BOO! Let the DOGS out
Pets can get their Howl-o-ween on during fall events

BY IAN J. STARK
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Dog owners and their canine companions can expect a packed schedule this October and November with events catering to man’s best friend. “I’m always looking for opportunities to get out with my pup,” says Kavita Gera, 26, of East Meadow. She and her dog, Treasure, a chihuahua — a cross between a Chihuahua and a dachshund — have taken part in the annual pet parade and costume contest at the Long Island Pet Expo and the SPCA Long Island. “I love seeing everyone’s creativity and the added bonus, she says. Gera also sees the event, happening Oct. 18, as a social boost for her dogs, who feels that “between him and I, I’m honestly not sure who’s more excited to see all the dogs.”

Liz Kim-Luan, 50, came from Queens to attend the last Hick’s pet parade with her rescue dog, Charleigh, a Chihuahua mix, who dressed as a dog that accompanied her human family members who wore costume designs. They plan to return again this season. “The kids love it and we get a chance to meet other dog lovers and see awesome dogs in costume,” she says.

From festivals to doggy brunches and costume parades, here’s a guide to dog-friendly events happening this fall.

SATURDAY: PAWSWALK 2023 AT BELMONT LAKE STATE PARK
Starting with a light breakfast and pet treats, leash dogs can then take part in a walk in the park. Attendees will receive a goody bag that includes a bandanna for participating dogs; people who bring a food donation for Long Island Cares’ Baxter’s Pet Pantry will be entered in a raffle.

Cost: $20, ages 13 and older. Registration required.
More Info: 8 a.m. to noon; 625 Belmont Ave., West Babylon; 631-399-8106, licons.org

OCT. 18: PET PARADE AT HICKS NURSERIES
Karen Musgrave, marketing and e-commerce associate at Hicks Nurseries, says the pet parade is an opportunity for attendants to meet other dogs and pets in the community. Participating dogs “seem to know this is a special day and enjoy being in their costumes and hanging out with other dogs and their humans,” she adds.

The march travels down a decorated path that leads to Otto the Ghost, the center’s Halloween mascot. Judges will be on hand to evaluate which costumes will win prizes. All pets will get participation ribbons. Attendees are asked to bring pet food, new toys and other items to donate to Long Island Cares.

Cost: Free
More Info: 5 p.m.; 100 Jericho Tpke., Westbury; 516-354-0066, hicksnurseries.com

OCT. 21: DIEGO’S TRUNK OR TREAT AT SANDS POINT PRESERVE
Hosted by the Nassau County SPCA, the event celebrates Diego, a goldendoodle who survived abuse and required critical surgery before being adopted by a foster family last March. A group of pet-related vendors will be on hand with decorated vehicles and free treats and toys for pups. Games and activities for pets will also be happening, including a costume contest and a pie-eating contest.

Cost: $25 per family; cash only
More Info: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; 127 Middle Neck Rd., Sands Point; 516-576-2921, nassaucountyspca.org

OCT. 21: HOWL-O-WEEN AT MICHAEL J. TULLY PARK
This festive gathering will include live music, crafts, giveaways and a contest with prizes given for top canine costumes and best human-dog duo costumes. All dogs in attendance must be leashed.

Cost: Free
More Info: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 1801 Evergreen Ave., New Hyde Park; 516-869-6311, northerrnsteadyny.gov

OCT. 22: DOG DAYS AT SUFFOLK COUNTY FARM AND EDUCATION CENTER
Returning for a second year, this event is the only time dogs are allowed to visit the farm. Featuring a corn maze, wagon rides and other farm-related activities, there will also be dog races to meet plus “dog sports” (tests of agility, their senses, play time), pumpkin picking and a costume contest.

Cost: $15 per person. Each visiting dog will receive a complimentary bandanna; dogs must be leashed and up to date on their rabies vaccination, with proof required at entrance.

More Info: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 350 Yaphank Ave., Yaphank; 631-852-4600, ccsuffolk.org

OCT. 22: BARKIN’ BRUNCH AT THE REFUGE’S HOWL’ O’ WEEN PARTY
This restaurant will host its last Sunday Barkin’ Brunch of the season with a Halloween celebration. Dogs may dine, dress up and walk in a costume parade. “Best dog,” “best owner-pet pair” and “best group” costumes will be chosen; fall-inspired brunch cocktails will be available for purchase.

Cost: Free; reservations recommended
More Info: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; 315 Broadhollow Rd., Melville; 631-577-4444, refuge110.com

OCT. 28: CANINES IN COSTUME AT LONGHOUSE RESERVE
In association with Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons (ARF), dogs are invited to visit this 16-acre space featuring gardens, sculptures and other art. Pooches may also arrive in festive attire to explore the reserve with their humans.

Cost: $25 for members, $35 nonmembers; register in advance
More Info: 10 to 11 a.m. and 11 a.m. to noon; 133 Hands Creek Rd., East Hampton; 631-329-3568, longhouse.org