

Everybody's Celebrating!

All over America, communities are throwing wonderful festivals to relive their history, to promote a local industry, to keep a tradition going or to just plain have fun. The goings-on usually last a weekend, but sometimes a week or more. And they abound in good food, crazy contests, parades, exhibitions.

Here are some especially terrific annual celebrations that aren't to be missed if you're in the neighborhood:

■ If you're looking for silliness carried to festival proportions, don't miss New Haven, Connecticut's, **Bed Race**, always held the Saturday after Labor Day. Yes, teams of four contestants push actual beds through the streets while another person rides. All teams must be coed. Some beds are souped up for speed; others are decorated for laughs. All participate in a 10 A.M. parade before the races begin. (Contact: New Haven Register, 40 Sargent Dr., New Haven, CT 06511; 203-562-1121, ext. 203 or 398.)

If you're an ice-cream freak, you'll love the **Ice Cream Festival** in Wilmington, Delaware, July 9-10, 1988. A display of antique ice-cream paraphernalia, Victorian crafts, antique cars, hot-air balloons and high-wheeled bicycles decorates the grounds of the rural Gothic nineteenth century Rockwood Museum. There's plenty of barbecued chicken, corn on the cob and, of course, old-fashioned homemade ice cream. Tour the museum with its manor house, conservatory and porter's lodge and learn about English, European and American decorative arts of the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. (Contact: Rockwood Museum, 610 Shipley Rd., Wilmington, DE 19809; 302-571-7776.)

The Christmas **Pageant of Peace** in Washington, D.C., is a festival of decorated trees representing every state in the Union. On the Ellipse, between the Washington Monument and the south lawn of the White House, President Reagan lights the huge national Christmas tree at dusk one evening in mid-December. All the other trees are illuminated too, for the last two weeks of December. Choral groups give free concerts of seasonal music each night from 5-10 P.M. (Contact: Washington Convention and Visitor's Assoc., 1575 Eye Street N.W., Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20005; 202-789-7000.)

Portland, Maine, holds a glorious **Festival of the Arts**, a three-day extravaganza, Aug. 19-21, 1988. Over 1,000 artists from all over the world provide continuous performances in dance, music and theater on five separate stages. The Festival Stage stars big-band, jazz and rock music. The Folk Arts Stage has international music performances and a folk-art tent with exhibitions. The Current Events Stage has interdisciplinary works, sculpture and dance. The Cafe Stage is an informal area with comedy, theater, literary works and local songwriters. The Children's Area has

mimes, jugglers, puppeteers and a kids' workshop. There's an evening concert series every night by well-known artists and lots of international and gourmet food. Admission: \$7, adults; \$3, senior citizens and kids; under 6, free. Combination admission for the daytime events and evening concert series: \$13 for adults; \$8 for senior citizens and children 7 and older; under 6, free. (Contact: Maine Arts Inc., 29 Forest Ave., Portland ME 04101; 207-772-9012.)

Celebrate beautiful autumn foliage in Oakland, Maryland, at the **Autumn Glory Festival**—a tournament of bands, banjo and fiddle championships, firefighters' events, Oktoberfest and Grand Feature Parade which takes place the second weekend in October. Square dance at the bagpipe and bluegrass concerts and polka to the sounds of the German oompah band. Learn old and new crafts at the Heritage and Contemporary Craft Shows and feed a painter by attending the Starving Artist Show. There's a railroad exhibit featuring old-time train cars, a mountain men competition with a tomahawk-throwing contest and, to top it off, a fabulous turkey dinner. (Contact: Deep Creek Lake Garrett County Promotion Council, Court House, Oakland, MD 21550; 301-334-1948.)

Nobody celebrates Halloween like that capital of witchcraft, Salem, Massachusetts. The town's **Haunted Happenings** go on for the whole week of Halloween from Oct. 24-Nov. 1, 1987 with eerie mystery tours, costume parties, parades, spooky haunted houses, magic shows and a psychic festival. You'll also absorb the history of the Salem witches and their trials and be educated on modern-day witchcraft at the Witches League for Public Awareness seminar. Admission to the various events ranges from free to \$6. (Contact: Salem Chamber of Commerce, 32 Derby Sq., Salem, MA 01970; 617-744-0004.)

You actually can take part as a citizen or shepherd of biblical times in the **Live Bethlehem Christmas Pageant**, Dec. 19-20, 1987 in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. In a solemn parade, camels, horses, donkeys, chickens, dogs and sheep are herded along a wooded trail while a narrator announces the birth of Jesus. A chorus or soloist sings Christmas hymns. Dress warmly and bring chairs. Admission: free; contributions appreciated. (Contact: John Cornish, 711 West Goepp St., Bethlehem, PA 18018; 215-867-2893.)

—Honi Brett

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This December, communities all over America will be honoring the holidays with lovely and moving festivals. Don't miss these if you're anywhere in the neighborhood.

BY HONI BRETT

● At Christmas the Biltmore in **Asheville, North Carolina**, is illuminated with hundreds of candles inside and out. Built in 1890-1895 by George Vanderbilt, the mansion's rooms are decorated especially for the Christmas season, and candlelight tours are held 6:30-8:30 P.M. every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 27-Dec. 24; Dec. 26, 27 (closed Christmas Day). Ensembles of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra add the perfect touch of Christmas music. Be sure to call for reservations. Daytime hours: 9 A.M.-5 P.M., seven days a week. Admission: \$13-\$20; free, children 11 and under. (Contact: Biltmore Company, Marketing Dept., 1 North Pack Square, Asheville, NC 28801; 704-255-1700.)

● **Charleston, South Carolina**, celebrates the season with an Historic Landmark Tour of Christmas-decorated homes and churches. There's a Wonderland of Christmas Trees at the Omni Hotel, a Christmas-tree lighting in Marion Square, a Christmas Parade and a Parade of Boats in Charleston Harbor. Tour fees: \$10, adults; \$8, groups; \$5, children 12 and under. (Contact: Charleston Trident Convention & Visitors Bureau, Box 975, 17 Lockwood Blvd., Charleston, SC 29402; 803-723-7641.)

● **Savannah, Georgia**, plays host to an annual month-long Christmas celebration. Its Riverstreet Christmas Festival kicks off the December calendar with a Christmas Parade at 11 A.M. on Dec. 5. You'll feel right out of Dickens (or *Gone With the Wind*) as you take the Christmas tour of historic homes in a horse-drawn carriage for \$14. There are holiday concerts by the Savannah Symphony and Choral Holiday too. (Contact: The Savannah Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, 301 West Broad St., Savannah, GA 31499; 912-233-6651.)

The annual Christmas Regatta of Lights in **St. Augustine, Florida**, on Dec. 13 marks the start of that city's holiday season. Sailmotor- and commercial boats festooned with lights and decorations depart from the Camanche Cove Yacht Harbor and circle Matanzas Bay. Judges give out awards for Most Colorful, Best Theme, Best Overall Pleasure Craft and Best Overall Commercial Craft. (Contact: St. Augustine Chamber of Commerce, Drawer 0, St. Augustine, FL 32085; 904-829-5661.)

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