

10 THINGS NOT TO MISS

BY ETHAN GILSDORF
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

DRIVE-IN MOVIES “The big variable is the weather and movies,” says Mitchell Shakour, owner of the Northfield Drive-In. “We can’t control either of them.” And despite rising gas prices and the popularity of DVDs, drive-ins are still around.

You’ll find classic asphalt at the Wellfleet Drive-In Theatre, which holds 800 cars, and Connecticut’s three-screen Mansfield Drive-In Theatre & Marketplace, which hosts daytime flea markets. But the Oscar goes to Vermont’s Fairlee, where you can watch the feature through a picture window from your bed in the motel.

Northfield Drive-In, Hinsdale Road, Route 63, Northfield, 603-239-4054, northfielddrivein.com.

Wellfleet Drive-In, Route 6, Eastham-Wellfleet, 508-349-7176, wellfleetdrivein.com.

Fairlee Motel and Drive-In Theatre, 1809 Route 5 North, Fairlee, Vt., 802-333-9192. \$60-\$70 per night; \$4-\$6 for drive-in only.

Mansfield Drive-In, Routes 31 and 32, Mansfield Center, Conn., 860-423-4441, mansfielddrivein.com.

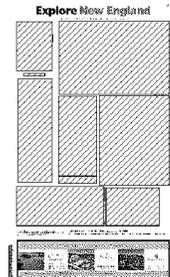
BOSTON POPS AND FIREWORKS “It’s more than a concert, it’s a sociological phenomenon,” says Keith Lockhart, conductor of the Boston Pops, about the orchestra’s annual Fourth of July concert on the Esplanade, which this year includes John Mellencamp.

The show uses cannons from the Massachusetts National Guard, and there will be a military flyover with planes from Otis Air Force Base, says Steve MacDonald, a 32-year veteran organizer of the whole shebang for Boston 4 Celebrations. MacDonald recommends bringing a picnic and arriving early to stake a claim with your blanket. While coveted spots on the Oval, in front of the stage at the Hatch Shell, have great orchestra views, “You don’t see the fireworks,” he says. Snag a seat with sight lines of the four fireworks barges moored on the Charles River.

Hate crowds? The rehearsal is July 3, minus the

planes and explosions.

Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular, Hatch Shell, the Esplanade, 888-484-7677, july4th.org. Oval opens at 9 a.m., concert 8:30-10:30 p.m., fireworks at 10:30.



BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS “You could take the lighthouse cruise to Little Brewster,” recommends Valerie Wilcox, a ranger with the National Park Service. “Bird-watching on Lovells is wonderful.” For hustle and bustle, go to Georges; for variety — military ruins, diverse habitats, longer coastline — she suggests Peddocks.

There’s something for everyone in the Boston Harbor Islands. Ferries run from Boston’s Long Wharf (and Hull and Quincy) to Spectacle and Georges; from there, free interisland shuttles take you farther afield. You can camp on Bumpkin, Grape, or Lovells. World’s End, attached to the mainland in Hingham, offers carriage paths, meadows, and views of tidal flats. For this summer’s collaboration with the Institute of Contemporary Art (till Oct. 8), four artists have installed site-specific works on various isles.

Spectacle, a former trash dump, has a visitors center, cafe, swimming beach, dock for visiting boats, and Sunday jazz concerts. “Last year people figured it out to get a paper and come out on the boat and read the paper on the veranda,” says Wilcox. “If you live in a little crowded apartment, you can’t beat it.” Or the skyline view.

Boston Harbor Islands, ferry schedules at bostonislands.org.

“Art on the Harbor Islands,” icaboston.org.

TEN THINGS, Page M11

FOURTH OF JULY

It’s hard to resist the effects of the Fourth: See a parade, have a picnic, watch a display of fireworks, and suddenly you feel patriotic. Marblehead is known to have one of the best fireworks shows around, viewable from ship or shore.

From July 6-8, the Glover’s Marblehead Regiment Colonial encampment of tents and craft activities occupies Fort Sewall.

At Old Sturbridge Village, Independence Day includes family activities like tug of war, hoop races, a 19th-century baseball game, and a chance to sign a giant Declaration of Independence.

Head to Rhode Island for the 222d Fourth of July Celebration in Bristol, which claims to be nation’s oldest parade (dating to 1785), and draws some 175,000 attendees.

The American Independence Museum in Exeter, N.H., throws its Independence Festival on July 21, which includes a viewing and reading of a rare Dunlap Broadside copy of that Declaration. “We put some hecklers in the crowd who might be Loyalists,” says Julie Tiebout, a museum spokesperson. “People can meet George [Washington] and Thomas Jefferson” — impersonators, of course, but filled with patriotic spirit.

Marblehead Fireworks Committee, marbleheadfireworks.org.

Glover’s Regiment, Marblehead, July 6-8, gloversregiment.org.

Fourth of July Celebration, Bristol, R.I., july4thbristolri.com.

Independence Day at Old Sturbridge Village, 800-SEE-1830, osv.org.

American Independence Museum, One Governor’s Lane, Exeter, N.H., 603-772-2622, independencemuseum.org.

LENOX AND THE BERKSHIRES

5 Summer in the Berkshires is synonymous with arts — and a vacation vibe tenuously holds sway. “Everyone is in a good mood, despite that we’re all working like crazy,” says Tony Fogg, artistic administrator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, who has been summering at Tanglewood in Lenox for 13 years. The “Shed” has been the BSO’s summer camp since 1938. Since then, Tanglewood (right) has added pop, folk, and jazz concerts to its ambitious orchestral schedule.

Beyond music, there’s theater with the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Shakespeare & Company (celebrating its 30th season), and the Berkshire Theatre Festival; and dance at Jacob’s Pillow, enjoying its 75th year with performances by the Royal Danish Ballet and the Paul Taylor Dance Company.

Fogg says the Stockbridge-Great Barrington area also offers antiques and bookshops, “great places to eat and drink,” and walks in John Drummond Kennedy State Park.

Tanglewood, Lenox, 617-266-1492, tanglewood.org.

Jacob’s Pillow, 358 George Carter Road, Becket, 413-243-9919, jacobspillow.org.

Shakespeare & Company, 70 Kemble St., Lenox, 413-637-1199, shakespeare.org.

Berkshire Theatre Festival, Main Street, Stockbridge, 413-298-5536, berkshiretheatre.org.

Williamstown Theatre Festival, Routes 2 and 7, Williamstown, 413-597-3400, wtfestival.org.

CAMDEN, MAINE

6 “There’s always something going on, almost too much,” says Carol Sebold, an artist who’s lived in Camden since 1975. She lauds the town’s summer theater, concerts, galleries, and museums. “This whole area is an artist’s mecca, you might say.” Sebold should know: She runs her own gallery and is involved in organizing the biannual HarborArts Arts & Craft Show featuring 100-plus exhibitors.

An ideal day in this seaside town between Portland and Bar Harbor might be to take a cruise on one of the schooners, or ascend Mount Battie for a memorable view along the Atlantic

coast. Then top it off with a bowl of chowder at Cappy’s Chowder House downtown.

Camden-Rockport-Lincolntonville Chamber of Commerce, 207-236-4404, camdenme.org. HarborArts Arts & Craft Show, July 21-22.

Sebold Studio, 21 Riverside Drive, Camden, 207-236-8234, csebold.com.

Cappy’s Chowder House, 1 Main St., cappyschowder.com.

BLUEBERRY PICKING

7 In mid- to late-July, blueberry season kicks off in New England — a time to load pails with dreams of pies and jams, while snacking along the way. “The first ones that ripen are the biggest,” says Pat Downer, horticulturalist at Owl’s Head Blueberry Farm in Richmond, Vt. Among her farm’s five acres of mostly high-bush varieties, “You can pick standing up,” she says. Most visitors amass a flat (six quarts) per hour. Owl’s Head makes the picking easy by sponsoring live music, from traditional bagpipe to bluegrass. Visitors bring picnic dinners and meet friends, says Downer. “It becomes a social activity.” Libby and Son U-Picks in Limerick, Maine, has eight varieties that ripen from mid-July to the end of August. Blueberry Bay Farm in Stratham, N.H., is another biggie, with 1,300 bushes. So get out there before the blues disappear.

Owl’s Head Blueberry Farm, 263 Blueberry Farm Road, Richmond, Vt., 802-434-3387, owlsheadfarm.com.

Blueberry Bay Farm, 38 Depot Road, Stratham, N.H., 603-580-1612, blueberrybayfarm.com.

Libby & Son U-Picks, 86 Sawyer Mountain Road, Limerick, Maine, 207-793-4749, libbysonupicks.com.

NEW HAMPSHIRE LAKES

8 At 72 square miles, Lake Winnepesaukee and its 253 islands have long been a center for water sports in New England. Of course, if renting a boat or roaming the bars of Weirs Beach is not your idea of fun, finding a quiet nook can be tricky. One escape is a cruise aboard the 230-foot M/S Mount Washington, whether for a day excursion or a dinner dance. Boats make round trips to the lakeside towns of Alton Bay, Center Harbor, and the more upscale Meredith and Wolfeboro. On Winnepesaukee’s southeast shore, there is the quick hike up Mount Major, north of Alton Bay on Route 11, offering great views.

Even more peaceful is the adjoining Squam Lake, pilgrimage site for “On Golden Pond” fandom. The Squam Lakes Natural Science Center has 200 acres of trails and enclosures to see wildlife like orphaned owls and mountain lions, says Iain MacLeod, its executive director. “The boat trips that we do on Squam are designed to get people on the water to experience nature,” he says. Or rent your own canoe or kayak from the Squam Lakes Association to see loons, bald eagles, and, perhaps, a moose.

M/S Mount Washington, 888-843-6686, cruisenh.com, \$12-\$25 and up.

Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, 23 Science Center Road, Route 113, Holderness, 603-968-7194, nhnature.org. Nature of the Lakes cruise \$16-\$20; mini-bus Moose Tours \$20.

Squam Lakes Association, Route 3, Holderness, 603-968-7336, squamlakes.org. Canoe, kayak, and sailboat rental \$40-\$60.

BEACH ARCADES, BOARDWALKS, AND BRASS RINGS

9 Fried dough. Bikinis. Old-time arcade games like Space Invaders and Skee-Ball. Soft serve ice cream, saltwater taffy, and cocoa-butter sunblock. Something about ocean air makes time stop. The granddaddy of honky-tonk might be Hampton Beach, N.H., home to free evening concerts, weekly fireworks, and nightclubs like the Casino Ballroom — and, oh yeah, the beach.

The coastal drive along Route 1A links Hampton to two other gems: York Beach in Maine (with its Fun-O-Rama arcade), and Salisbury Beach (with Joe's Playland), both classic downscale fun spots. As for carousel lovers, at least two remain: At Crescent Park in Riverside, R.I., built in 1895; and Nantasket Beach's Paragon Carousel, built in 1928, in Hull.

Hampton Beach, N.H., hamptonbeach.org. Casino Ballroom, 169 Ocean Blvd., Hampton Beach, 603-929-4100, casinoballroom.com.

York Beach, Maine, visitmaine.net/York.htm.

Salisbury Beach, salisburychamber.com. Joe's Playland, 12/15 Broadway, Salisbury Beach, 978-465-8311, joesplayland.com.

Crescent Park Carousel, 700 Bullocks Point Ave., Riverside, R.I., 401-435-7518, crescentparkcarousel.com.

Paragon Carousel, 205 Nantasket Ave., Hull, 781-925-0472, paragoncarousel.com.

WALDEN POND AND DECORDOVA MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE PARK

10 Concord and Lincoln are home to some of suburban Boston's most coveted swaths of farmland, forested trails, and parks. Two jewels are Walden Pond and the DeCordova Museum. The pond is quintessential summer. Folks fish, swim, and hike at the state reservation where Henry David Thoreau lived from 1845 to 1847. Bring a copy of "Walden" and lounge on the public beach, or find a quieter spot on the path encircling the water and look for his original hut site (forget that replica by the parking lot).

Nearby is the DeCordova, a 35-acre oasis of outdoor sculpture — and indoor exhibits like its Annual Exhibition of emerging artists (till Aug. 12). Plus, there's an August concert series and guided twilight tours. "The grounds are especially spectacular during the summertime," says spokesperson Cory Cronin. "We invite families to picnic." Even the family dog is welcome.

Walden Pond State Reservation, 915 Walden St., Concord, 978-369-3254, mass.gov/dcr/parks/northeast/wldn.htm.

DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, 51 Sandy Pond Road, Lincoln, 781-259-8355, decordova.org.

Ethan Gilsdorf can be reached at ethan@ethangilsdorf.com.



A MONTH OF HAPPENINGS

Check out all that July has to offer and more at explorenewengland.com.

JULY

1.

Drive-in movies

2.

Boston Pops and fireworks

3.

Boston Harbor Islands

4.

Fourth of July

5.

Lenox and the Berkshires

6.

Camden, Maine

7.

Blueberry picking

8.

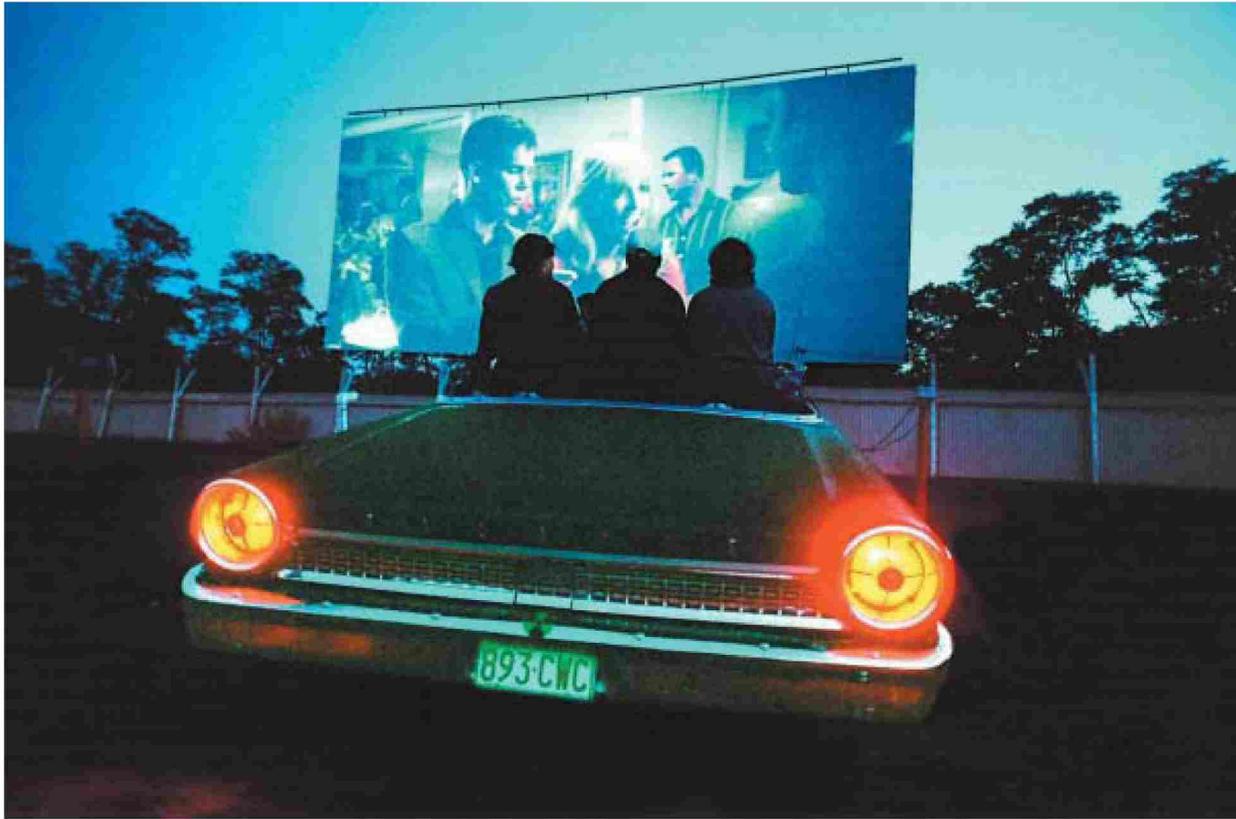
New Hampshire lakes

9.

Beach arcades, boardwalks,
and brass rings

10.

Walden Pond and DeCordova
Museum and Sculpture Park



EVAN RICHMAN/GLOBE STAFF/FILE



DINA RUDICK/GLOBE STAFF/FILE



CHITOSE SUZUKI/ASSOCIATED PRESS/FILE



DOMINIC CHAVEZ/GLOBE STAFF/FILE



NANCY PALMIERI FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE/FILE



JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF/FILE