

# CAPE COD TIMES

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## Column: Finding summer's rhythm

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Gloria Estefan sings “there’s no place you can hide” because “the rhythm is gonna get’cha, the rhythm is gonna get’cha.”

And as the glorious summer roars down on us once again – just hours old after the Summer Solstice – you can feel its rhythm down deep in your bones. All the miserable cold winter storms with their beach eroding destruction and the wet spring weekends are just faded memories now that summer has officially begun. The Cape welcomes the mass of tourists and visitors freed from overcoats, boots and scarves and their heaviness left on the other side of the bridge.

The rhythm starts at the shore. Wave after wave rolls up on the soft sand over and over on Chapoquoit Beach, never missing a beat, a sort of sonic syrup to our senses. Through our sunglasses, we witness the clouds floating through the blue sky with no destination or agenda. The gulls following the Steamship Authority ferries soar and dive on the air currents that softly whisper their rhythm to the passengers headed to the islands. The hydrangeas will soon blossom everywhere and color the seaside all the way to Provincetown.

The daylight stretches out longer now allowing us to feel the pleasure of passing time. From the early sun peeking over the horizon while we savor a cup of morning coffee to the moon shadows dancing on the water at Craigville Beach at night, we get caught by the summer rhythms. We sit and watch the Cape Baseball League games under warm skies and hear the crack of wooden bats from an era gone by.

When you see Sweet Caroline’s ice cream shop in Sandwich crowded with people happy and waiting patiently in line for their scoop or waffle cone after dinner, even on a weekday in the summer, with the only decision being whether it will be black raspberry or rum raisin, the summer has already inoculated them from life’s mundane worries.

Even the barbecue grills on back porches sizzle with the rhythm. The aromas of grilled meats and veggies relax the senses and take the rush out of mealtimes. Visit the West Falmouth Market's Thursday night barbecue dinners and linger at the sidewalk tables.

Don’t forget the feasts of lobsters, oysters and the chowder – from opening that plastic sleeve of crackers to the cracking of that claw and splitting open the tail – those special sounds of summer repeat table to table, day to day, like rhythmic piano keys.

Pedal your bike on the Shining Sea Bike Path between Woods Hole and Falmouth; you will get into a rhythm. Catch a concert at the Hyannis Melody Tent where there will surely be rhythm. Ride the Island Queen to Martha’s Vineyard for lunch at one of the dockside restaurants and feel the rhythm of the ship’s engines pushing through the white caps.

You cannot escape the summer rhythm. And why would you want to?

The crowds, the traffic, the long lines are the dissonance of the summer on the Cape. No one likes them. Yes, take a deep breath. And if you join a conga line somewhere this summer, or find yourself doing the Limbo with your family

and friends in the backyard to see how low can you go, remember it's the rhythm of summer that has finally got'cha.

*James Carroll lives in East Falmouth.*