

Downe Township holds its annual Horseshoe Crab Festival



A buzz is starting across South Jersey and it's all about the Downe Township Horseshoe Crab Festival set for May 16 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Most people feel spring is in full swing when the bulbs bloom and trees blossom, but along the Delaware Bayshore, spring means one thing — the arrival of the horseshoe crabs.

Fortescue is a community-dedicated horseshoe crab sanctuary and it is the best place in the region to see large numbers of crabs. At this year's festival, two new Downe Township sanctuaries will be dedicated — Gandy's Beach and Money Island.

The main stage will be located on the North Beach in Fortescue with live music all day

from five amazing bands.

The owners and a local kayak expert will be offering advice and the opportunity to try out kayaking in the bay. You can also check out N.J. State Police Marine Unit and United States Coast Guard vessels, with staff and crew to provide insiders' knowledge of rescues at sea.

Especially for kids, there will be pony rides, a bounce house, a face painter, and more. There will be beach games and opportunities to get down and dirty while helping restore the shore with the purchase and personal planting of dune grass, cedar trees, and other coastal species. A dog obedience display and adoptable pooches from an area animal rescue.

The food will be tempting with a delicious variety of meals and snacks.

Artists and crafters who will be exhibiting at the festival.

A shuttle is available to take you to all of the exhibits and experiences along the island.

If you really want the full experience of the Delaware Bay, then purchase advance tickets for a pre-festival Lighthouse Boat Tour on Bonanza II. The adventure will begin at 9:30 a.m. at Fortescue State Marina and have you back in time for the first band. This special festival tour is an opportunity to enjoy the open water on South Jersey's largest fishing charter for only \$15 (\$20 at the door), with all proceeds being donated back to support the community thanks to the generosity of Captain Mike Rothman.

For more information and boat tour tickets, see www.downtownpnj.org or check out www.Facebook.com/DowneTownshipHorseshoeCrabFestival. Call **(856) 447-3100** for more information.