until done – about 30 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream or whipped cream.

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Chamber To Meet At Highland Lake Inn

Nestled amongst picturesque barns, gorgeous fields, and old New England farmhouses, the Highland Lake Inn is the perfect place to spend a crisp autumn night. Join Pecco and Gail Beaufays as they host the Greater Franklin Chamber of Commerce for an evening of Business After Hours, Wednesday, October 18, at the Highland Lake Inn in East Andover from 5:30 to 7 PM.

Take a tour of this gorgeous bed and breakfast, enter to win exciting raffle prizes, and network with fellow professionals. "I am really excited for this event," commented Sandy Marshall of

LRGHealthcare and President of the Chamber. "Andover is a wonderful community and we are proud to serve the businesses located there."

As always, Business After Hours presented by the Greater Franklin Chamber of Commerce is free to all.

The Greater Franklin Chamber of Commerce serves the communities of Andover, Franklin, Hill, Northfield, Salisbury, Sanbornton, and Tilton. To learn more about this event or how to become a member of the Chamber, contact the office at 934-6909 or online at ExperienceThreeRivers.com or FranklinNHChamber.com.



Josh Barton opened Barton's Performance in July at 720 Franklin Highway in East Andover, across from Highland Land and the snowmobile trail. Josh specializes in performance and customization upgrades to cars, trucks, motorcycles, and snowmobiles, but also does inspections and general repairs as well. He carries snowmobile maintenance products, too, and currently has an application in to the state to offer OHRV registrations in the future.
Photo: Charlie Darling



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