

ESSEX STEAM TRAIN & RIVERBOAT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Essex Steam Train & Riverboat Celebrates 5th Anniversary of Neighbor Appreciation Weekend!

*Neighbors Ride Free on Opening Weekend . . . May 2nd & 3rd
Aboard a Special, Train Only Journey
Making Local Station Stops from Essex to Haddam*

April 20, 2009, Essex, CT - - Essex Steam Train & Riverboat is delighted to celebrate its 5th Anniversary of Neighbor Appreciation Weekend, on May 2 & 3, 2009, by operating a sentimental journey through the Connecticut River Valley. This special, TRAIN ONLY journey will be making local station stops from Essex to Haddam, just as the *Connecticut Valley Railroad* did back in the 1870's, when the train line was the primary means of weekend travel from Hartford to Old Saybrook.

Robert Bell, **President of the Valley Railroad Company**, says, "Neighbor Appreciation Weekend is Essex Steam Train & Riverboat's way of expressing thanks to community residents who support our efforts to share this unique historic treasure with visitors. Five years ago, we began Neighbor Appreciation Weekend by offering free train and boat rides to residents in towns that the Essex Steam Train & Riverboat travels through. This year, we're delighted to mark the 5th anniversary of this occasion with a train only journey that enables residents the rare opportunity to travel the same route as their local predecessors."

This TRAIN ONLY event includes *free* rides for residents in 5 towns along the Valley Railroad's operating line - - **Essex, Deep River, Chester, Haddam, and Old Saybrook**. The Essex Steam Train will embark on a 90 minute, round-trip journey along the banks of the Connecticut River to Haddam; passengers may elect a shorter trip from one town to another. This springtime adventure will be blooming with Connecticut River Valley flora and fauna and will traverse the tidal wetlands of Pratt Cove and Chester Creek. Historic landmark sightings will include local station stops, East Haddam Swing Bridge, Goodspeed Opera House, and Gillette Castle.

- more -

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There will be three trains making departures and arrivals at local stations as follows:

Essex Steam Train Timetable
Neighbor Appreciation Weekend
May 2 & 3, 2009

Northbound

Station	Time	Time	Time
Essex (dp)	11:00am	1:00pm	3:00pm
Deep River	11:15am	1:15pm	3:15pm
Chester	11:20am	1:20pm	3:20pm
Hadlyme Ferry	11:25am	1:25pm	3:25pm
Goodspeed (ar)	11:40am	1:40pm	3:40pm

Southbound

Station	Time	Time	Time
Goodspeed (dp)	11:50am	1:50pm	3:50pm
Hadlyme Ferry	12:05pm	2:05pm	4:05pm
Chester	12:10pm	2:10pm	4:10pm
Deep River	12:15pm	2:15pm	4:15pm
Essex (ar)	12:35pm	2:35pm	4:35pm

All trains making local stops in each direction.

Tickets for “Neighbor Appreciation Weekend” are available for all 3 departures, on a *first come, first serve basis*. Adult residents must present picture identification at the Essex Ticket Window, or to the Trainman upon boarding at Local Stops.

The Valley Railroad Company

Incorporated in 1969, The Valley Railroad Company opened the Essex Steam Train & Riverboat to the public in 1971. Today, the Essex Steam Train & Riverboat attracts 150,000 visitors a year and is one of Connecticut’s most vibrant tourist attractions. Tour goers enjoy a 2½ hour narrated steam train and riverboat journey through the scenic Connecticut River Valley. Special events include *Day Out With Thomas*, *Santa Special* and *North Pole Express*. Please visit www.essexsteamtrain.com.

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