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NH GUIDE TO SUMMER 2024



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Enjoy tiki time on Lake Winnepesaukee

Homegrown business takes thousands of people out on the big lake every summer.

By Kaarin Clausen

When Donald Gagnon decided to purchase three tiki boats while living in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, he never expected that his purchase would lead to a full-time job. After selling his truck dealership — Rochester Truck — in 2016 and moving to the “Orange State,” Gagnon would often see tiki boats floating back and forth on the water while relaxing at a local bar.

A brilliant idea came to him: Why not purchase a couple of boats to resell back in New Hampshire, as well as keep one for himself? He would then have a project to keep him busy while visiting his home state and could also make some money from a unique investment opportunity.

Only one boat sold after Gagnon returned to New Hampshire; however, he did receive plenty of calls from people asking for a ride on one of the floating tiki huts. After hosting a couple of bachelor and bachelorette parties on the boat, as well as giving a few rides to people he knew, Gagnon said, “Oh, what the heck, I’ll try it.” In 2017, Tiki Hut Boats of NH opened its doors (or planks) in Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee.

Based at the Winnepesaukee Pier, Tiki Hut Boats of NH quickly became popular as word spread. Gagnon recalls, “The first year, I did everything myself. We had 179 people on the boat that summer. The next couple



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TIKI HUT BOATS OF NH

The most popular cruise at Tiki Hut Boats of NH is the 90-Minute Express, which cruises around Governor’s Island, weather permitting.

of years, we did 3,000 and 6,000 people. Then two years ago, we took 14,000 people out on the water.”

Due to the rapid rise in passengers each consecutive year, it became clear that Gagnon would need some assistance with the overload. He enlisted the help of Captain Mark Jennings — a local DJ at Lakes FM 101.5. Jennings, who has partnered with Gagnon for the past three years, is one of 23 tiki hut boat captains.

All captains hold a commercial li-

cense and have been vetted, trained and strategically chosen based on their experience with boating and knowledge of the lake. They make up almost half of the company’s 50 current employees.

“All of our employees are part-time and probably half are retired,” said Gagnon.

“We have a couple of college kids, some firemen and a few school-teachers. We don’t let anyone work more than four hours per day, or two trips. That way, everyone is fresh.”

Cruising on Lake Winni

The most popular trip on the Tiki Hut Boats of NH is the 90-minute Express Tiki Hut Cruise. This voyage departs from Anthony’s at the Pier every two hours beginning at 10 a.m. and sails around Governor’s Island (weather permitting). Prices are \$48 per person during the week and \$59 per person on weekends. Visitors can bring their own beer, wine or other drinks and should be ready for a great time. These boats can

also accommodate two-hour private charters for up to 10 people, at a price of \$800.

The Big Kahuna is the largest tiki hut boat and holds up to 27 people. It features a large bar area, plenty of seating, a Bluetooth stereo system to play guest music and a bathroom. Rental rates for the Big Kahuna start at \$650 per hour for up to 16 people, with a two-hour minimum. Additional passengers are \$40 per person per hour. These cruises leave on the half hour starting at 10:30 a.m., with the last cruise departing at 6:30 p.m.

Additional trips on the Tiki Hut Boats include Reggae Night on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m., starting at \$50 (all ages welcome); Fireworks Cruises on The Big Kahuna, 90-minute trips on Weirs Beach fireworks nights departing at 8:30 p.m. for \$59 per person; midweek specials featuring 90-minute private charters up to 10 people for \$400 (a \$400 savings from weekend and holiday prices); and Karaoke Night.

Mother Nature usually determines which of four routes will be taken for each days' excursions.

"We do around Governor's Island; we do Sally's Gut; we do Paugus Bay and we do Meredith," said Gagnon. "Sally's Gut and Governor's Island are probably the two most popular trips. We do Paugus Bay on really windy days because we can go in there and hide, and it'll still be comfortable for the customers."

Gagnon — also nicknamed "Hulk" — said the Governor's Island trip is his favorite, but it's also the most difficult.

"I have a lot of useless trivia about people who live on the island," he said. "But the wind on the back side is horrible and it makes it rough on the boat. The Big Kahuna is 16 feet wide and 27 feet long, so it's twice as long as most boats and definitely twice as wide. Its size makes it extremely stable."

For additional stability, Gagnon has begun making upgrades to his fleet by converting the current wooden bases to engineered all-aluminum bases. The smallest boat is near completion for use in this year's tours. It will feature three benches around the bar and a large bench at the back, accommodating a total of 16 people. Next year, he will begin on the second small boat. The upgraded boats are expected to last 20 to 25 years.

'On tiki time'

When people put on their complimentary flower leis and step onto a tiki hut boat, their cares and worries seem to float away. Once the music begins playing on the 600-watt stereo system and a drink is in hand, passengers are "on tiki time."

This year, the Boston Beer Company will sponsor four Saturdays of free boat rides, and people can register for the giveaway in local grocery stores. The company will be promoting their new vodka seltzer — a vodka mix with different tropical flavors — and will also be providing free Hawaiian shirts to passengers on Reggae Nights.

Gagnon said booking in advance is a good idea, not only for special events, but for regular boat rides during the summer.

"I would say 99% of people book their rides in advance," he said. "Saturdays are pretty much sold out for the whole summer, but there are slots here and there that you can get on. Midweek, you can almost always grab a boat."

Reservations for the Tiki Hut Boats of NH can be made online for rides every day of the week from mid-May through Labor Day. A shortened schedule will be available Labor Day through Columbus Day.

Gagnon has a passion for boating and putting smiles on the faces of



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TIKI HUT BOATS OF NH

Company owner Donald Gagnon is working on upgrading his smaller Tiki Hut Boats to feature aluminum bottoms, which will make each vessel more stable and last longer.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TIKI HUT BOATS OF NH

The Big Kahuna is the largest vessel in the Tiki Hut Boats of NH fleet.

his customers.

"I've had a boat for the last 40 years," he said. "I never did this for money, and I never did it for a job. I did this for something to do. Now, it's a seven-day-a-week job. We've had 14,000 people on the boat in three and a half months. That's a lot

of people."

For information about the Tiki Hut Boats of NH and to make reservations, visit tikihutboatsofnh.com. For fun excursion photos and information on the aluminum boat upgrades and special events, visit their Facebook page.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TUSCAN VILLAGE

Folks find a pleasant way to spend a nice summer evening by spreading out on chairs and blankets around Lake Park at Tuscan Village in Salem.

On The Cover

A large crowd enjoys the fireworks on a warm summer night at the Tuscan Village in Salem. A great entertainment spot in Southern New Hampshire, Lake Park at Tuscan Village is “a community space that welcome guests of all ages. Packed with fire pits, Adirondack chairs, a stage with performances, a beer garden, two bars, a restaurant and a lake for activities with LL Bean,” according to tuscanvillagesalem.com. Visit the website to learn more about events happening throughout the summer.

*Cover Design: Elyse Thornton
Photo Provided by Tuscan Village*

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- Authentic coal-fired steam locomotives run from May 25 through Sept. 27.
- The annual “Race the Cog” event is scheduled for Sunday, June 23. Three waves of runners will have separate start times:

First biodiesel train, traveling at 3 mph, leaves at 9 a.m. Second biodiesel train, traveling at 4 mph, leaves at 9:15 a.m. Third and final biodiesel train, traveling at 5 mph, leaves at 9:30 a.m.

To buy tickets and for directions to the Marshfield Base Station, visit thecog.com.



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Bring the Family: Sculptured Sand

Sculptured Sand, an enchanting summer event presented by the creators of Ice Castles, is returning to North Woodstock for its second year.

Beginning on Saturday, June 22, and continuing every weekend through Sept. 2, Sculptured Sand will provide a forest overflowing with stories of fairy tales combined with over 25 intricately carved sand sculptures, all designed and hand-carved by award-winning master artists.

“We’re excited to be back in 2024, with our one-of-a-kind family experience,” said Kyle Standifird, organizer of Sculptured Sand. “With its blend of artistry and natural beauty, Sculptured Sand promises to create unforgettable memories for all who join us.”

Tickets are sold in 30-minute entry time slot increments. Once guests have entered, they are welcome to enjoy Sculptured Sand for as long as they would like. Tickets are on sale now at sculpturedsand.com.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SCULPTURED SAND

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Read it for New Hampshire's best dining, beauty,
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NEW HAMPSHIRE
SUNDAY NEWS

Open up New Hampshire.

Bring the Family: Water Country

This summer, Water Country in Portsmouth will host a KidsFest full of activities Aug. 12 through 18. Not only will kids get to enjoy family-friendly special events, but they can also take a dip in the newly re-imagined Happy Harbor.

“We can’t wait to open our park this summer and see more families gather for these events and experience the new Happy Harbor,” said Water Country General Manager Matt Hehl. “We’re continuously looking for ways to improve the park, and hope we can bring more to the community with these offerings.”

Water Country will host an Opening Celebration (June 1-2), Celebrate America Week (July 1-7), Seacoast Week (July 8-14), and the annual Father’s Day Flop (June 16).

To buy tickets and learn more about the events, visit watercountry.com.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY WATER COUNTRY

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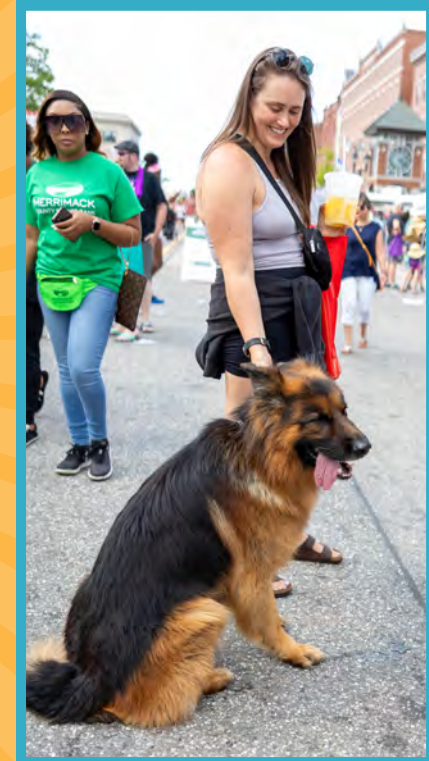


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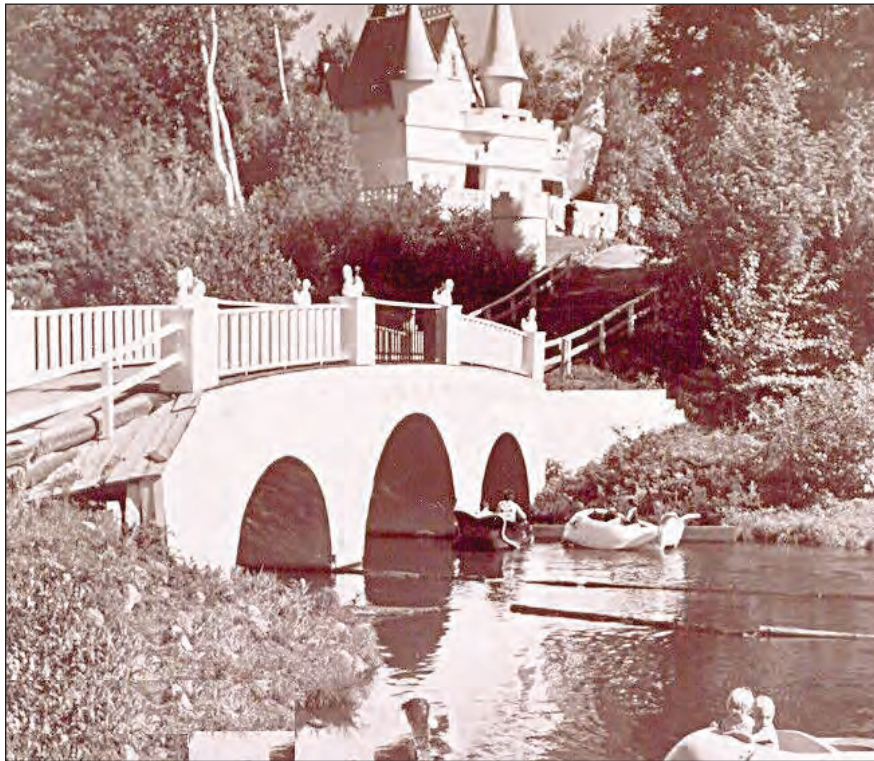


PHOTO PROVIDED BY STORYLAND

An old photograph shows the early days of Storyland in Glen.

Story Land celebrates 70th anniversary

Celebration event coming in June; new Moo Lagoon opens this summer.

By Kathleen D. Bailey

It all began with a doll.

When Bob Morrell was stationed in postwar Germany, he and his wife Ruth made friends with an older German woman, Frau Edith Von Arps. Von Arps created dolls of figures from fairy tales and folk tales, and sold them around town. The Morrells ended up with 25 of her creations, and brought them back home to the New Hampshire mountains. The dolls cried out for settings, the settings cried out for children to enjoy them, and Story Land was born.

The beloved theme park celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. According to Marketing Director Lauren Hawkins, the park is ready to welcome new and repeat visitors for a summer-long celebration.

According to the Story Land website, the Morrells knew they were on to something, and they bought a parcel of land in Glen for their Story Land. They opened for business in 1954, one year before Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California.

The Morrells quickly expanded on Von Arps' creations. They added Cinderella's coach and castle, still beloved by little girls, in 1957. They expanded their ride offerings in 1964, and in 1967 Bob scored a German

carousel train to tote his little guests around the park. They expanded the railroad, brought in antique cars, more rides including the Roar-O-Saurus roller coaster, and shows including a current "Daniel Tiger" performance for the littlest ones.

A companion attraction, Heritage New Hampshire, didn't last, shutting its doors in 2006, but the company bounced back with the Living Shores Aquarium, added in 2018. The company will add its newest attraction, the Moo Lagoon Water Play Park, this summer. "It's a farm theme and really fun," Hawkins said. "There are cows in sunglasses, pigs in sunglasses."

Since 2009, Story Land has been owned and operated by Palace Entertainment. "They've been able to upgrade the facility, and also to keep the traditions alive," Hawkins said.

The Morrells' original guests return when they can, accompanied by their children and now grandchildren. "It's really a super-generational park," Hawkins said. "It's a tradition with many families." Story Land welcomes these repeat customers with Grandparents Day in September and "Nostalgia Nights," when Story Land alumni can enjoy the park without children. These visitors either don't have children or need a night out, according to Hawkins. "We have adult children come with parents, and have their pictures taken on the same attractions they did as kids," she said. "It's a chance to be a kid again." This year's Nostalgia Nights will be July 13 and 27 and Aug. 10.

Hawkins is working on a 70th-anniversary documentary film, with

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vintage footage and interviews with Story Land alumni. The formal birthday celebration will be toward the end of June, “though that’s not fully fleshed-out yet,” she added.

Story Land will close out its 70th anniversary season with “Epic September,” a series of events with heart. The Believe in Books Fun Run to encourage literacy will be held Sept. 2. Grandparents Day is Sept. 8, with one grandparent admitted free for every paid admission. On Sept. 14 and 15 the park goes relatively quiet for “Sensory Sensitive Weekend.” “Safety Awareness Day” is Sept. 22. And Story Land hosts Hero Appreciation Days Sept. 8, 15 and 22, with first responders, police, fire personnel, EMTs and medical professionals admitted for free.

Check out Moo Lagoon

According to the Story Land



RENDERING PROVIDED BY STORYLAND

This rendering shows Storyland’s new Moo Lagoon waterpark area, opening this summer during the park’s 70th anniversary year.

website, Moo Lagoon features a new slide tower with three unique body slides:

- Cob Cruiser
- Silk Husker

- Husk Runner

There’s also a spray playground with squirting flowers, farm-themed fountains and a tractor that soaks guests. A newly constructed bath

house features changing rooms, showers and restrooms.

The park’s newest shopping experience — The Stock Yard — is located inside Moo Lagoon and offers swimming essentials and lockers to rent.

And nearby the waterpark area is the newly upgraded Barn Yard Pizza food stop.

The most popular attraction depends on the family, the children and their ages, according to Hawkins. But in a recent Instagram survey, the “Bamboo Chutes” log flume was the winner.

Asked what makes the park still attractive after 70 years, Hawkins said, “I think it’s the ability to forget the real world. You get inside these gates and you let go of all the craziness. Plus, it’s a chance to make memories.”

Story Land is located at 850 Route 16 in Glen. For more, call 603-383-4186 or visit storylandnh.com.



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PHOTO PROVIDED BY A&A BALLOON RIDES

A&A Balloon Rides of Salem offers rides in these hot air balloons — named Passion and Sunrise Passion.

Let the ‘winds welcome you’ and ‘the sun bless you’

Enjoy the floating sensation and endless breathtaking views from these balloons.

By Robert Levey

For Andre Boucher, owner of A&A Balloon Rides in Salem, his love of hot air ballooning began in 1986 on his way to work when he saw a balloon in the sky and decided to follow it. It was flying at the Suncook Valley Rotary Hot Air Balloon Festival in Pittsfield.

“When it landed, I asked how I

could get a ride,” said Boucher.

After his first flight, he asked the pilot where he could buy a balloon.

“I began taking lessons and crewing for the pilot every chance I had,” he said.

Since receiving his commercial pilot’s license in October 1994, Boucher has flown passengers throughout southern New Hampshire. Their smaller balloon, measuring 120,000

cubic feet and named Sunrise Passion, holds between four and five passengers with a maximum total weight of 1,000 pounds.

Named Passion and measuring 180,000 cubic feet, their larger balloon holds between eight and nine passengers with a maximum passenger capacity of 1,600 pounds.

“I have flown over 2,700 hours to date,” he added.

As for the thrill of hot air ballooning, Boucher said one of its most exciting parts is the serene and panoramic view you get from high up in the sky.

“Floating gently, you’re treated to breathtaking views that you wouldn’t see from the ground,” he said. “The sense of adventure and freedom that comes with drifting with the wind adds to the excitement.”

Every flight, according to Boucher, is unique.

“You never know where the winds might take you, which adds an element of unpredictability and excitement to the experience,” he said.

Recalling his favorite memories at A&A Balloon Rides, Boucher said a lot of marriage proposals happen in the basket. One time, his crew

had spread out a banner as they left the field. The banner said, "Will You Marry Me?"

"Another couple in the basket thought it was for them," he laughed.

Boucher remembered another time in September 2014 when local meteorologist Josh Judge proposed.

"He brought two rings and, when proposing, purposely dropped the ring over the side of the basket," he said. "He then pulled the real ring out of his pocket and placed it on Diane's finger ... Our crew searched

for the dropped ring and was never able to find it."

In reflecting on the deeper meaning behind his profession, Boucher said a hot air balloon ride is not just a journey through the sky, but an unforgettable adventure.

"It will leave you with memories to cherish for a lifetime," he said. "Far above the hustle and bustle of everyday life, a sense of peace washes over you. Time seems to stand still as you soak in the beauty of the world from a perspective few ever

experience."

After this experience, Boucher said they always say the balloonist prayer.

"The winds have welcomed you with softness," he recounted. "The sun has blessed you with its warm hands. You have flown so high and so well that God has joined you in your laughter and set you gently back again into the loving arms of Mother Earth."

To learn more about hot air ballooning, visit balloonridesnh.com.



"Far above the hustle and bustle of everyday life, a sense of peace washes over you. Time seems to stand still as you soak in the beauty of the world from a perspective few ever experience."

ANDRE BOUCHER

Owner and Pilot, A&A Balloon Rides



PHOTO PROVIDED BY A&A BALLOON RIDES

Staff from A&A Balloon Rides tests the burner while still on the ground.

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Bring the Family: 'Country by the Coast'

Hampton Beach will host "Country by the Coast" Country Music Fest from July 9-11 — and all shows are free. This year's headliner is Parmalee.

Every show will begin with free line-dance classes with Nashville Line Dance.

New Hampshire country artist April Cushman, who has opened for or worked with many national country music acts, will kick off the 2024 Country Music Fest at the Hampton Beach Seashell Stage on Tuesday, July 9.

The Wednesday night show will feature the award-winning Stefanie Jasmine Band.

On Thursday, music begins at 7 p.m. with opener David J., followed by Parmalee, the "Country by the Coast" headliner. Parmalee has three No. 1 hits, including "Carolina," "Just the Way" and "Take My Name."

Visit hamptonbeach.org for more details.



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Bring the Family: Santa's Village

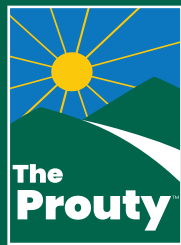
Santa's Village in Jefferson is building a new roller coaster — the Midnight Flyer — on the spot where the retired Rudy's Rapid Transit used to be. The Midnight Flyer will give riders the feel of flying with reindeer, just like Santa does to deliver presents. There is no firm opening date for it yet.

According to the Santa's Village website, children at least 36 inches tall can ride with adults, as the Midnight Flyer climbs over 40 feet before descending into a series of hops, twists and turns at up to 25 mph. It's about 50% taller, and slightly faster, than the previous coaster, and its new cars have individual laps bars to accommodate a wider range of adults and children.

Visit santasvillage.com to see a video simulation.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SANTA'S VILLAGE



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Star Island bustles with visitors all summer

Visit for a walkabout or stay for a multi-day conference or personal retreat.

By Kathleen D. Bailey

For Chelsea Haskell, communications and program manager for the Star Island Corporation, the island's real strength isn't the century-old inn, or the meandering paths along the shoreline, or even the glimpse of a rare sea bird. It's the people.

"It all comes down to community," Haskell mused. "The relationships are special here and run deep."

These could be relationships between participants in the island's many conferences, or relationships forged on a one-day stopover. They could be relationships among the Pelicans, the youngest staff members, who keep in touch over the years. Or it could be a family relationship or friendship strengthened by a day in a beautiful natural setting.

Star Island is the only one of the Isles of Shoals open to the public. Guests can stay for a conference with boarding available at the Oceanic Hotel, stay one night, or sample the Island's beauty on a one-hour walkabout.

"It's a magical brew of people and place," according to Haskell.

Today the island's calendar brims with conferences on art and music, history, nature and spirituality. "Personal retreats" are also available. The conferences are largely sponsored



SEAN D. ELLIOT

Above, guests participating in the Star Island International Affairs Conference in 2023 take some time to enjoy a dip in the ocean. Below, the M/V Thomas Lighton, from the Isles of Shoals Steamship Company, brings guests to Star Island from Portsmouth.

by the Unitarian Church, the United Church of Christ, or the Star Island Corporation.

For example, one conference offering coming up in June will be "Natural History Week" June 16-23. Naturalist Peter Alden will speak on topics including "Sea Life in the Gulf of Maine," "Invasive Plants of the Northeast," "Let's Change Some Bird Names" and more.

According to Star Island's website, the program fee is \$135, and boarding options are available for the full length of the conference.

Another example of programming offered on Star Island is "Earth Yoga Retreat," offered twice, June 21-23



and Aug. 31 to Sept. 2. Yoga teacher Kacy Harnedy helps participants deepen their connection with nature. Boarding rates are listed on the website.

The “Programs” page at starisland.com shows offerings that will keep you scrolling 12 rows deep — too many to mention here but worth taking a look at.

Day visits are also available June through September, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors may debark from the M/V Thomas Loughton, Isles of Shoals Steamship Company, or Island Cruises’ Uncle Oscar. According to Haskell, the Island hosts 15,000 day visitors each year.

The one-hour “walkabout” is the most common day trip. Participants may wander the island, visiting the Gosport Church, a stone structure on the highest point of the island built in 1800. They can explore Vaughn Cottage, a museum of the island, or gaze at the Tucke Monument, an obelisk

dedicated to the island’s first minister, the Rev. John Tucke.

Or sit on the Oceanic’s front porch and watch the waves roll in.

Some of the daytrippers come back for conferences or personal retreats, and Haskell wants to get the word out that these are open to the public. “With more than 50 conferences, there’s something for everyone,” she said.

The Oceanic doesn’t have TV in the rooms, bathrooms are shared, and because of water shortages, showers are an every-other-day indulgence. Despite the simplicity, most visitors have no problem unplugging themselves from the 21st century. “We do have Wi-Fi,” Haskell said. “We understand people’s need to be connected for work.” But even children tend to surrender their devices, and surrender to the natural charm of the island. “Adults, too,” she said with a smile.

To learn more, visit starisland.com.



A guest with the Star Island International Affairs Conference in 2023 works on a craft project while relaxing on the deck.

SEAN D. ELLIOT

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2024 GAME SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MAY - JUNE							VT 8:00 PM
	NBB 3:30 PM	NOR 4:00 PM		WST 10:30 AM	RDX 6:30 PM	WBH 6:30 PM	WST 6:30 PM
	VT 6:00 PM		RDX 10:30 AM	RDX 10:30 AM	WBH 10:30 AM	NBB 6:30 PM	NBB 6:30 PM
	WBH 4:00 PM	RW 6:00 PM	NBB 6:30 PM	WBH 6:30 PM	WST 6:30 PM	RDX 6:30 PM	RDX 6:30 PM
	RW 3:30 PM	WBH 6:00 PM	NBB 6:30 PM	WBH 6:30 PM	WBH 6:30 PM	NOR 6:30 PM	NOR 6:30 PM
	WST 3:30 PM	WST 6:00 PM	NOR 6:30 PM	NBB 6:30 PM	VT 6:30 PM	VT 6:30 PM	VT 6:30 PM
	NOR 6:00 PM						
JULY							
				WST 6:30 PM	NOR 6:30 PM		
	NOR 4:00 PM	NOR 6:30 PM	NOR 6:30 PM	NOR 6:30 PM	VT 6:00 PM	VT 6:30 PM	VT 6:30 PM
	RDX 1:30 PM		RDX 6:30 PM	WBH 6:30 PM	RDX 6:30 PM	RDX 6:30 PM	RDX 6:30 PM
	RDX 6:00 PM			WST 6:30 PM			
AUGUST							
					RW 6:30 PM	NBB 6:30 PM	VT 6:30 PM
	VT 6:30 PM						

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Go off road in northern New Hampshire

Get back to nature on the 83-mile Cross N.H. Adventure Trail.

By Robert Levey

Some of the roads less traveled across northern New Hampshire are becoming a popular route for hikers and bikers looking to enjoy a scenic journey in the Granite State's beautiful outdoors.

That route is the Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail (xNHAT), which connects rail trails, dirt roads, bike paths, and quiet paved back roads up north.

The 83-mile trail begins in Woodsville at the Connecticut River on the Ammonoosuc Rail Trail and continues on some back roads through Bath, Lisbon, and Littleton. It then continues through Whitefield on more back roads to the start of the Presidential Rail Trail at Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge.

"This section of the trail is a scenic gem with fabulous views of the Presidential and Kilkenny mountain ranges," noted xNHAT founder Marianne Borowski. "Also, in June, the fields are purple with the lupine bloom — it's so beautiful along the roadsides."

Returning to the Presidential Rail Trail after some time on backroads, the trail then takes people to Gorham and includes "a fun, slightly downhill cruise for about nine miles" followed by an "adventure" on Hogan Road.

"It's a scenic, unmaintained dirt road that travels on the north side of the Androscoggin River to North



UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO/LISA MARTINEAU

Fields full of lupines, similar to this one in Sugar Hill, can be seen during early summer on the Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail.

Road in Shelburne," explained Borowski, who elaborated on the meaning behind "unmaintained."

"'Unmaintained' means just that, so most cyclists have to walk through some of them, but mountain bikers say it is their favorite part of the entire trip," she said.

"The adventures are worth it for the riverside scenery and abundant wildlife, osprey, eagles, bears, deer — and an occasional moose will be out there with you."

After Hogan Road, the trail uses scenic North Road all the way into Bethel, Maine. "The last part in Bethel is a cute reaction path that winds around from the riverside to the endpoint in a park," she said.

Borowski is excited about the

growth potential for xNHAT. To the east, she is working with colleagues in Maine to take the route from Bethel to Lewiston, which will connect with the East Coast Greenway. To the west, she envisions connecting xNHAT with the Cross Vermont Trail.

To date, xNHAT has garnered significant interest, as Borowski noted they award approximately 250 celebratory embroidered End-to-End Patches each year to those who complete the entire route.

"There are likely more because not everyone cares about having a patch," she said.

She said they also mail out a detailed seven-panel waterproof fold-out map to anyone who requests one via email. "So far, we have provided

maps to 43 states and five countries," she said. "We have sent out over 7,000 maps."

As for her guiding vision behind xNHAT, Borowski said they want to get cyclists off of roadways and onto a rail trail wherever possible. There are sections of the trail that are on the road (with traffic), but off-road is their ultimate goal, she said.

"The rail corridor provides a scenic off-road alternative that is good for the xNHAT, good for the snowmobiles, and good for the residents and visitors to the area," she said.

To learn more about the Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail, including an interactive story map, visit xnhat.org.

Bring the Family: Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum

Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum has joined the New Hampshire Heritage Museum Trail.

Founded in 1991, the museum is located on a 12-acre campus that educates visitors about the natural environment and how Natives historically used it. Offering a variety of experiential outdoor learning opportunities, MKIM additionally features the Betsy Janeway Arboretum.

According to Executive Director Andrew Bullock, MKIM is more than a collection of artifacts. "Our mission is to provide a venue to facilitate greater understanding between guests and members of the Native community," he said. "We value the preservation of Native American history and educating our members and the public through tours, workshops, lectures, and special events."

The museum also features exhibit galleries that explore the rich diversity of art, housing, food, environments, and transportation of the region's Native Americans.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MT. KEARSARGE INDIAN MUSEUM

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The pros can help you plan your adventure

Outdoor New England strives to be a 'community hub' for outdoor adventurers.

By Robert Levey

This summer, outdoor adventures begin in Franklin at Outdoor New England, which offers sales, rentals, lessons, trips, and a host of used gear to help people get into sports for less.

"Out of the store, we specialize in whitewater fishing kayaks, and we also do a lot of biking and offer some fishing equipment as well," said Marty Parichand, owner of Outdoor New England.

When asked about their trips, Parichand said their most notable excursion is whitewater kayaking at Franklin at Mill City Park, a nonprofit he founded and the only whitewater park in New England.

"All of our trips are unique because we are in a city, not in the woods, but it is easy to feel surrounded by woods within minutes," he said. "It is a really unique feeling to be on the water and surrounded by the woods, but you can be in a brewery in minutes."

For Parichand, whitewater kayaking is more than just a part of his business.

"I wanted to see if the sport that I loved the most could turn around the town," he said. "We have been on the frontlines of community change to make Franklin a better place to live and a pretty cool place to visit."

As for words of encouragement



PHOTO PROVIDED BY VHB

Kayakers enjoy the river rapids at Mill City Park in Franklin as spectators watch from amphitheater-style seating. People looking to give whitewater kayaking a try can rent from Outdoor New England in Franklin.

for those unfamiliar with adventure sports or activities, Parichand said he has found that the people who are more apprehensive tend to have the most fun.

"I always encourage people to take their fun more seriously," he said. "Chances are you will really like it out there."

According to Parichand, the heart of adventure is the importance of relationships, which he and his staff actively work to cultivate with the public.

"Our phone will ring to see what the latest conditions are, or people will send us their packing list to see if they have forgotten anything," he said.

"We view ourselves a bit like a

community hub for our recurring patrons. We love that part and having that relationship with our customers. It is smart to use these local shops for anything for which you feel you are not fully prepared."

Regarding myths about outdoor adventures, Parichand said they do not have to be particularly expensive.

"There are often trips that you can do that are relatively cheap," he said. "It is really about preparing, planning, and taking that first step — there is always a way to figure it out on any budget."

To learn more about whitewater kayaking or outdoor adventures around the Granite State, visit outdoornewengland.com.

“

"I always encourage people to take their fun more seriously. Chances are you will really like it out there."

MARTY PARICHAND

Owner of Outdoor New England

Bring the Family: Market Days Festival

Concord will celebrate its 50th Market Days Festival from June 20-22 across the city. An expected 50,000 people will visit the three-day festival, featuring 150-plus vendors, live entertainment and lots of family fun.

The best way to preview the entertainment schedule is to visit marketdaysfestival.com. There are too many performers to list here, so browse through it online.

The Flying Gravity Circus will be at the festival all three days. A '70s Costume Parade is scheduled for Friday afternoon. The Capitol Center for the Arts will present a Silent Disco on Saturday night at the Bank of NH Stage. The Ultimate Queen Celebration, a tribute to the band Queen, will be on the Main Stage on Friday night.

The vendor list and more details about activities, food and drink can be found on the website.



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

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