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New Hampshire Sunday News | June 13/14, 2026

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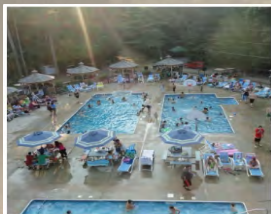


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Adventure on the horizon



PROVIDED BY SUNCOOK VALLEY ROTARY CLUB/ALAN MACRAE

The Suncook Valley Rotary Club will hold its annual Hot Air Balloon Rally July 31 through Aug. 2 in Pittsfield.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

The Seacoast **5**

White Mountains **8**

Lakes Region **9**

Dartmouth – Lake Sunapee **12**

Great North Woods **14**

Merrimack Valley **16**

Monadnock **18**



ON THE COVER: Midge and Bill Wallace of Greenwood Village, Colorado, take in the view from Artist's Bluff at Franconia Notch State Park on May 20. *David Lane/Union Leader Staff*

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THE SEACOAST

From harbor cruises and tall ships to fireworks and waterfront theater, New Hampshire's Seacoast is packed with summer fun both on and off the water, giving you plenty of ways to experience the state's 18-mile coastline.

By Krysten Godfrey Maddocks
Union Leader Staff

Prescott Park will host its signature summer musical this summer, "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella," beginning Thursday, June 19. Evening performances are typically held Thursdays through Sundays at the Wilcox Main Stage, with reservations available online and optional suggested donations.

Throughout the summer, Prescott Park will continue to offer free outdoor concerts and movie nights, with the Piscataqua River as a backdrop. For more information: prescottpark.org.

One of the Seacoast's largest nautical events cruises into town beginning July 23, with the return of the **Sail Portsmouth Maritime Festival**. The multi-day festival brings a flotilla of tall ships and maritime activities to Portsmouth Harbor, including the Parade of Sail, dockside tours, sailing excursions and waterfront entertainment.

The Parade of Sail will take place beginning at 7:30 p.m. on July 23. To get the best vantage point, you can buy tickets to board the M/V Shining Star and watch the ships come in. Additional two-hour ocean sails on the tall ships will take place from July 24-26 and range from \$80 to \$89 per person. For more informa-



PROVIDED BY PARADE OF SAIL

Parade of Sail Tall ships make their way through the harbor during a Parade of Sail, accompanied by an escort of vessels and a ceremonial water salute. The Parade of Sail will serve as the opening spectacle of the 2026 Sail Portsmouth Maritime Festival.

tion: sailportsmouth.org/sail-portsmouth-festival.

If you can't be in town to see the tall ships, you can still head out for a sunset cruise, take a harbor tour or board a party ship operated by the **Isles of Shoals Steamship Company**. Cruises operate on weekdays and weekends, during the day and evening. You can also opt for a cruise itinerary that includes a full-day excursion

to Star Island. Ships depart from Market Street in downtown Portsmouth. For cruise schedules and tickets: islesofshoals.com.

Visitors looking for more active ways to soak in the coastline may opt to kayak in estuaries or cycle the rocky coast. **Portsmouth Kayak Adventures** offers both kayak and stand-up paddle boat guided tours and specialty tours, including

Wednesday night Ladies Night tours and Full Moon Tours. For schedules and pricing: portsmouthkayak.com.

If you'd prefer to explore the coast on dry land, consider riding with **PortCity Bike Tours**. The company offers guided e-bike and traditional tours through Portsmouth and New Castle, including coastal and harbor-focused rides, starting at

\$75 per rider. For daily schedules and pricing: portsmouthnhhistorical-biketours.com

For daytrippers looking for a quiet coastal break, **Great Island Common** in New Castle offers idyllic lighthouse views, picnic areas, a recently updated playground and beach access just minutes from downtown Portsmouth. The Common is open to the public from 9 a.m. to

9 p.m. daily, and costs \$15 per vehicle. For more information: newcastle.nh.gov/great-island-common.

At the **Seacoast Science Center** in Rye, you can blend marine education with outdoor recreation and find something every member of your family will enjoy. The center's Atlantic Grill Music by the

See **Seacoast**, Page 6

Seacoast

From Page 5

Sea concert series begins July 2 and takes place every Thursday evening through July 30 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

During the day, children can explore museum exhibits, dip their hands in touch tanks, or frolic on the adjacent seaside playground and tidepools. For more information: seacoastsciencecenter.org.

A few miles down the road, **Hampton Beach** offers one of the state's busiest summer entertainment venues. Free weekly fireworks displays take place every Wednesday night at 9:30 p.m. on the beach near B and C streets, with additional shows planned

for July 4 and Labor Day weekend. Free Monday Night Movies return to the Seashell Stage on Ocean Boulevard on July 6 alongside nightly concerts and special events.

Children are the stars of Hampton Beach the week of Aug. 17 at the Hampton Beach Children's Festival, where they can participate in a parade and see magicians and other entertainers perform throughout the week. For more information: hamptonbeach.org.

The surf and sand provide their own entertainment, but Hampton Beach also features opportunities for surf lessons, camps and rent-

als through **Cinnamon Rainbows Surf Company**. You can also rent scooters through **Hampton Beach Scooter Rentals** on Ocean Boulevard. For more information:

cinnamonrainbows.com and scootersnh.com.

Too hot for beachcombing on Ocean Boulevard? The **Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom** hosts a cool slate of concerts all summer long, while Aces & Eights Casino gives you the opportunity to spin the roulette wheel, play a hand of poker or try your luck at one of the gaming machines. For more information: casinoballroom.com and acesandeights casinos.com.



"Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella" is this year's summer musical at Prescott Park.

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WHITE MOUNTAINS

Whether you're looking to immerse yourself in nature or planning a family vacation, summer in the White Mountains offers a variety of activities set against stunning scenery.

By Krysten Godfrey Maddocks
Union Leader Staff

Start your family adventure by driving up Route 16 to the heart of the region's family entertainment scene in the Conway region, where visitors continue to make summer traditions.

In Glen, **Story Land** is introducing several new attractions and experiences for 2026, including the return of the Turtle Twirl and Crazy Barn rides, both expected to reopen in June. New ticketed experiences include the "Topsy Turvy Party," a Cinderella-themed interactive show held three times daily at the Hilltop Theater, and "Daniel Tiger's Morning Make-Believe," a breakfast experience offered daily through Sept. 7. For the first time, Story Land is offering TimeSaver line-skipping passes starting at \$49.99. For more information: storylandnh.com.

Cool off and take a scenic ride on the **Conway Scenic Railroad** in North Conway Village. Departing from its historic 1874 train station, the railroad offers Valley Train excursions and the Mountaineer route through Crawford Notch. On select Saturdays, adults can opt to show off their detective skills on "Murder on the Rails," a 55-minute interactive murder mystery train ride priced at \$59. For schedules and tickets: conwayscenic.com.

Who can resist celebrating Christmas in July? On the other side of the Kancamagus Highway, in Jefferson, **Santa's Village** offers Christmas-themed rollercoasters and amusement rides, with date-specific admission tickets for June FEASTival and summertime visits. You can also visit Santa Claus, munch



PROVIDED BY STORY LAND

The Roar-O-Saurus Coaster is the most intense ride at Story Land.

on Christmas cookies and feed the reindeer before you chill out at Santa's Water Park. For more information: santasvillage.com.

Families can continue their White Mountains adventure in Lincoln, where the **Whale's Tale Waterpark** is now open for the summer season. The park's popular "Flowboarding" attraction combines surfing, skateboarding and snowboarding on a simulated wave system, with instructors available for beginners.

General admission is \$50, but visitors arriving after 2 p.m. can enjoy discounted admission for \$29. Residents living within 30 miles of the park can

also receive reduced admission on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information: whalestalewaterpark.net.

Lincoln also serves as a hub for some of the White Mountains' most unique attractions. **Alpine Adventures** offers zipline canopy tours and off-road mountain excursions, while nearby **Clark's Bears** continues a family tradition dating back to 1949, featuring live black bear performances throughout the summer. For more information: clarksbears.com.

For visitors looking to take in the region's natural beauty, the White Mountains offer no shortage of scenic drives and hiking

trails. The Kancamagus Highway stretches roughly 30 miles between Lincoln and Conway through the White Mountain National Forest, with gorgeous views and access to destinations including Sabbaday Falls, Rocky Gorge, Lower Falls and the Swift River.

Farther north, **Crawford Notch State Park** offers more than 5,700 acres of hiking trails, waterfalls, wildlife viewing and fishing. One of the park's best-known hikes leads to **Arethusa Falls**, one of New England's tallest single-drop waterfalls. The popular trail is a 3-mile round trip with approximately 850 feet of elevation gain through forest

and brook crossings. Find your perfect hike at nhstateparks.org.

If you want to visit the tallest peak in the northeastern United States, consider driving up the **Mount Washington Auto Road**, to Mount Washington State Park. If you happen to visit on a clear day, you can catch 360-degree glimpses of parts of Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Maine, Quebec and the Atlantic Ocean from the Mount Washington Observatory. The Visitor Center at the top of Mount Washington is open daily, during the summer/fall, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (times subject to change). For more information: mt-washington.com or nhstateparks.org/find-parks-trails/mt-washington-state-park.

Wildlife enthusiasts can experience the northern White Mountains through **Gorham Moose Tours** in Gorham. The guided evening excursions last three to four hours and cost \$35, taking visitors into remote areas where moose sightings are common during the summer months. For more information: gorhammoosetours.org.

Looking for something to do when the sun goes down? Summer evenings in the mountains bring a variety of live music and festivals. In North Conway, the **Arts Jubilee Summer Concert Series** returns to Cranmore Mountain Resort throughout the season, including the Aug. 13 "Changes in Latitudes" Jimmy Buffett tribute concert at the base of Cranmore's North Slope.

You can also check out the White Mountain Boogie & Blues Festival Aug. 14-16 in Thornton and enjoy live blues music and camping. For more information: whitemountainboogie.com.

LAKES REGION

New Hampshire's Lakes Region sits near the state's population hub, anchored by the towns of Laconia, Meredith, Gilford and Wolfeboro — and Lake Winnepesaukee. You won't have to travel far to find countless ways you can stay and play this summer — with activities stretching from lounging to ziplining.

By Krysten Godfrey Maddocks
Union Leader Staff

Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines! The summer season begins June 13 with the **103rd annual Laconia Motorcycle Week**, the world's oldest motorcycle rally. The weeklong rally spans two weekends and brings motorcycle enthusiasts from across the country to Laconia, Weirs Beach, Loudon and surrounding communities for races, bike shows and street festivities. Kick off the fun at

the 20th annual Peter Makris Memorial Run around Lake Winnepesaukee on June 13 at 10:30 a.m. For pre-registration and details: NASWA.com.

Motorcycle enthusiasts can also take part in Motorcycle Demo Rides at New Hampshire Motor Speedway, running daily from June 13-20, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. You won't want to miss the annual Hill Climb on June 17 at Gunstock, where riders attempt to race motorcycles up Torger Tokle Memorial Ski Jump hill. Lakeside Avenue in Weirs Beach will

once again serve as the epicenter of the action. For the Laconia Motorcycle Week schedule: laconiamcweek.com.

Off the main road, shoreline attractions draw families, couples and seniors alike. In Meredith and Weirs Beach, you can visit the **Winnepesaukee Railway**, which offers two-hour round-trip excursions from Meredith, or shorter one-hour rides from Weirs Beach aboard historic rail lines dating back to 1848. For schedules and pricing: gsscenic.com/winnepesaukee-railway.

On foot or bicycle, take some

time to explore the **WOW Trail**, a paved multi-use trail connecting Lakeport, downtown Laconia, and Belmont. Take in scenic views of Lake Winnepesaukee, Opechee Bay and Lake Winnisquam on a 2.7-mile stretch between Meredith and Lakeport. The trail meets with Belmont's Winnisquam Scenic Trail, providing visitors 4.25 miles of continuous trail between Lakeport and Belmont's Osborne's Agway.

Looking for a unique way to cruise the lake? No problem. Island-inspired **Tiki Hut Boats** depart from Lakeside Avenue and

offer 90-minute public cruises priced at \$49 midweek and \$60 on weekends. Choose to cruise to reggae or Motown music, view fireworks, or celebrate Christmas in July. Or you can create your own theme when you charter your own boat. Private weekend charters range from \$800 to \$1,154 for two hours. For schedules and pricing: tikhutboats.com.

For a relaxing lakeside day, **Ellacoya State Park** features a 600-foot sandy beach with sweeping

See Lakes Region, Page 10

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Lakes Region

From Page 9

views of Lake Winnepesaukee and the White Mountains. A limited number of campsites and RV hookups are available by reservation. Farther north in Tamworth, White Lake State Park offers swimming, fishing, hiking trails, camping and boat rentals. To reserve a day pass or campsite at either park: nhstateparks.org.

If you're seeking thrills, **Gunstock Mountain Resort** in Gilford transforms from a ski mountain to an adventure park during the summer. The resort's zipline tour sends riders soaring more than 1.6 miles above the forest canopy during a 90-minute guided adventure. Scenic chairlift rides



PROVIDED BY TIKI HUT BOATS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Take a 90-minute cruise on the Tikila Sunset, The Big Kahuna or Tikila Sunrise.

begin July 4 weekend, offering panoramic summit views. Gunstock also features mountain biking, hiking, aerial treetop courses and its popular Mountain Coaster, which lets you control your own

speed as you twist and turn on downhill tracks. For pricing, tickets and schedules: gunstock.com.

History buffs and casual hikers will find plenty to enjoy at **Castle in the Clouds** in Moultonborough. Over-

looking Lake Winnepesaukee, this mountaintop estate was built in 1914 by shoe manufacturer Thomas Plant. Visitors can explore the mansion on a guided or self-guided tour, then head to the trails

below to see waterfalls and take in the scenery. Even if you have visited before, the property is worth a return trip for dinner or seasonal events such as Music Nights and Yoga on the Lawn. For a

full event listing: castleintheclouds.org/calendar-of-events.

Looking for something to do when the sun goes down? The region's nightlife heats up during summer. In downtown Laconia, the **Lakeport Opera House Summer Concert Series** hosts rock, country, and blues performances throughout July and August. In Meredith, **The Winnepesaukee Playhouse** will stage productions including "The Complete History of America (abridged!)," "The Odd Couple" and "Wait Until Dark." For times and schedules: lakeportopera.com/shows-events or winnepesaukeeplayhouse.org.

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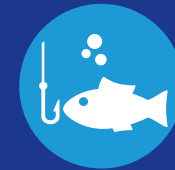
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DARTMOUTH-LAKE SUNAPEE

The Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee region, also known as the Upper Valley, fosters a blend of history, art and cutting-edge medical discoveries at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. Route 89 ties it all together, with sweeping vistas that are almost an attraction in themselves.

By Kathleen D. Bailey
Special to the Union Leader

In Warner, stop at the **Mount Kearsarge Indian Museum**. The museum was the dream of Charles “Bud” Thompson, a lifelong collector of Native American art who founded it at age 70.

Age didn’t hinder him, nor did the fact that he didn’t have a degree in museum studies — or a high school diploma. Today the museum features a collection of artifacts from tribes across the Americas, lectures,

powwows and contemporary art from living Native artisans. For more information: indianmuseum.org

Warner is also home to three other museums: the **New Hampshire Telephone Museum**, the **Warner Firefighters Museum** and the **Upton-Chandler House of the Warner Historical Society**. There’s an independent bookstore, **Main Street Bookends**, and everything from coffeehouses to fine dining.

After the museum visits, consider a drive up Mount Kearsarge and a hike to the

windswept summit, which offers panoramic views from Mount Monadnock to the coast. From the top, the summits of Pack Monadnock, Crotched Mountain and the Uncanoonuc Mountains are visible, along with a glimpse of the Boston skyline. For more information: nhstateparks.org.

More history — and some serious gardening — awaits at **The Fells** in Newbury. The Fells was the summer home of John Hay, personal secretary to Abraham



UNION LEADER FILE

The New Hampshire Telephone Museum features a range of phones collected from different eras.

See **Dartmouth**, Page 13



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Dartmouth

From Page 12

Lincoln and a renowned diplomat in his own right.

Hay bought the property, with frontage on Lake Sunapee and views of Mount Sunapee, as a retreat from Washington summers. He fell in love with the area, writing to a correspondent that he was “daft about the lake.”

But while Hay sought escape, guests sought him out. He entertained a who’s who of late 19th-century figures, including President Theodore Roosevelt, whose visit is commemorated in the “Teddy Room.”

Hay’s son Clarence inherited the property and, with his wife Alice,

transformed the original farmhouse into a mansion and the gardens into a showplace. Clarence studied landscape design at Harvard, and Alice modeled the gardens on ones she had admired in Europe, with a special passion for roses.

The Fells is open to the public in summer, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a preservation project of the Garden Conservancy. For more information: thefells.org.

A short drive up Route 89 brings you to Hanover and Dartmouth College. **Dartmouth’s Hood Museum of Art** holds more than

72,000 objects representing artists from six continents, including Native American, European, American, Asian, Indigenous Australian, African and Melanesian art.

The collection ranges from six Assyrian stone reliefs from the palace of Ashurnasirpal II, dating to around 900 B.C., to works by Picasso and the Dutch masters. For more information: hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu.

And if the summer heat becomes too much, there’s always a dip in one of the many lakes and ponds dotting the area — or in Lake Sunapee itself.



PROVIDED BY THE FELLS/GREAT ISLAND PHOTOGRAPHY

This azalea rock garden is one of the several gardens available for viewing at The Fells in Newbury.

Joy CONNECTION WONDER

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GREAT NORTH WOODS

Another world exists beyond the ski towns, theme parks and soaring peaks of the White Mountains. It's a land of windswept ridgelines, majestic forests and sparkling lakes — a place where outdoor recreation thrives alongside the history and culture of this wild region.

By Kathleen D. Bailey
Special to the Union Leader

The Tillotson Center in Colebrook began life as a horse barn in 1909, serving as a Grange hall and storage barn for the Nugent family before the center was established, initially through a donation from Louise Tillotson.

A full summer calendar includes children's theater, STEM activities, adult theater, a drama camp and concerts featuring the center's 1928 Steinway grand piano. The Carriage Lane Players call the 171-seat theater home. For more information: tillotsoncenter.org.

The arts also thrive at the **Great North Woods Center for the Arts** in Columbia. Theater, concerts, lectures and more are offered from a restored barn. Don't miss Great North Woods Music Day on June 27, which will feature 11 performances by 25 performers in a wide variety of music genres and styles. For more information: gnwca.org.

The center's calendar also features four free family shows by the Patchwork Players of **Weathervane Theatre**. Weathervane, based in Whitefield, is celebrating its 61st season of professional summer repertory. This year's offerings range

from "Peter Pan Goes Wrong," a family-friendly comedy, to "Rent" to "Much Ado About Nothing." For more information: weathervanenh.org.

For a close look at local history, visit the **Poore Farm**, a restored North Country farmstead located

between Colebrook and Pittsburg. The site portrays one family's life from 1830 to the 1980s. The 100-acre farm was bequeathed by J.C. Kenneth Poore, the last of his line, to serve as a historical and educational site. For more information: poorefarm.org.

The North Country is a haven for hunters, anglers and riders. ATV trails abound at Jericho Mountain State Park, and the First and Second Connecticut lakes offer remoteness and relaxation.

Both are also a short drive from the Canadian

border, so keep that passport handy.

Don't miss the annual **North Country Moose Festival** scheduled to be held in Colebrook and Canaan, Vermont, on Aug. 28 and 29. For more information: mygonorth.com/moose-festival.



PROVIDED BY LEW WHITENER

Last year's productions at the Weathervane Theatre included "One Man, Two Guvnors." New Hampshire's northernmost professional theater will once again offer summer stock in Whitefield.

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MERRIMACK VALLEY

New Hampshire's Merrimack Valley offers everything from curated history to a glimpse of tomorrow, all wrapped up in charming back roads and bustling main streets.

By Kathleen D. Bailey
Special to the Union Leader

Start your Merrimack Valley adventure in Nashua, the state's second-largest city and a hub of history, culture and tech energy.

Experience historic Main Street during the **Summer Stroll**, now in its third year and inspired by the popular Holiday Stroll each November. The event closes part of Main Street to traffic, featuring vendors, makers, food trucks, live entertainment and activities for kids.

This year's stroll is Saturday, July 25. For more information: downtownnashua.org/summer-stroll

Manchester's Millyard is rich in history, with the **Millyard Museum** chronicling the city's storied past. Explore French-Canadian culture on the West Side, a neighborhood that once had the character of a city unto itself.

Manchester is also a center for the performing arts, with the mainstage **Palace Theatre** and the intimate **Rex Theatre**. A few shows worth checking out in-

clude "The Cher Show," playing through June 21, "Beatlemania Again: The Beatles Experience Live on Stage!" (July 11) and "Changes in Latitudes: America's Premier Jimmy Buffet Tribute" (Aug. 15) For more information on additional shows and tickets: palacetheatre.org.

Head to the **SNHU Arena** for everything from ice shows to bull riding. Shows this summer include Shinedown (July 20), An Evening with Seth Meyers (Aug. 7) and WWE (Aug. 13). For more

See **Merrimack Valley**, Page 17



Milo the Moose meets with a young race fan at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon.

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Merrimack Valley

From Page 16

information: snhuarena.com.

Concord has a growing arts district anchored by the **Capitol Center for the Arts**, which hosts national acts, and its Bank of NH Stage for music and smaller events. Check out the To the 9:00's — 90's and 00's dance party on June 19 and Juston McKinney on July 31 and Aug. 1. For more information: ccanh.com.

The **Red River Theatres** screens independent, art-house and foreign films. For movie and show listings: redrivertheatres.org.

Downtown also offers a trove of history, including the classic **State House** and

the **New Hampshire Historical Society**.

Looking for high speed fun? Head to **New Hampshire Motor Speedway** for the Dollar Tree 301, part of the NASCAR Cup Series, on Aug. 23. If you want to be more than a spectator and experience driving a race car, check out the NASCAR Racing Experience held on dates throughout the summer. For more information: nhms.com.

Then touch the future at the **McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center**. The complex honors Christa McAuliffe, the Concord teacher whose dream of being the first educator in space

ended when Challenger broke apart shortly after launch in 1986, and Alan Shepard, the first American in space and one of only 12 people to walk on the moon.

The facility offers exhibits, an observatory, planetarium shows and more. For more information: starhop.com.

When you're ready for some quiet, slip next door to **Canterbury Shaker Village**. The complex has been restored to reflect the life and work of the industrious religious community that once lived there.

The village offers barn dances, concerts, garden

talks and more, but it's perhaps best experienced on a summer afternoon, when the loudest sound is birdsong. Shut your phone off and listen.

For more information: shakers.org.

One of the area's most distinctive festivals is the annual **Suncook Valley Rotary Hot Air Balloon Festival**, held this year Aug. 1-3 in Pittsfield. The rally features balloon flights, tethered rides, food vendors, a craft fair, helicopter rides, a 5K race and pancake breakfasts — plus a balloon glow that lights up the night sky. For more information: nhballoonrally.org.



PROVIDED BY GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN

This Disney princess and her subjects are right at home at last year's Nashua Summer Stroll. This year's event takes place Saturday, July 25.

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MONADNOCK

New Hampshire's Monadnock region, known as the Currier and Ives corner, offers everything from world-class entertainment to shopping, all served up in historic buildings off winding country roads.

By Kathleen D. Bailey
Special to the Union Leader

The Peterborough Players, formed in 1933, are still putting on shows in the barn, only now it's air-conditioned. The Players, a professional stock company, will present five shows this summer, including "Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery" and a new take on Jane Austen's "Emma." "Million Dollar Quartet" explores the evening in December 1956 at Sun Records when Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash and a then-little-known Elvis Presley met and jammed. For more information: peterboroughplayers.org.

Peterborough is also home to the **Mariposa Museum**, a world cultural center offering music, art and education on different cultures. According to the museum's website, the Mariposa is a museum of human understanding. Originally a museum of folk art, the Mariposa now also explores human experience and culture through a range of media and in a more contemporary context.

Exhibits for all ages may examine a region of the world or cultures in transition, multiculturalism in the U.S., or an individual experience, all with an eye to understanding a diverse world and fostering greater compassion, understanding and peace. For more information:



PROVIDED BY CATHEDRAL OF THE PINES

Clouds frame Mount Monadnock behind the Altar of the Nation at Cathedral of the Pines, a memorial to those who served the country.

mariposamuseum.org.

Don't forget to eat at the 75-year-old **Peterborough Diner** before crossing the street to **The Toadstool Bookshop**.

Keene is a college town with energy and buzz. The wide main street encourages shopping and dining. Main Street is also home to the **Colonial Theatre**, an Art Deco gem built in 1923. The Colonial hosted vaudeville, movies and concerts in the 20th

century.

After it fell into disrepair, a determined group of citizens raised funds for a restoration, and the now-nonprofit hosts music, dance and theater. For more information: thecolonial.org.

For a different taste, check out the smaller towns around Keene such as Stoddard, headquarters for early glass-making; Nelson, birthplace of the modern contra dance

movement; or Harrisville, once a textile manufacturing hub. Harrisville's 19th-century mill buildings have been restored, and the 1843 general store, now owned by Historic Harrisville, is a good place to relax over coffee or tea.

Jaffrey is home to the "Buddies" monument, a renowned World War I remembrance carved and donated to the town by Danish sculptor Viggo Brandt-Erichsen. Brandt-



PROVIDED BY PETERBOROUGH PLAYERS

"Jack's House" was one of the plays presented in the first summer of the Peterborough Players. The professional summer theater group celebrates 93 years in 2026.

Erichsen was working in Paris in the 1920s when he fell in love with an American tourist, Dorothy Caldwell. Caldwell shared memories of childhood summers in Jaffrey. They married, and when she died, Brandt-Erichsen vowed to bury her in Jaffrey. He ended up staying and donating "Buddies" to the town — a love story that crossed two continents and an ocean.

Jaffrey is also the base for **Mount Monadnock**. At 3,165 feet, Mount Monadnock is nearly 1,000 feet higher than any other

mountain peak within 30 miles. For campsite and hiking reservations: nhstateparks.org.

And for a moment of reflection, stop by the **Cathedral of the Pines** in Rindge, an outdoor memorial to those who served. Begun by the Sloane family in 1945, the complex features an Altar of the Nations, a bell tower honoring women who served and stunning views of Mount Monadnock. It's a fitting way to begin or end your Monadnock day. For more information: cathedralofthepines.org.

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