

A New Westfield Tradition Lights Up Trumbull

Thousands converge on the mall to enjoy a family day.

By [Carol Banner](#) | June 26, 2011



new

A week of soggy skies gave way to sunshine Saturday as Trumbull and the [Westfield Mall](#) set up the inflatables, gathered performers, and organized for a day of family activities in the first attempt to launch "Trumbull Family Fun & Fireworks Day," a reincarnation of Trumbull Day.

"We love Westfield!" said Trumbull's Chistine Mucherino and friends who came early prepared for the fireworks and plunked down on blankets in front of the stage. Her daughter, 7-year-old Nevaeh (Heaven spelled backwards) whiled away the time singing and dancing with some of the children's entertainers on and off stage.

"This is so great," said mom of the performers. "All the kids love it."

"I love it," said 4-year-old Trevor Vaccino adamantly between swallows of pizza. "I went on the jumping."

"The inflatables," his mother Mindy translated. She read about the event in a tourism magazine in East Haven.

The event was developed by Westfield partially to fill a void left by the previous version of Trumbull Day, which used to take place at [Trumbull High School](#) or [Hillcrest Middle School](#). The mall organized and picked up the tab for everything except security.

In addition, it allowed proceeds from the nominal \$1 admission charge collected by some 30 volunteers to go to Trumbull's Academic Challenge for Excellence (ACE) Foundation, a booster club for competitive academic teams throughout the town's public schools.

"It (the event) allows us to showcase our \$40 million renovation and commitment to families," said the mall's Senior General Manager Bryan Gaus, as he and Assistant General Manager Matthew Seebeck greeted VIPs to the hospitality tent.

For 38 years the town held its "Trumbull Day" on the grassy fields of Hillcrest Junior High School, until budget-breaking costs and bottle-necking crowds brought it under the scrutiny of town boards and commissions.

In 2009, over 50,000 residents and out-of-towners attended the fair-like event. Saturday, after a year's hiatus, a similar, fledgling event was set up on acres of asphalt in Westfield mall's parking lot by management.

Three friends going into eighth grade at Hillcrest sat on the asphalt debating the event. Austin Gin thought sitting out on acres of asphalt was "kinda cool." Rozzi Moran liked the music, but Jennifer Becker said, "I liked it at Hillcrest. I miss the rides."

So did Trumbull's Janie Algeri who watched her two children bounce through the inflatables while she waited for a group of mom's and children to join them in the afternoon sun. "There's not much to do here now," she said.

Gaus explained. "We tried to bring in one (a carnival with rides) but there was a scheduling conflict." Also, the safety of families attending was foremost. "We wanted to focus on family fun," he said, "So we brought in the inflatables and children's entertainers, and later Ryan Starr for the teens." A Beer Garden selling wine, as well as brew, was open in the evening to the over-twenty-ones.

The promise of fireworks drew many families. "My boys heard the word 'fireworks' and here we are," said Trumbull's Bree Scott. She had attended other Trumbull Days, but likes the convenience of it being at the mall.

Trumbullites Russell and Aida Tomatore brought their three granddaughters for the fireworks. The pre-schoolers were happy to spend the afternoon in the inflatables and blowing soap bubbles in the air

Kiana Gibson, 5 1/2, and her mom Roseann, both of Bridgeport, loved the event at Westfield. Both had attended the old Trumbull Day at Hillcrest. "I like the face painting and the bouncing, here" mom said, "and we can't wait for the fireworks."

According to Deborah Cox, Trumbull's Economic Development Director, Westfield put a lot of effort into the event. "They have been so generous. They deserve a lot of credit and thanks." Financially Trumbull was only responsible for it police presence on the premises.

The event took over the entire parking lot behind [JCPenney](#), and a free shuttle was run between the mall and additional parking at Sacred Heart University. The family fair ran from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. and was followed by a concert. A fireworks display set to music concluded the activities.

Beardsley Zoo had married its annual Trumbull Appreciation Day to the Westfield event to kick off a full day of family fun. It welcomed Trumbull residents with discounted admission and special activities for children.

“We’d love to do this next year,” said Gaus. “We’re committed to families and the community.”

In addition to ACE, other Trumbull clubs benefiting from booth participation at the event were Trumbull Students Studying Spanish and the Trumbull High School Golden Eagle Marching Band.

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