

April 2, 2010

Plans underway for downtown block party

PORTLAND - The Portland Main Street program announced recently that it will hold its first "Downtown Portland Block Party" on Saturday, May 15. A classic car show, local food vendors, live entertainment, and a softball tournament will highlight this year's event.

"The Promotions and Marketing Committee was looking for a great spring-time promotion, one that would bring people downtown, and they are working very hard to pull together a great event," said Main Street Manager Patrick Reagan.

The block party will feature a car show by the Portland Cruisers Car Club. Classic cars will be on display on Kent Street from 3 to 8 p.m.

"We've been told that we may have as many as 125 classic cars downtown, so we're pretty excited to have the Portland Cruisers taking part in this event," said Reagan.

Great food will also highlight this event, as local food vendors will be selling their best dishes throughout the day.

"We have some great restaurants taking part in this event," Reagan said. "We're hoping that a lot of people will be introduced -- or reintroduced -- to some of the best food in the area during the block party."

The Downtown Block Party will also feature a men's softball tournament, as well as a co-ed kickball tournament; both will be held at Power's Park and Bogue Flats Park on May 15.

"This will be the first tournament that the Parks and Recreation Department has offered in five years, so we're pretty excited to offer an early season tournament and get people downtown," said Portland Parks and Recreation Director Mary Scheurer.

The cost to register a team for the softball tournament is \$75 per team, with a deadline of May 12 for registrations. The cost to enter a co-ed kickball team is \$50 per team. Both tournaments are double elimination. Groups interested in participating in either of these tournaments should contact Recreation Programmer Neil Brown at (517) 647-3207. Registration forms can also be downloaded at www.portlandmainstreet.org.

A complete schedule of events will be available on the Portland Main Street Web site, www.portlandmainstreet.org in the coming days.

"More than anything, the Promotions and Marketing Committee is very impressed with the support that this event has received from our sponsors in the first year," said Reagan.

"Our "Block Captain" sponsor for 2010 is the Mid Michigan Radio Group -- Q106 FM, Classic Hits 92-X, 94.1 The Edge, and 92.9 WJZL -- and we really appreciate their support."

"We are also really happy with the way Portland area businesses have stepped up to help sponsor this event as well," said Reagan. Local sponsors include Maria's Tacos, Simon Insurance, Midwest Business Equipment, Raffaeles' Marketplace, Portland Federal Credit Union, and Duff, Chadwick and Associates.

"This type of community support is outstanding, and we really appreciate it," said Reagan.

The goal of the Portland Main Street program is to actively revitalize Portland's vibrant, charming, and unique downtown into a gathering place-one that uses broad-based community support to (1) provide

opportunities to entrepreneurs; (2) sustain a strong economic foundation for the region; and (3) safeguard history, tradition, and a sense of community for residents and visitors.

For more information on how to be part of this mission, visit the Portland Main Street Web site at www.portlandmainstreet.org or call the Portland Main Street offices at (517) 647-5027.

- From Portland Main Street
