

Southington Drive-In Delivers Fun In the Dark

Movies under the stars bring out the kid in everyone.

- By [Margaret Waage](#), August 22, 2011

Who doesn't enjoy spending a summer night outdoors? The [Southington Drive-In](#), a town-owned movie theater in its second year of operation, is quickly becoming a sweet spot for residents to take in a show and enjoy some old fashioned fun.

The venue is one of three remaining drive-in's in the state. The other two are the Mansfield Drive-In and Pleasant Vally Drive-In in Barkhamsted.

What makes Southington Drive-In unique is its history. It first opened in 1954 and played movies until 2002 when it closed. The lot sat underutilized for many years. In 2004 Southington residents voted to purchase the property and restore the site back to its original purpose.

With the screen light turned back on, this favorite attraction is proving to be something that gives the whole family a reason to spend time together. With plenty of open space there's room enough to toss a frisbee or play a game of tag before the movie starts.

The drive-in is conveniently located next to Recreation Park and Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike where nearby restaurants make eating dinner pre-show or grabbing a late night snack afterwards very easy.

Two vendors are also located adjacent to the pavilion and serve movie munchies such as hot dogs, pizza, sausage and peppers, chips, juices and seltzer.

The entire venue is run by local volunteers called the Southington Drive-In Committee, and it is that community spirit that makes it special.

Every movie that plays at the theater is sponsored by a civic group and a portion of ticket sales proceeds goes directly back to that host group. "This collaborative arrangement is something of value to everyone in town," said Dawn Miceli, Southington Drive-In Committee member.

"What is super about tonight's event, is that [Southington Brass](#) (band), featuring band director at Kennedy Middle School Tim Johnson, Principal of Southington High School Dr. Martin Semmel and brother Erik Semmel and eight local students, called to ask if they could start the evening off," said Miceli. "The music is great and people really enjoy hearing it. It makes Southington Drive-In a great attraction destination." Following a performance that included "Love Me Tender," "Ghostbusters" and "Over There," Southington Brass presented [The Mill Foundation for Kids](#) with a check for \$356 they raised during a fundraiser.

"Field of Dreams" charmed audiences Saturday night sponsored by the [Southington Knights Travel Football](#). Gates open at 6 p.m. Movies begin at sunset. \$10 a carload for Southington residents; \$13 a carload for non-residents. Walk-ins are at a reduced rate of \$2.

Two more shows are will conclude the 2011 season:

Aug. 27 - "The Sandlot"

Sept. 3 - "Toy Story III"

Photos



Southington Brass

The Southington Brass performs in the pavilion at Southington Drive-In before "Field of Dreams" movie airs. The group is made up of volunteers that simply enjoy sharing their love of music. The group helps raise money for The Mill Foundation for Kids, which improves the lives of sick children. Credit: [Margaret Waage](#)



Southington Brass

Brett Taricani, left, and Sam Johnson perform before at Southington Drive-In pavilion. Credit: [Margaret Waage](#)



Brothers Brass

Dr. Martin Semmel, left, Southington High School Principal, and brother Erik Semmel are band members of Southington Brass, a group that formed to better appreciate music making. They often perform to help raise money for The Mill Foundation for Kids, which helps improve the lives of sick children. Credit: [Margaret Waage](#)



Players

Michael Loose, foreground, and Brett Taricani of Southington Brass perform at Southington Drive-In pavilion. Credit: [Margaret Waage](#)



Awarded

Members of Southington Brass present Jeff Krar (in blue), board member of The Mill Foundation for Kids, a community-based non-profit that helps improve the lives of sick children, with a check for \$356 from a recent fundraiser. Credit: [Margaret Waage](#)