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Backgrounder

**MAJOR ANNUAL SPECIAL EVENTS IN HARTFORD
FACTS AT A GLANCE**

Greater Hartford thrives with festivals and special events throughout the year to celebrate the arts, music, poetry, sports, holidays and the riverfront. The events also reflect the city's broad spectrum of cultural groups, including a Puerto Rican Day Parade, West Indian Week and Parade, Asian Festival and Dragon Boat Races, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Columbus Day Parade, African-American Bazaar and Rally, Hartford PRIDE Rally and Festival, and Three Kings Day celebration.

Following are some highlights of popular annual events:

**Buick Championship (formerly the Greater Hartford Open)
Tournament Players Club at River Highlands, Cromwell
August**

www.buickchampionship.com

The PGA Tour makes its annual swing into Hartford every summer with the Buick Championship. Golf fans have a chance to watch their favorite pros take on one of the country's toughest courses. As the Greater Hartford Jaycees' only event, it raises more than \$1 million every year for community programs for children and other goodwill efforts.

**First Night Hartford
Various Locations in Downtown Hartford
December 31**

860 722 9546

www.firstnighthartford.com

The city's premier New Year's family-oriented celebration (alcohol free) of the arts features nine hours of extraordinary performances of all kinds, including jazz, classical, rock n' roll, world and folk music; dance; theater; children's entertainment; and early evening fireworks, ending with a midnight finale and fireworks.

**Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz
Bushnell Park, Hartford
July**

www.jazzhartford.com

This three-day world-class jazz festival further contributes to enlivening the cultural and economic vitality of Greater Hartford with over 20 hours of music performed by

internationally acclaimed artists. It is the largest free festival in southern New England, sponsored by the Hartford Financial Services Group.

Greater Hartford Marathon
Bushnell Park, Hartford
October, Columbus Day Weekend
www.hartfordmarathon.com

United Technologies Greater Hartford Marathon attracts runners from around the globe to compete in races for all age groups. All races start and finish in Bushnell Park.

Hartford Festival of Light
Constitution Plaza Downtown Hartford
November – January
860 525 8629
www.ConnectTheDots.org

Downtown Hartford's longest-running winter wonderland tradition, "Hartford Festival of Light," marks the official winter holiday season from Thanksgiving to right after New Year's. Visitors and residents alike enjoy bright, twinkling lights while they stroll along the shimmering plaza and bask in the holiday music and decorative trees, fountains and sculptures. This festival is produced by the Greater Hartford Arts Council.

Hartford International Jazz Festival
Downtown Hartford
October, Columbus Day Weekend
860 524 9094
www.HIJF.com

Held in the city's central business district, this festival encourages music fans to enjoy wonderful sounds of jazz, Latin jazz, Brazilian, blues and other new music genres, along with great food.

Hartford Vintage Base Ball Invitational
Bushnell Park, Hartford
Fourth of July Weekend
www.hartfordvintagebaseball.com

Nineteenth-century baseball returns to downtown Hartford's Bushnell Park in early July with vintage base ball, featuring more than a dozen amateur clubs competing for the coveted Capital City Cup, while adhering to the rules, uniform styles, equipment and gentlemanly play of yester-year. The Hartford-based Vintage Base Ball Factory, LLC, a baseball sports goods company, produces the event.

Juneteenth
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford
June
www.juneteenth.com

Juneteenth is the celebration and commemoration of the day formal notification of emancipation from bondage was received by enslaved Africans in Texas. The three-day event contributes to cultural awareness and educates children and adults about little-known American history with a gala, parade and cultural events. Presented annually by the Jubilee Committee, the event benefits the Amistad Foundation's collection of African-American art housed at the Wadsworth Atheneum.

Open Studio Weekend
Citywide in Hartford
First Weekends in May and December
www.open-studio.com

The annual Greater Hartford Artists Open Studio Weekend is an opportunity for the public to meet local artists in their studios throughout the city, and view and purchase their work, including paintings, crafts, photography, jewelry, fabric art, pottery and more. The event also includes entertainment, museum tours, music and family activities.

Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival
Marin Park, East Hartford
August
www.gotech.com/events.dir/podunk/homepg01.htm

860 291 7350

This four-day festival features some of the best of bluegrass, as well as free workshops, family activities, storytelling, jam sessions, and food and craft vendors.

Riverfest
Charter Oak Landing and Riverfront Plaza, Hartford, and
Great River Park and Founders Plaza, East Hartford
Independence Day Weekend, July

860 713 3131

www.riverfront.org

The region's largest Independence Day celebration showcases food, activities for all ages, top-name talent and other entertainment. The grand finale is a spectacular fireworks display.

Sunken Garden Poetry Festival
Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington
June – August
860 677 4787

www.hillstead.org

The Hill-Stead Museum's Sunken Garden turns into "a little paradise for poetry" every summer with a festival highlighting music and world-class poetry.

Talcott Mountain Music Festival
Simsbury Meadows, Simsbury
June – July
860 246 8742

www.hartfordsymphony.org

This lively summer concert series attracts more than 20,000 people annually and features the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and special guests playing classical and popular music.

For more information on the diverse events in Hartford, contact **Greater Hartford Arts Council** at www.connectthedots.org and www.connectthedots.org/calendar.html; **Hartford Image Project** at www.hartford.com.

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