



Current Connections

Issue No. 8 | January/February 2026



WINTER BLUES BASH – KID’S DANCE PARTY

Shake off the winter blues and turn up the fun at the Winter Blues Bash! The DYC’s Kids Dance Party returns Friday, February 21 from noon–4 PM, and after last year’s amazing turnout, we’re leveling up to make this party bigger, louder, and even more fun. Pre-K through 2nd graders are invited to dance and play from noon–2 PM with classic favorites like musical chairs and other age-perfect games, while 3rd through 6th graders take over the dance floor from 2–4 PM. DJ Mazz will be spinning the hits and keeping the energy high as kids bust a move to crowd-pleasers like the Cha Cha Slide, Macarena, Cotton Eyed Joe, and more. Expect nonstop dancing, laughs, and games—this is one party your kids won’t want to miss! Admission is just \$5 per child (adults are free), or \$10 gets you in the door with a choice of a hot dog or chicken nuggets, snack, and drink. Additional snacks and food will be available for purchase. Grab your dancing shoes and join us for an afternoon of winter-beating fun!



REV UP THE FUN: THE 30TH ANNUAL DYC TRACTOR PARADE

The Delaware Youth Center is thrilled to invite you to the 30th Annual Tractor Parade, a beloved community tradition celebrating three decades of hometown pride, history, and horsepower! This year promises to be a parade for the record books, and to help things run even more smoothly we’re introducing optional tractor preregistration to streamline check-in on parade morning. When you preregister, you’ll be asked to provide your Tractor Owner name, Make, Model, and Year — making it easier for us to get everyone lined up and rolling on time. After the parade, join us back on the Center grounds for a delicious chicken BBQ, live music by Pistachio Bathtub, and an inflatable bounce slide for the kids. We can’t wait to celebrate 30 years of tradition, community, and tractors with you — see you there!

MEET THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Alex Gardner

Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you got involved in DYC?

We started bringing our kids to the Summer Program in 2014, when our daughter was six and our son was four. That year my husband moved from industry to a university and so had his summers off. We had been weekenders in Acidalia for the previous four years, but now he and the kids got to stay for the entire summer while I went to the New York on the bus every week. Both kids learned to swim at the pool, and got to know a lot of other kids in the area, while we met lots of parents. Then in 2018 we bought a house in Callicoon and moved here full-time. I guess we were on the grounds an awful lot, because in 2022 the board asked me to join, which I was glad to do. I was raised in a family that valued public service so I was grateful for the opportunity to help.



What is your favorite DYC memory?

The DYC has been such an integral part of our life here that it’s hard to think of one thing. I really loved line dancing, and I hope we can bring that back. No matter how tired I was after a full day, going down to dance with April and all the other people was so invigorating. Line dancing is so much fun. One summer we did a “flash mob dance” at the Tractor Parade and people who hadn’t come to the Youth Center dance joined in.

What is your vision for the Center?

We are incredibly fortunate to have the DYC in town. It’s more than just the terrific facilities, it’s a meeting place for the entire community. I’ve met so many people who either just discovered it or tell me their memories of the place, how they had their birthday parties and their weddings there, proms and memorial services. Other community organizations use the hall and the pavilion for their meetings and their parties, and I’d like to see more of that. The Tractor Parade and the River Race are bigger than ever, and our holiday parties continue to bring new families down. I want to do more, both for kids and for adults. We have an amazing kitchen and we’re talking about cooking classes and community meals. The pickleball community is growing, and with the new courts I’m excited to host tournaments. I’d love to see the beer league come back and play softball, and have other sports like ultimate frisbee. The DYC belongs to the community, and anything is possible.



FROM PARTIES TO PICNICS: RENT SPACE AT THE DELAWARE YOUTH CENTER

Looking for the perfect place to host your next celebration or community event? The Delaware Youth Center offers a variety of rental options set in a beautiful, welcoming space right on the Delaware River in Callicoon. You can book Grover Hermann Hall, a spacious indoor venue with seating for up to 222 people — ideal for weddings, graduation parties, reunions, birthdays, anniversaries, meetings, and more. It comes fully equipped with tables and chairs, and you can choose to include use of the main kitchen for your event. For outdoor gatherings, there's a pavilion with picnic tables and its own kitchen, plus access to ballfields, playgrounds, and shared restrooms — perfect for summer parties, picnics, or family fun days. Other rental options include smaller side rooms, weekly rental times for ongoing activities, and extras like a fire pit or BBQ area.

Whether you're planning a casual get-together or a big celebration, the DYC can accommodate your needs with flexible spaces and helpful amenities. To request a rental, just complete the online form or email rent@delawareyouthcenter.org — dates are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis, and members enjoy discounts on rental rates.



STAY ACTIVE, STAY CONNECTED

The Delaware Youth Center is a lively hub of activity with recurring programs for all ages and abilities throughout the week. Join us for Indoor Pickleball, ease into your weekend with Pilates on Saturday mornings, or find balance and movement with Tai Chi on Mondays and Wednesdays. We also offer Chair Yoga on Thursdays and everyone's favorite—Bingo every other Tuesday—for a fun and social outing. Have a great idea for a class or program but need the space to make it happen? We'd love to hear from you! Reach out to info@delawareyouthcenter.org to make arrangements and bring your idea to life.



LOVE THE DYC? LEND A HAND AND JOIN THE FUN—VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Do you love the Delaware Youth Center and feel that itch to get involved—but aren't quite sure how? We've got great news: we need you! Volunteers are always the heartbeat of our events, and we have plenty of fun ways to jump in. For the Tractor Parade, you could help sell t-shirts, direct traffic, register tractors, or simply be an extra set of hands wherever needed on parade day. If diesel fuel isn't your style, the Delaware River Race is another fantastic opportunity—think bagel prep, water station support, registration help, or selling raffle tickets. The list truly goes on and on, and we'll happily work with you to find a role that fits your schedule and your skills. After all, many hands make light work—and we'd love for YOU to be one of them!