

Summer 2024: Find Your Adventure



Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam
Hot-air balloons dwarf the people who come to see them at a balloon rally at Letchworth Park south of Rochester. The 14,000-acre state facility offers cabins, campgrounds and hotels and one can easily spend a week exploring, or just a few hours.

Willing spirit and a little planning make weekenders an easy field trip

By TODD R. McADAM
Managing Editor
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iconic honeymoon destination? But I'll gladly spend a day or two there.

We stayed at the Red Coach Inn, pretty much across the street from the falls and walking distance from the Rainbow Bridge, the Maid of the Mist, Niagara Falls State Park and Canada. We

parked and didn't look at the car again until we left.

We crossed the bridge and had poutine at a restaurant on the Canadian side of the falls, but mostly we just marveled at the sites: this side of the falls, the Canadian side, underneath from the boat tours. We strolled

through the park and went out again at night when the falls are lighted in deep shades of red, blue purple and green.

The next day, we drove to Old Fort Niagara and explored. Its predecessor fortifications were erected in 1679 and it was built, re-built, modified and restored,

housing military garrisons from three nations until 1963. Today, it's been restored to its 18th-Century self.

A retired photographer totally outclassed me in capturing the reenactors firing the artillery over the Niagara River. Then it was a leisurely afternoon drive home.

ADIRONDACKS

I had always wanted to see the Adirondacks. Forty years in upstate New York, and I had never come closer to them than Utica. It was a three-day excursion the spouse and offspring planned.

Day one was a leisurely excursion past Utica, Long Lake and Tupper Lake. Stop where you will, when you will. The journey is the destination, and the lakes surrounded by peaks reminded me of my home town in central New Hampshire, where I could see two mountain ranges from my bedroom overlooking the state's largest lake.

Lunch was at a converted railroad caboose overlooking a lake and we eventually stopped for the night in Saranac, staying at the Hotel Saranac. After a walk about town — it has a well-developed river walk that Homer might want to examine — we were on the road past Lake Placid.

On the way to Ticonderoga, we stopped at the Crown Point State Historic Site, the location of a pair of 18th Century fortresses — one French and one British. Unlike the nearby Fort Ticonderoga, these were never refurbished into a tourist destination, and we spent an hour or two wandering the grounds to see what the archeologists had

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The little guy is taller than me, now. I had so much I wanted to show him; so much I wanted to do. So many adventures. But time is limited.

Fifteen years ago, a fun trip was to pack a couple of towels and hang out at Hope Lake in Virgil, or maybe do the grand tour of every park in Cortland County. Perhaps, as he grew older, we'd drive go-karts in Dryden, or peruse children's museums in Ithaca or Syracuse.

But the little guy is 19 now, a college sophomore. The days are limited when we'll just be able to hang out and have fun. The spouse and I want to make every memory count, while we still can.

Not every adventure needs to be a week-long immersion in a foreign culture, or a mile-deep trek into the Grand Canyon. Weekenders, overnights and quick car trips are just as fun, particularly as the former adolescent has become more willing to converse. (Still not sure about his fondness for Nordic chants, though.)

NIAGARA FALLS

I hate to sound jaded, but I can't imagine spending a week at Niagara Falls. And this was an



Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam
The Niagara Falls have long been lighted at night, but the colors now are intense shades of red, blue, green and purple, well worth a nighttime excursion.

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Plan the perfect road trip



Road trips tend to be less regimented than other excursions. But a little planning can ensure a road trip goes smoothly.

A road trip can be a relaxing and exciting way to see the country. According to the financial firm IPX 1031, 51 percent of Americans planned to travel more in 2023 than the year prior, and 67 per-

cent were considering road trips over other options. Canadians also planned to travel, with the 2023 edition of the annual Toyota Canada Summer Road Trip Survey finding 74 percent of those polled were still desiring a

road trip despite high fuel costs.

It remains to be seen how many travelers will opt for car over plane travel in 2024, but those who aspire to plan road trips to remember can consider these pointers.

- Choose a destination. Although the ride can be an adventure on its own, eventually a destination will need to be reached. Travelers can choose destinations by distance and incrementally increase that

distance as they gain road trip experience. For example, the first trip can be a few hours from home. As drivers grow more accustomed to the open road, they can take lengthier trips.

- Know your time constraints. The road trip distance and route will depend on how much time travelers can devote to the trip. Road trips should be fun and include plenty of breaks along the way to see the sites. Time constraints can pressure individuals to race there and back, which isn't enjoyable.
- Determine how many drivers are coming along. Bringing along other licensed drivers means that driving duties can be split up and the trip can be enjoyable, not exhausting.
- Don't forget the scenic route. The journey is part of the road trip experience. When planning the route, travelers can be sure to include back roads that feature interesting views. However, they should be sure to research rest stops and fuel spots, which may be more spaced out on rural roads.
- Schedule a tune-up. Breakdowns are not enjoyable, and having a breakdown on a trip

on unfamiliar roads can be even worse. Drivers should schedule a vehicle checkup prior to the trip. AAA suggests using the acronym Tgood BET,V referring to Battery, Engine and Tires to reduce risk of roadside emergencies.

- Use planning tools. Various applications can help road trippers get from point A to point B and back more easily. Furkot, for example, is a road trip planning service that helps drivers map out routes, find interesting places and book hotels with ease.
- Make regular stops. Travelers should pull over every two hours or 100 miles to stretch improve alertness and give their eyes a break.
- Identify where to sleep in advance. Although spontaneity can be exciting, it's probably a good idea for drivers to have a general idea of where they will be spending the night each evening of the trip. Few things are worse than finding a no vacancy sign or realizing a motel has closed down when people are hungry and in need of rest. Making reservations in advance is less risky and more comfortable than sleeping in the car.

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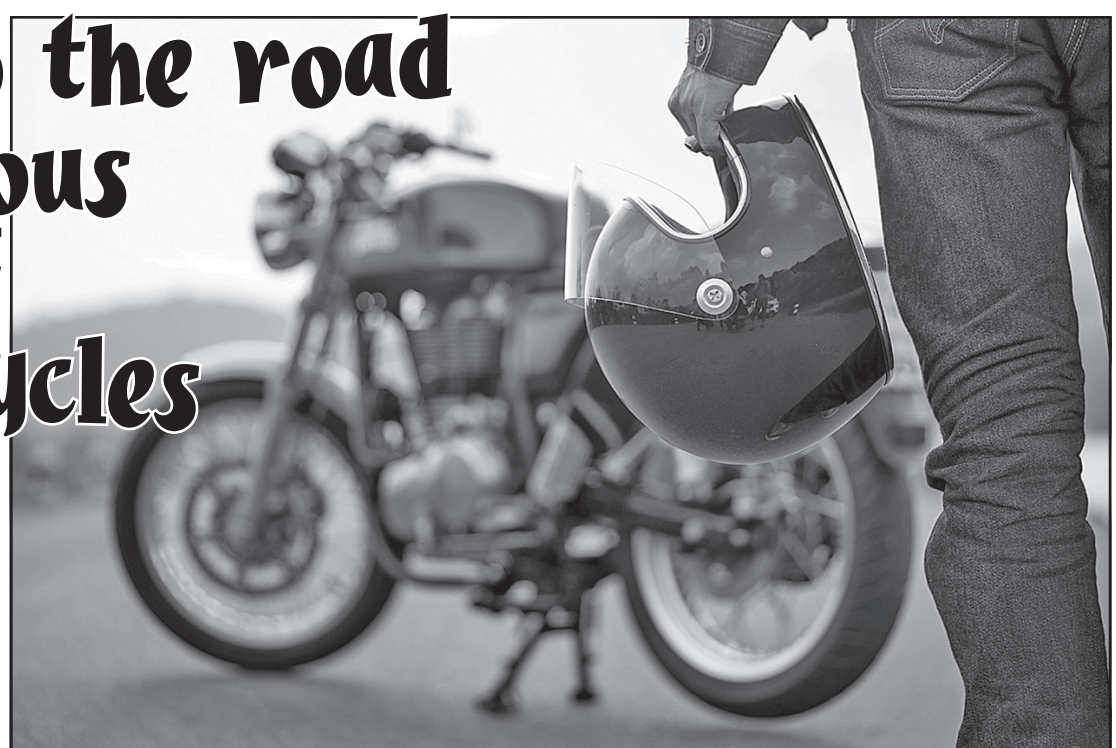
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Take to the road on various types of motorcycles

Motorcycles share the roadways with cars and trucks. Many enthusiasts enjoy riding motorcycles because they provide a visceral experience with the great outdoors. The feeling of the wind and sun is more pronounced on a bike than behind the wheel of a car.



Motorcycles come in many different styles, ensuring there's one to suit all types of riders.

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JD Power says motorcycles account for 3 percent of all registered vehicles in the United States. In 2022, there were 829,892 registered motorcycles in Canada, according to Statistics Canada. Registrations have increased each year since the organization has kept track.

Individuals considering adding a motorcycle to their vehicular portfolio have a lot of options from which to choose. Some may be surprised to find out there are many different types of bikes.

- Cruiser: A cruiser is an American-style motorcycle designed for long journeys. They are large, heavy bikes with handlebars that keep the hands almost parallel to the ground. The seat also provides a relaxed position for the body, and a comfortable suspension corrects irregularities of the road.
- Sportbikes: Sportbikes are cost-effective, reliable and fast. They are easily customizable and come in a variety of sizes. Although they are popular, comfort is not one of the main fea-

tures of sportbikes. Aggressive body position and a steep rake angle make these less comfortable to ride than other bikes.

- (Naked): These are simple and versatile bikes that have no windshields, a more upright body positioning, and no plastic parts or elements of lining. It is a category of sportbike that is stripped down.
- Chopper: These heavy bikes are designed for leisurely riding. They're traditionally associated with the biker subculture. Choppers will feature wide and high handlebars, many chrome parts, rake out fork, and a low-set seat. Riders sit with their legs extended forward. Although some are mass-produced, most choppers are custom-made.
- Motocross: These bikes are for those serious about dirt riding. Most motocross bikes are not legal for road use and are featured in strictly off-road racing. They're often called dirtbikes.
- Adventure: Adventure bikes are designed for having fun. They are sturdy and usually outfitted

with a tall seat height, tall windshield, upright seating positioning, and ample suspension. Some adventure bikes have luggage options and also may come equipped with on-road/off-road tires.

- Touring: A sportier version of cruisers, these motorcycles are designed to take comfort to the extreme. Smooth handling, heated seats, cruise control, and even cup holders make touring bikes perfect for long trips.
- Supermoto: A Supermoto is a single-cylinder motor bike with the fast action of a dirtbike that is allowed on the streets. Its youthful appeal makes it quite popular.
- Scooter: Scooters are less popular in North America than in Europe, but they've gained some steam here in urban areas. They are usually automatic, making them easier to ride for novices. The frame design of scooters is called an underbone, which leaves plenty of space from the rider's legs to the front of the scooter.

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SO MANY ADVENTURES • from Page A1



Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam

Every Trekker alive has imagined what it might be like to enter the bridge of the U.S.S. Enterprise. And now you can, in Ticonderoga. You can even sit in the captain's chair.

uncovered. The older, French, fort was built in 1734 and was a base to raid British settlements in New York and New Hampshire. (In fact, a bridge across this part of Lake Champlain — or maybe the Hudson River — connects to Vermont, which was part of New Hampshire nearly 300 years ago. The British fort came later, when they captured it from the French and built their own works in 1759, which in turn were captured by colonial troops during the Revolution.

Very cool. After that, the trip south to Ticonderoga and Fort Ticonderoga were almost anticlimactic. Don't get me wrong, Fort Ticonderoga was a neat experience. Live cannons and authentic uniforms and all that. But the fort itself was re-created and finished in the early to mid-19th Century, nearly 50 years after it was an actual fort taking part in an actual battle of the Revolutionary War. The restaurant was good — better than what we had in town.

But perhaps the most memorable experience as the stop at the Star Trek Museum. I'm a geek, I get it. But James Cawley acquired the blueprints for and replicated the entire sound stage for Star Trek, the iconic series of the 1960s: engine room, transporter room, sick bay and (gasp) the bridge. I actually did gasp stepping onto it from the turbolift. "Everyone has a different reaction," the tour guide told my wife. Fans have a religious experience; non-fans get a rare insight into how television shows are put together.

And I bought a tribble. The only downside to the weekend excursion is that it came at the heaviest of the 2023 wildfires in Canada and smoke obscured everything. I'd love to go back, if only to actually see the Adirondacks.

CORNING MUSEUM

The story of glass goes back millennia, and it reaches into the future. At the Corning Museum of Glass, we explored all that, and the art of glass, too.

The history and technology intrigued me, most, although one must concede the aesthetic value of a material made to be



Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam

Fire has its own beauty, as does glass. The Corning Museum of Glass will show you both.

as beautiful as it is functional. We spent hours wandering the halls to see the role glass has played in history, and how its manufacture has evolved.

We saw the mistakes become major products, like Corningware. We saw the innovations neglected for decades until a use was found of them, like the gorilla glass in your iPhone. We saw galleries of fine art and halls of practical applications.

The demonstrations were major cool. I had seen glass blowing, but never understood how many different techniques in applying heat to silica there are to create objects of beauty.

COOPERSTOWN

The little guy, like me, has no athletic aptitude. He's an engineering major.

I grew up in a baseball family, so I at least know the basics. Mostly, though, I like the culture and history of America's pastime.

Still, we made only our second trek to Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame. The docent in the lobby pointed out the three historic figures memorialized in statues, including John McGraw, and was more than polite — even enthusiastic — when I described the 1938 fundraising game in his honor in his hometown of Truxton.

The place was crowded and the offspring isn't fond of crowds, but there's enough there

to spend a couple of days wandering. I saw the women's baseball exhibit opened around the time "A League of Their Own" was released. I saw Babe Ruth's uniform and watched the video of Carlton Fisk waving the ball fair in the 12th inning of Game 6 of the 1975 World Series.

And we wandered the Hall of Records. The family was tolerant, but they insisted they take a photo of me next to the plaque honoring my childhood hero: Lou Gehrig: a nice guy and one of the best at his craft, ever. I wish I could be either.

LETCHWORTH PARK

This wasn't a great discovery for us. My wife grew up 30 or 40 minutes northwest of the park, which is south of Rochester. We were married there; my mother-in-law is active with a non-profit that supports the park and the in-laws have frequent get-togethers.

But it never ceases to amaze. Three waterfalls, 66 miles of hiking trails, a 450-foot-deep gorge and a swimming area. Even returning to the sites we've been to a dozen times still takes one's breath away.

If you time it right, you may get there for the balloon launches. A contractor provides rides through the season, but the park hosts a balloon festival there, too. It's a bit unnerving to see the pilots drop the balloons into the gorge, reach down and splash



Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam

Balloonists will drop their balloons into the Genesee River Gorge at Letchworth Park. Some will even splash in the river before they continue around the bend.

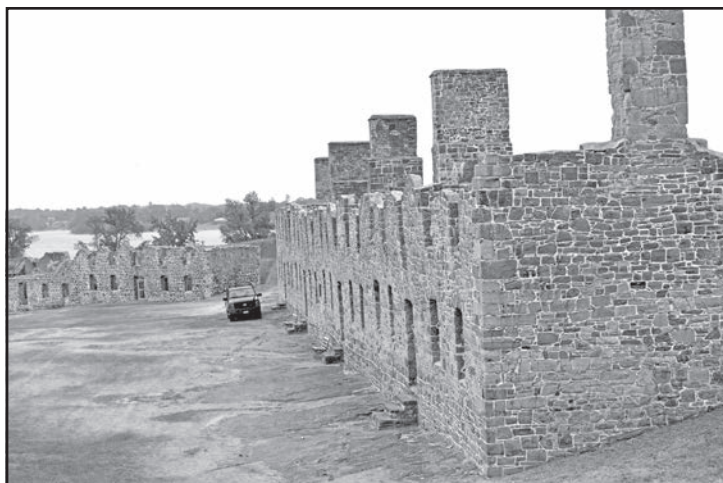


Photo provided by Todd R. McAdam

The fortresses at Crown Point, north of Ticonderoga, are quieter than Fort Ticonderoga. But in a way they better capture the mystery and legend of the 18th Century in the ruins of a pair of French and British forts on the west shore of Lake Champlain.

the Genesee River before heading around the bend and wherever the wind blows.

The park offers several camping areas and cottages to fit a variety of budgets, including both a motel and hotel. It has a couple of restaurants, too, but cook-outs are just as nice.

MANHATTAN

We haven't done this trip yet. We want to: Manhattan, but only one small dock of it. The Intrepid Air and Space Museum has the World War II aircraft carrier, the space shuttle Enterprise (I wonder if they have a tribble), the Cold War-era submarine U.S.S. Growler, a Concorde jet and lots of other stuff.

The museum on Pier 86 is only about a mile from Penn Station. We figure we can take the Amtrak train from Syracuse to avoid the hassle (and cost) of driving and parking, find a hotel about halfway between and skip the cab fares, too.

The little guy really appreciated the Cold War-era sub U.S.S. Albacore when we saw it in New Hampshire, and I loved wandering the decks of the battleship U.S.S. New Jersey, submarine U.S.S. Becuna and white fleet cruiser U.S.S. Olympia, all based in or near Philadelphia.

The train trip will be the son's first, and my first since a wedding in Chicago not quite 30 years ago.

It'll be an adventure.



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Fun ways to celebrate the summer solstice

The summer solstice is an opportunity to celebrate the arrival of summer and all the fun that comes with it.

Summer is a great time to enjoy recreational activities that take advantage of the great outdoors. This year summer arrives on June 20 with the summer solstice, which features the most hours of daylight of any day for the entire year. Celebrants who want to usher in another summer of fun in the sun can embrace these ideas for commemorating the start of summer.

Continued on page A6



Traveling this Summer???


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June 5 - 14

The Last
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author of
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June 19 - 28

Jimmy Buffet's
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Margaritaville

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Music and Lyrics by
Jimmy Buffet

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FUN A BIT CLOSER TO HOME

You don't need to go far afield for a bit of fun this summer. Here's a sampling of what's going on in the greater Cortland area.

MUSIC

- May 4: JD Souther, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 5: Margaret Glaspy, Unplugged, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 5: Patti Stanford Band, 2 to 5 p.m., Cortland Country Music Park.
- May 7: Rickie Lee Jones, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 10: Shawn Kellerman, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 11: Al DiMeola, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer. SOLD OUT
- May 11: Nate the Great with Mister Bob-Cat, 1:30 p.m., Rose Hall, Cortland.
- May 12: Matt Nathanson, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 14: Madeleine Peyroux, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 15: Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.

- May 17: Donna the Buffalo, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 17: Hiroya Tsukamoto, 7 p.m., Rose Hall, Cortland.
- May 18: Hiroya Tsukamoto fingerstyle guitar workshop, 11 a.m., Rose Hall, Cortland.
- May 18: Alan Doyle, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 19: Double Chase, 2 to 5 p.m.
- May 28: The Heavy Heavy, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 31: Tinsley Ellis, 8 p.m., Rose Hall, 19 Church St., Cortland.
- June 5: John Hiatt, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 7: The Verve Pipe, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 9: Josh Ritter, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 16: Jazz is Dead with Steve Kimock, Alphonso Johnson, Bobby Lee Rodgers and Pete Levezoli, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 20: The Young Dubliners, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 21: Karla Bonoff, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 25: Preservation Hall Jazz Band, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- June 27: Kiefer Sutherland, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- July 11: Clint Bush, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- July 12: Duane Betts and Palmetto Motel, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- July 18: Steve Romer, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- July 25: Taylor Made, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- July 29: Keb' Mo' 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer. SOLD OUT
- July 31: The Stick Men, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- Aug. 1: Unreal City, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.

- Aug. 8: Molly and the Ringwalds, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- Aug. 8: Al Stewart and The Empty Pockets, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- Aug. 9: Jimmie Vaughan, 8 p.m., Center for the Arts of Homer.
- Aug. 15: Cortland Old Timers Band, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- Aug. 22: Jim Vandeuson, 7 p.m., Summer Concert Series in Courthouse Park, Courthouse Park, Cortland.

THEATER

- May 4: The Cursed Circus, 7:30 p.m., for audiences 18 and older. Port Watson Street, Cortland.
- May 21 to May 26: Gilligan's Island: The Musical, 7:30 p.m. May 22, 23, 24 and 25; 2 p.m. May 26, Homer Center for the Arts, Homer.
- June 5 to June 14: My Fair Lady. Little York Pavilion, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.
- June 19 to June 28: The Last Romance. Little York Pavilion, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.
- July 23 to July 12: Escape to Margaritaville. Little York Pavilion, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.
- July 17 to July 26: Wait Until Dark. Little York Pavilion, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.
- July 19 and 20: Storybook Tales, 11 a.m. July 19; 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. July 20, starring the Bright Star Touring Co. at Dwyer Memorial Park.
- July 31 to Aug. 17: Beauty and the Beast. Little York Pavilion, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.

FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

- May 4: Corn Ducky Derby, Suggett Park, Madison Street, Cortland.
- May 18: Forage and Feast with Hana Pandori, 9 a.m. Lime Hollow Nature Center, 3277 Gracie Road, Cortlandville.
- June 1: Pet Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Cortland County Fairgrounds, 4301 Fairgrounds Drive, Cortlandville.



Bob Ellis/file photo

Fireworks are reflected in Little York Lake at the annual Independence Day display in 2015 at Dwyer Memorial Park. The event returns this year, albeit on July 6.

- June 1: 33rd Annual Water Festival, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Cortland Waterworks.
- June 4: Cortland County Dairy Parade, 6:30 p.m., North Main Street, Cortland.
- June 8: Dryden Dairy Day, Dryden.
- June 8-9: St. Anthony's Festival, St. Anthony's church, 50 Pomeroy St., Cortland.
- June 28-29: Second Annual Cortland County Bull Bash, Cortland County Fairgrounds.
- July 5: Movie Under the Stars, dusk, "Barbie," Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- July 6: Independence Day celebration, Dwyer Memorial Park, Preble.
- July 11: Movies on the Homer Green, dusk, "Migration," Homer Village Green.
- July 12: Movie Under the Stars, dusk, "Super Mario Brothers Movie," Courthouse Park, Cortland.

Continued on page A7



Cortland Standard file photo

Shirley Kane of Cortland waves the Italian flag as the Old Timers Band plays in 2015 at the end of a St. Anthony's Church celebratory Mass.

S.U.M.M.E.R

6 TIPS TO PREVENT TEEN ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE THIS SUMMER

As summer vacation approaches, it can be a challenging time for both youth and parents. Adolescents have plenty of free time, while parents often struggle to balance supervision with their daily responsibilities. During these months, young people may be more exposed to the dangers of alcohol, other drugs, and risky behaviors such as reckless driving. To help prevent underage drinking and keep teenagers safe, parents can implement the following S-U-M-M-E-R strategies:

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Set rules and consequences: Establish clear rules and fair consequences for breaking them. Data shows that when children understand the consequences of drinking, they are less likely to engage in binge drinking.

Understand and communicate: Engage in open conversations with your child about the dangers and consequences of alcohol use, starting as early as age nine. Consistently emphasize family rules and expectations about alcohol consumption.

Monitor activities: Make it difficult for teenagers to access alcohol in your home. If you have alcohol, keep track of the quantities or store it in a locked cabinet or cupboard.

Maintain involvement: Get to know your child's friends and their parents, coaches, and other adults in their lives. Stay connected without being intrusive, and show your child that you care about their well-being.

Encourage summer activities: Encourage your child to participate in structured activities such as Scouts, 4-H, sports, church groups, or other youth programs. Alternatively, they could explore job opportunities, camps, or volunteer work. Involvement in these activities can keep them occupied and focused throughout the summer.

Reserve time for family: Despite teenagers often seeming disinterested in spending time with their families, it is still beneficial to maintain a strong connection. Plan family meals, vacations, and outings to reinforce family bonds. Studies show that quality family time ranks high among factors contributing to happiness in adolescents.

By implementing these S-U-M-M-E-R strategies, parents can reduce the risk of underage drinking and promote a safer, more enjoyable summer for their teenagers. Establishing boundaries, fostering open communication, and encouraging positive activities can help young people make better choices and avoid the dangers associated with alcohol and other risky behaviors.

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Interesting facts related to Memorial Day

Memorial Day is celebrated annually on the last Monday of May across the United States. The proximity of Memorial Day to the summer solstice has led many to view the weekend preceding the holiday as the unofficial kickoff to summer. However, Memorial Day is about more than backyard barbecues and weekend getaways.

Memorial Day honors service members who died while serving in the United States military. Though Memorial Day traces its origins to the years following the American Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century, it did not become an official federal holiday until 1971. That's one of just many interesting facts about Memorial Day that are worth noting as the United States prepares to commemorate the sacrifices of military personnel who died in service of the country.

- Memorial Day began as something of a grass roots movement. According to History.com, by the late 1860s individuals in towns across the war-ravaged United States began holding spring-time tributes to soldiers who lost their lives during the American Civil War.

- Among the more notable postwar commemorations was one organized by former slaves in Charleston, South Carolina. That commemoration occurred less than a month after the Confederate forces surrendered in 1865. Despite that, History.com notes that in 1966 the federal government declared Waterloo, New York, the birthplace of Memorial Day.

- Postwar commemorations also were organized by northern veterans of the Civil War. General John A. Logan, who led an organization of Union veterans, called for a nationwide day of remembrance in May 1868. General Logan referred to the holiday as Declaration Day and chose May 30 because it was not the anniversary of any specific battle and therefore unlikely to be viewed by some as controversial.

- Early commemorations of Decoration Day, which gradually came to be known as Memorial Day, initially honored only those soldiers who died during the American Civil War. However, that changed over time as American servicemen fought in various wars, including both World Wars, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and other conflicts.

- The red poppy has become a symbol of Memorial Day. That red poppy can be traced to a poem by Canadian John McCrae, who served as a Lieutenant Colonel in World War I. In Flanders Field notes the red poppies that grew in fields where countless soldiers had been buried in modern-day Belgium. The poem was published in 1915, three years before the war ended. Sadly, McCrae himself was a casualty of the war, succumbing to pneumonia in France in 1918 while still in the service.



Memorial Day honors service personnel who lost their lives while serving in the U.S. military. The holiday's inspiration and lengthy history merits consideration as the nation prepares to commemorate countless soldiers' sacrifices once more.

Safety tips ahead of your Memorial Day barbecue

Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial start of summer for millions of people across the country. Backyard barbecues are a staple of Memorial Day weekend, and such informal gatherings contribute much to the laid back vibe of this beloved three-day weekend.

Backyard barbecues may be all about food and fun, but it's important that hosts take measures to ensure such soirees are safe as well. By employing the following measures, hosts can ensure their Memorial Day barbecues are safe for all in attendance.

- Place the grill in a safe location. The National Fire Protection Association urges hosts to place their grills a safe distance away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves or overhanging branches. The NFPA also notes no grill should be placed within 10 feet of any structure, including a home.

- Check propane tanks for leaks prior to using the grill. Memorial Day may be the first time many people use their grill since the previous summer or fall. The NFPA recommends propane grill users check their tanks for leaks prior to using the grill for the first time. This inspection is simple. Apply a light solution of soap and water to the hose. The NFPA notes a propane leak will release bubbles. The smell test also can reveal a leak, as a strong odor of gas can indicate a leak. In such instances, close the tank valve and turn off the grill. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional. If the leak persists, call the fire department. The NFPA urges hosts who detect an odor of gas while cooking to get away from the grill immediately and call the fire department. Do not move the grill in such instances.

- Man the grill at all times. An unattended grill poses a significant safety hazard. Whether you're using a propane grill, a charcoal grill, a smoker, or a hybrid, make sure an adult is keeping an eye on the grill at all times.

- Purchase long-handled cooking tools. The American Red Cross notes that long-handled cooking tools are designed to

keep chefs safe. Such tools ensure cooks' hands and arms do not have to be directly over flames, which can periodically flare up and pose a safety hazard.

- Ensure children are supervised when swimming. The grill is not the only safety threat that may be present at Memorial Day barbecues. Hosts who will open their

pools or provide inflatable pools for children should make sure kids are supervised when in or around the water at all times. Before allowing kids in a pool, hosts should confirm their swimming abilities and insist kids who cannot swim or only recently learned to swim wear inflatables or life jackets to reduce drowning risk.

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Memorial Day weekend is a festive time at many households. By emphasizing backyard barbecue safety strategies, hosts can ensure everyone has a great time and gets home safe this Memorial Day weekend.

FUN WAYS TO CELEBRATE THE SUMMER SOLSTICE • from Page A4

- Watch the sunrise. Get up early and watch the sun come up on the longest day of the year. Then be sure to

catch the sunset to enjoy every minute of daylight.

- Host a cookout. Memorial Day, Canada Day and Independence Day get most of the barbecue glory this time of year. But there's nothing that says the first day of summer shouldn't be a reason to gather friends and family for

a cookout. June 20 falls on a Thursday this year, so the solstice provides the perfect excuse to take a four-day weekend and celebrate the official arrival of summer.

- Light a campfire. Traditional Midsummer's Eve/summer solstice celebrations featured bonfires. Hold on to

the tradition by gathering people around a campfire or backyard firepit. S'mores make the perfect complement to a campfire scene.

- Grab some ice cream. Cool off on the summer solstice by visiting a nearby ice cream shop and indulge in a sundae or triple-decker cone.

- Go on a nature hike. Enjoy the great outdoors with a relaxing hike through a park or nature trail.

- Participate in a beach clean-up. Make a beach trip even more enjoyable by signing up for a clean-up to clear the sand of litter. Organize an impromptu beach clean-up session either solo or with some like-minded friends.

- Pick fresh fruit. Many berries come into season in the summer. Head to a nearby pick-your-own farm and grab fresh fruit to enjoy right away or utilize your pickings in recipes.

- Plant a flower garden. Clean up garden beds or go to the nursery and grab some colorful annuals to spruce up areas around the yard.

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Outdoor activities ideal for summertime

George Gershwin's song "Summertime," from "Porgy and Bess," offers: *Summertime and the livin' is easy, Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high*

Summer can be a magical season full of fresh air, warm days and nights, blooming flowers, and plenty of opportunities to spend time in the great outdoors. There are so many ways to fill summer days, and people are urged to maximize time spent outdoors during this time of year. Since the sun's rays can be particularly harmful between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., protective clothing and sunscreen is recommended during this time; otherwise, people can engage in outdoor activities during times when the sun is less potent.

Those seeking some summertime recreation inspiration can consider these activities.

- Family bike ride: Explore trails or bike paths in the area in advance, and then prepare bikes for an excursion. Bicycle riding is a great cardiovascular activity that people of all ages and fitness levels can enjoy. Try flat paths for beginners, and then build up the length and intensity of rides as experience is gained.
- Day at the beach: Some attest there is no more perfect place than the beach on a summer day. The waves lapping the sand, the birds calling in the air, and the sounds of children's laughter and sunbathers' chatter all combine to create a relaxing seaside symphony. According to WebMD, the negative ions given off by the ocean can improve mood and add to the calming effect the beach provides.
- Backyard obstacle course:

Construct an obstacle course in the backyard that everyone can try. It can include having to jump through tires; climb a jungle gym; run through a sprinkler; and crawl under a low-hung clothesline. Family members can compete to see who can finish the course in the least amount of time.

- Walk a boardwalk: Those lucky to live near a coast can spend an afternoon or evening strolling the boardwalk, enjoying the various fare and fun activities offered. Many boardwalks have games of chance and small rides for

kids. Adults may enjoy the restaurants, bars and shops. Of course, no trip to a boardwalk is complete without coming home with some salt-water taffy.

- Hike: In a survey of Americans 18 and older conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association, nearly 50 percent said going for a walk or hike was their favorite outdoor summer activity. Hiking requires very little to get started and can produce numerous opportunities to witness nature and get some exercise.



There's no limit to the ways people can enjoy the great outdoors when the weather warms up.



These measures will not necessarily prevent all ticks from establishing themselves on a property, so individuals are urged to inspect their bodies and the bodies of their pets after a day in the yard.

Tips to make a yard less attractive to ticks

Backyards are ideal places to spend warm afternoons soaking up some sun. Lazy days in the yard are a big part of what makes warm weather seasons like spring and summer so appealing. But those afternoons can quickly go off the rails when an unwelcome visitor makes its presence known.

Ticks can be found throughout the world, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that only a select few types of ticks transmit bacteria, viruses and parasites, or pathogens, that cause diseases in people. But even if the number of tick species that transmit diseases to humans is relatively low, ticks that can infect humans are a notable threat. Such ticks carry pathogens that the CDC notes can cause a number of diseases, including Bourbon virus, Ehrlichiosis and, of course, Lyme disease, among others.

Human beings can come into contact with ticks in their own backyards. But humans can take various steps to make their lawns less welcoming to ticks.

- Cut your grass short and keep it that way. Black-legged ticks are transmitters of Lyme disease, which the CDC notes is the most common vector-borne disease in the United States. Lyme disease also poses a growing threat in Canada, where data from the Public Health Agency indicates human-reported Lyme disease cases increased from 144 in 2009 to more than 2,100 in 2022. Black-legged ticks do not like environments that are dry and hot, so short grass makes lawns less attractive to this type of tick. Consumer Reports advises homeowners who have let their grass grow a little too high (around five or six inches) to bag their clippings when cutting the grass. Lots of clippings on the grass can provide a respite from the heat for black-legged ticks.
- Create a tick barrier if your property abuts woods. Woods provide a cover from summer heat that black-legged ticks crave. So properties that abut

the woods may be more vulnerable to these unwanted guests than yards that do not border woodlands. A barrier of dry mulch made of wood chips between a property and a bordering wooded area can help repel ticks, who won't want to settle in often dry, hot mulch beds.

- Plant with infestation prevention in mind. Some plants can help to repel ticks because they boast certain characteristics that ticks cannot tolerate. The fragrances, textures and oils of plants like garlic, mint, lavender, marigolds, and others create less welcoming conditions for ticks. Homeowners can speak with local garden centers for advice on tick-repellant plants that can thrive in their particular climate and on their properties.
- Remove yard debris. Piles of wood, leaves and brush can make for good conditions for ticks that transmit disease. After raking leaves and gathering brush, discard the resulting piles immediately.

FUN A BIT CLOSER TO HOME • from Page A5

- July 18: Movies on the Homer Green, dusk, "Kung Fu Panda 4," Homer Village Green.
- July 19 and 20: Storybook Tales, 11 a.m. July 19; 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. July 20, starring the Bright Star Touring Co. at Dwyer Memorial Park.
- July 20: Holiday in Homer, Homer Village Green.
- July 25: Movies on the Homer Green, dusk, "Elemental," Homer Village Green.
- July 26: Movie Under the Stars, dusk, "Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire," Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- Aug. 1: Movies on the Homer Green, dusk, "Wonka," Homer Village Green.
- Aug. 2: Movie Under the Stars, dusk, "Trolls Band Together," Courthouse Park, Cortland.
- Aug. 8-10: Fillmore Days and Bathtub Races, Fillmore Glen State Park, Moravia.
- Aug. 10: The National Brockway Truck Show, Homer.
- Aug. 15: Movies on the Homer Green, dusk, "Barbie," Homer Village Green.
- Aug. 22-24: Groton Olde Home Days, Groton.

OTHER STUFF

- May 4: Spring Craft Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Cortland Junior-Senior High School

to benefit senior class all-night prom party.

- May 4: Mike Joseph: Champion of Rural Schools and Cortland County's History of Supporting Teachers, 1 p.m. CNY Living History Center, Cortlandville.
- May 6: Mother's day mini-cookie bouquet class, 5:30 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 9: Springboard: Intro to Pickleball, 6 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 9: Closing reception for Kristen Egan, 5 to 8 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 9: May Meditation, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 12: Mother's Day brunch, 11 a.m., Tinelli's Hathaway House, Solon, by the Cortland County Historical Society.
- May 16: May Meditation: 6:30 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 23: May Meditation: 6:30 p.m. Center for the Arts of Homer.
- May 30: ComedyFLOPs Presents Improv at the AKE Gallery to raise money for JM Murray Center, 7 p.m.
- July 12: Lifetime Achievement Awards reception, by Cortland Arts Connect, July 12, McNeil Building Gallery, Main Street, Cortland.
- Aug. 3: Arts off Main, downtown Cortland.
- Sept 13-15: Northeast Electro-Music Fest. Center for the Arts of Homer.

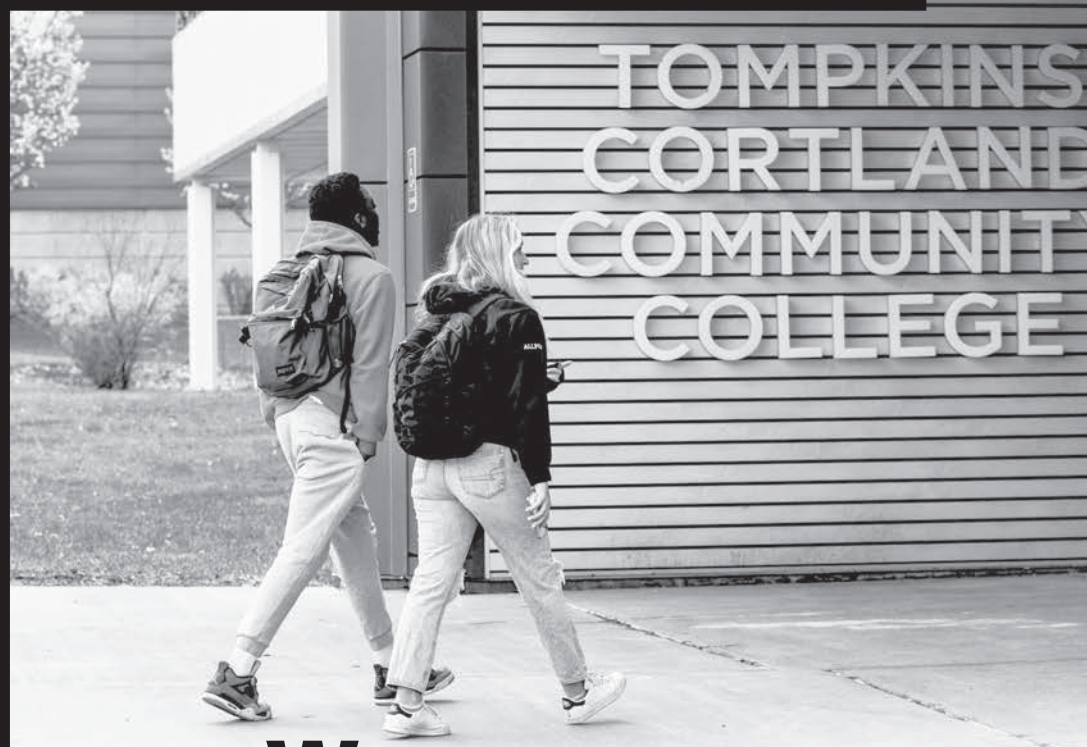


Kevin T. Conlon/file photo

Participants in a Coffee Mania float walk along Homer Avenue in Cortland during the 2022 Cortland County Dairy Parade

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