



*Take a Sneak Preview of Essex Heritage's  
premier partnership event . . .*

[www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LOWER MERRIMACK VALLEY TO OFFER  
32 FREE! EVENTS FOR TRAILS & SAILS 2008**

*All Opportunities to GO! Experience Essex Heritage*

**September 4, 2008 (Salem, MA)** . . . Momentum is building as Essex Heritage (Essex National Heritage Commission) finalizes its plans to present its seventh annual TRAILS & SAILS 2008: *A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage*, September 26 - 28. This year, in an effort to reach out to its regional partners, Essex Heritage has joined forces with Amesbury Chamber of Commerce, Town of Amesbury, ArtsFest Merrimack Valley and the Newburyport Chamber of Commerce to showcase a cluster of 32 events taking place in a unique array of historic, cultural, and natural sites within the Lower Merrimack section of the Essex National Heritage Area. Throughout all of Essex County, TRAILS & SAILS weekend will include more than 200 *FREE!* events spread out over 140 locations, involving non-profit and community organizations, as well as recreation-based businesses. For a full listing of events, visit:

[www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org)

Activities in the lower Merrimack Valley will focus on the towns of Amesbury, Newbury, Newburyport and Salisbury which are offering more events than ever before and are eager to give visitors a taste of their unique history, breathtaking landscapes and hidden gems! With the help of the local chambers and partnership with ArtsFest Merrimack Valley, Essex Heritage has assembled a network of community groups and organizations to offer a stellar itinerary of Lower Merrimack events including guided nature hikes, historical biking tours, as well as special interest walks and art happenings for all ages, skill levels and interests.

The possibilities are endless . . . You can begin your itinerary in Amesbury with a fun and educational bike tour that highlights all 15 of Amesbury's Historic Treasures including the Bartlett Museum, the Mary Baker Eddy House and Lowell's Boat Shop. Check out the self-guided walking tours that take you through Amesbury's fascinating industrial transformation and scenic passages. Partake in a peaceful trail walk in Salisbury through our beautiful eastern marshlands. Feel the creative energy along a Newburyport Art Walk and realize how our unique landscape and history inspires local artists. Take a nature hike at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. There is so much to see, learn, experience, explore and rediscover! Navigate your weekend with: [www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org) where you can search by event date, time and activity, and download a program guide.

### **TRAILS & SAILS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- 200+ *FREE!* events to be held at over 140 historic, cultural and natural sites in Essex County, MA. Three fun-filled days! From Friday afternoon to Sunday at sunset, there will be the widest range of activities ever with a special focus on "Family Fun Sunday" Special themed trails to be offered include: Go! Green, Go! Outdoors, Go! Kids
- Kick off TRAILS & SAILS Weekend with a special celebration entitled "*A Taste of TRAILS & SAILS*" on Thursday, September 25 from 5:30 – 8:30pm, at Willowdale Estate in Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased online at: [www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org) or by calling 978-740-0444
- Inaugural partnership with ArtsFest Merrimack Valley, a first annual, valley-wide art happening greatly expanding the number of creative activities offered. For more info: [www.merrimackvalley.info/artsfest](http://www.merrimackvalley.info/artsfest)
- Go! Explore a wide range of GO! Healthy activities designed to raise your heart rate and let you try all new heart-healthy ways to improve fitness.

TRAILS & SAILS 2008: *A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage* is an annual celebration of all the historic, cultural and natural treasures in the Essex National Heritage Area. Organized by the Essex National Heritage Commission, this event is an integral part of the Essex Heritage mission, which is to raise regional awareness of the Area's unique treasures and promote their preservation. Printed program guides with event descriptions, locations and times are now available via online registration at [www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org). Please register online to receive a copy, or call Essex Heritage at 978-740-0444.

**TRAILS & SAILS 2008: A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage** is presented by TD Banknorth, with additional financial support from Eastern Bank, Beverly Hospital and Addison Gilbert Hospital.



***About TRAILS & SAILS 2008***

**TRAILS & SAILS: A Weekend to Go! Experience Essex Heritage** is the premier partnership event of the Essex National Heritage Commission celebrating the historic, cultural and natural treasures of the Essex National Heritage Area. Coordinated by Essex Heritage as an integral part of our mission, TRAILS & SAILS raises regional awareness of the Area's unique history and promotes the preservation of its heritage sites. Learn more at: [trailsandsails.org](http://trailsandsails.org)



***About Essex National Heritage Area and Essex Heritage Commission***

The Essex National Heritage Area is comprised of the 34 communities of Essex County and designated by US Congress in recognition of the important role that this region played in American history and the significant heritage sites still extant in the region. Essex Heritage is the non-profit management entity for the Area, working in collaboration with the National Park Service to promote public/private partnerships, and develop programs that enhance, preserve and encourage regional awareness of the Area's unique historic, cultural and natural resources. For more information, experience Essex Heritage at [essexheritage.org](http://essexheritage.org) or call (978) 740-0444.



***About ArtsFest Merrimack Valley***

ArtsFest Merrimack Valley is organized by the Merrimack Valley Creative Economy Project, a collaborative effort of the Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council, the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the Cultural Organization of Lowell, with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The goal of ArtsFest is to showcase the magnitude and diversity of art and culture of the Merrimack Valley . . . 24 diverse communities forming a "creative corridor" along the Merrimack River and I 495. For more info: [merrimackvalley.info/artsfest.htm](http://merrimackvalley.info/artsfest.htm)

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