

**LONG ISLAND / SUFFOLK****Things get wild after Amagansett St. Patrick's Day Parade**

Hampton Bay's Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center hosted the post-parade event.



The Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center's education coordinator, Jim MacDougall, introduces onlookers to Meep, a great horned owl, after the Amagansett St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March, 10, 2018. Photo Credit: Marlo Jappen

**By Marlo Jappen**

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After the Amagansett St. Patrick's Day Parade last Saturday, onlookers marveled at Meep — an 11-year-old great horned owl with captivating yellow eyes and brown plumage — and snapped selfies with a reddish eastern screech owl the size of a pint glass.

Those were some of the creatures from the Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center's meet-and-greet event, which took place in the front lawn of the Amagansett Free Library.

As Meep perched on the gloved hand of the center's education coordinator, Jim MacDougall, children were eager to ask about the creature, and MacDougall was happy to oblige.

— “She's called Meep because that's the noise she makes whenever we feed her,” he said.

The owl had broken her wings and pelvis after falling out of a nest when she was a fledgling. Although she has healed, Meep resides at the center as an education animal because she doesn't know how to hunt.

The Hampton Bays center was invited to hold the meet-and-greet by the parade's grand marshal, Dell Cullum, an Amagansett native who is known for his efforts as a wildlife activist and rescuer. The center's event is a perfect addition to the parade, Cullum said, because it's valuable to educate the community — particularly the children — about wildlife.

Aside from the meet-and-greet, the center also hosts a variety of free classes for the public, including one about animal rescue and transport and another about deer.

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“People love what [the educators] have to say and they love getting close to these animals,” Cullum said.

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