

visit  
**MADISON**  
county, ny

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 18, 2026

Contact: Nikita Jankowski  
315-706-4443, nikita@belesai.com

---

## **PETERBORO FREEDOM FOLK FESTIVAL**

*Peterboro's Juneteenth Week Returns with Live Music, and Free Exhibits at the Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark*



**PETERBORO, N.Y.** — Peterboro, a cornerstone of American abolitionist history, marks Juneteenth 2026 with a week of powerful programming honoring the legacy of freedom. Running **June 16–22**, the celebration is anchored by the return of the Peterboro Freedom Folk Festival on **Saturday, June 20**, at the **Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark** (5304 Oxbow Road, Peterboro, NY).

The outdoor music event opens on the estate grounds at 2 p.m. for exterior exhibits, before a live performance lineup beginning at 3 p.m.

This year's artists — **Foxrow**, **Mira Grimm**, **Westcott Jug Suckers**, and acclaimed singer-songwriter **Rod MacDonald** — each take the stage on the hour. Advance tickets are \$20 and \$25 at the gate. The Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department will sell food and beverages on site.

***“We are truly looking forward to honoring this significant history of Peterboro, where the past isn't just remembered — it's felt,” said Dot Willsey, past president of the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum. “Each year, Juneteenth Week gives our community and visitors a chance to connect with stories that shaped this country and our lives.”***

### **Full Juneteenth Week Schedule: June 16–22, 2026**

The celebration blends free exhibits, distinguished scholars, live music, and community events across Peterboro and Central New York.

- **June 16–22 | 12–4 p.m.:** Free exhibit “The Chronology of American Abolition from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction” at the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum, Smithfield Community Center (5255 Pleasant Valley Road, Peterboro). Eight large panels created by abolition scholar Milton C. Sernett, PhD.

- **Tuesday, June 16 | 7 p.m.:** The Berea College (KY) Choir performs a free concert, “Songs of Slavery and Emancipation,” at Hope Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, 751 South Street, Utica. Pre-registration suggested at [www.peterborony.org/events/](http://www.peterborony.org/events/).
- **Friday, June 19 | 7 p.m.:** Manisha Sinha, PhD, author of *A Slave’s Cause*, presents “A New History of Abolition and Emancipation” at Cummings Theatre, 16 Lincklaen St., Cazenovia. Free; pre-registration suggested.
- **Saturday, June 20:** The Peterboro Hamlet Green opens for free community displays and vendor sales from dawn to dusk. The National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum and Peterboro Area Museum are open 12–4 p.m., featuring “Four for Freedom,” an exhibit on four freedom seekers.
- **Saturday, June 20 | 3–8 p.m.: Peterboro Freedom Folk Festival at the Gerrit Smith Estate NHL. Estate opens for exterior exhibits at 2 p.m. Music on the hour featuring Foxrow, Mira Grimm, Westcott Jug Suckers, and Rod MacDonald. Advance tickets are \$20 and \$25 at the gate.**
- **Sunday, June 21 | 11 a.m.:** Town historian Donna Dorrance Burdick presents on Madison County Free Churches and Churches of Peterboro Black Residents at Peterboro United Methodist Church, 5240 Pleasant Valley Rd. Free and open to the public.



For tickets, full schedule, and event updates, visit [www.peterborony.org/events/](http://www.peterborony.org/events/).

###

---

### About Visit Madison County, NY

*Visit Madison County, NY is the official Tourism Promotion Agency (TPA) of Madison County, New York, promoting the region’s natural beauty, rich heritage, and diverse attractions for over 30 years. As a designated New York State TPA, the organization promotes more than 300 attractions across the county. According to Tourism Economics, tourism generated 46.4 million in direct visitor spending in Madison County in 2024.*

*Nestled in the heart of Central New York, Madison County is where adventure seekers, history buffs, antique lovers, foodies, and couples searching for the perfect wedding destination all find their place. Home to Chittenango Falls, the International Boxing Hall of Fame, the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum, Oz-Stravaganza®, and the legendary Madison-Bouckville Antique Week, Madison County delivers authentic experiences and small-town charm that keep visitors coming back. Plan your visit at [www.visitmadisoncny.com](http://www.visitmadisoncny.com).*