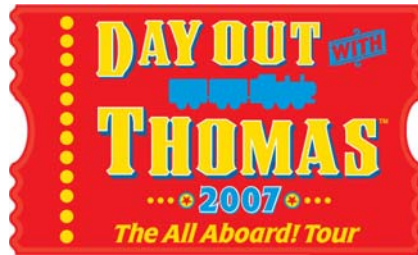


**Contact:** Ryan Smith  
Rob Bailey Communications  
201.760.0200 ext. 103  
[rsmith@rbcpr.com](mailto:rsmith@rbcpr.com)

**Contact:** Susan Dee  
Essex Steam Train  
860-767-0103 X116  
[valley.railroad@snet.net](mailto:valley.railroad@snet.net)



## **DAY OUT WITH THOMAS™ 2007: ALL ABOARD TOUR PULLING INTO ESSEX**

**Thomas the Tank Engine™ to Visit Essex Nov 3-4 & 10-11  
Tickets On Sale Now!!**

**Essex, Connecticut** – Peep! Peep! Thomas the Tank Engine is set to roll into Essex for the *Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour*. The event, which takes place November 3-4 & 10-11, will be hosted by **Essex Steam Train & Riverboat**, [www.essexsteamtrain.com](http://www.essexsteamtrain.com), at 1 Railroad Avenue in Essex.

“Over the past nine years, *Day Out With Thomas* continues to stand out as a unique, interactive family experience. This event brings thousands from the surrounding areas to our local heritage railroad, connecting them to each other and to a piece of US history,” explains Susan Dee of Essex Steam Train. “In addition to experiencing a real, working railroad, the event is perpetually growing in size and popularity -- everyone from grandchild to grandparents has something special to enjoy.”

At Essex Steam Train, fans will be immersed in the tradition of an authentic rail yard and will be left awe-inspired by their fun-filled ride **on a real train** pulled by a 60-ton steam locomotive replica of everybody's favorite #1 engine, Thomas the Tank Engine. For the first time ever at Essex Steam Train, *Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour* will include a photo opportunity with an inflatable Percy, Thomas' trusted friend. This limited-engagement experience features a variety of *Thomas & Friends*-themed entertainment for the entire family including a 25-minute (approximate) ride with Thomas the Tank Engine; the opportunity to meet and take a photo with **Sir Topham Hatt™**, Controller of the Railway; a **Thomas & Friends Imagination Station**; featuring stamps, temporary tattoos, hands-on arts and crafts activities and coloring sheets; storytelling, video viewing and live music. In addition to the *Thomas & Friends*-themed activities, the Essex Steam Train experience will include: magic shows, face-painting, local favorite Kaboose the Clown, and balloon twisters. **And, all new in 2007, children can operate an oversized Thomas the Tank Engine O-gauge model train or enjoy the thrill of climbing aboard a Diesel Locomotive Simulator to drive the engine, toot the horn and ring the bell!**

For more than six decades, children have been captivated by the tales of Thomas the Tank Engine. Pulling out of the station for its 12th consecutive ride on the rails, the *Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour* will visit 47 cities in the United States and Canada. Presented by HIT Entertainment, *Day Out With Thomas* is the only place for entire families to come together and enjoy Thomas-themed activities such as the Imagination Station, including stamps, temporary tattoos and hands-on arts and crafts. Sir Topham Hatt, Controller of the Railway, will

also be on hand to greet visitors and insure Thomas is being a “Really Useful Engine”. Each year the tour grows, traveling to new destinations, adding new activities and welcoming new visitors.

The approximately 25-minute, train ride with Thomas the Tank Engine will depart every 45 minutes, rain or shine, between 9:00 AM and 3:45 PM daily. Tickets for the ***Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour*** are \$16.00 for ages 2 and up.

Tickets are on sale now and are available by calling toll-free 866.468.7630 or logging onto [www.ticketweb.com](http://www.ticketweb.com). For more information and directions contact Essex Steam Train at 800.377.3987 or visit [www.essexsteamtrain.com](http://www.essexsteamtrain.com).

For general information or to find a ***Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour*** event near you, visit [www.thomasandfriends.com](http://www.thomasandfriends.com).

#### **For media use only:**

For high-resolution downloadable artwork or additional information please go to [www.hitnewsonline.com](http://www.hitnewsonline.com), select U.S. media and then ***Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour***.

#### **About Essex Steam Train & Riverboat**

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 to the *only* steam train and riverboat connection in the country. Tour goers enjoy a 2½ hour narrated steam train and riverboat journey through the scenic Connecticut River Valley. For more information about the Essex Steam Train & Riverboat, visit [www.essexsteamtrain.com](http://www.essexsteamtrain.com).

#### **About Thomas & Friends**

Thomas & Friends invites children to enter a world of imagination through the tracks of a train and the words of a story. Thomas the Tank Engine was created by a father for his son more than 60 years ago. Today, families in more than 145 countries enjoy fun and adventure with their engine friends while experiencing timeless life lessons of discovery, friendship and cooperation. Thomas & Friends is making tracks to great destinations on PBS KIDS® and PBS KIDS SproutSM. For more information about the world of Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends, please visit [www.thomasandfriends.com](http://www.thomasandfriends.com).

#### **About HIT Entertainment**

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners since June 2005, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes internationally renowned children's properties, such as Bob the Builder™, Barney™, Thomas & Friends, Pingu™, Rubbadubbers™ and Angelina Ballerina™. HIT acts as a representative for The Wiggles® in the UK, US and Canada and as worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands, including Fraggle Rock™. HIT also owns the Guinness World Records™ publishing and television property and Fireman Sam™, a joint venture with S4C. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production (including studios in the US and the UK), publishing, consumer products licensing and live events. With a catalog of more than 1,000 hours of young children's programming, HIT sells its shows to more than 240 countries worldwide, in more than 40 different languages and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. In 2005, the Company joined Comcast Corporation, PBS and Sesame Workshop to launch PBS KIDS SproutSM, a 24-hour digital cable channel and VOD service for preschoolers. For more information, visit [www.hitentertainment.com](http://www.hitentertainment.com).

###