

On the Street

Downtown Happenings

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Committees

- **Design:** Kathy Parsons
- **Economic Revitalization:**
Diane Smith
- **Organization & Finance:**
Julie Clement
- **Promotions & Marketing:**
Wanda Urie

- **Board Chair, Joel**
VanSlambrouck

Volunteer Opening!

We need volunteers to help plan Oktoberfest and HolidayFest on the Grand. Give us a call if you can spare an hour here & there.

June is packed with fun things to do in and around downtown Portland.

- ▷ June 3, Thursdays on the Grand (TOG), 6:30-8pm, Thieves Like Us
- ▷ June 5, Farmers' Market at the Red Mill begins, 8am-noon
- ▷ June 10, TOG, 6:30-8pm, Pat White
- ▷ June 12, Farmers' Market, 8am-noon
- ▷ June 12-13, Portland Rodeo Days
- ▷ June 17, TOG, 6:30-8pm, We Three Strings
- ▷ June 18, Third Friday Art Walk, downtown
- ▷ June 19, Farmers' Market, 8am-noon
- ▷ June 19, Cruise-A-Thong, 11:30 or so
- ▷ June 24, TOG, 6:30-8pm, Blue Jello
- ▷ June 26, Farmers' Market, 8am-noon
- ▷ June 26, Memorial Paddle from Sebewa Creek



Cruise-A-Thongers pose for a photo op after the grueling 2009 race

(end of Erdman Rd, Sunfield) to Thompson Field, launch at 10:30am

- ▷ June 26, Verlen Kruger Memorial unveiling, 4pm, Thompson Field
- ▷ July 1, TOG, 6:30-8pm, Pete Trappen
- ▷ July 3, Farmers' Market, 8am-noon
- ▷ July 8, TOG, 6:30-8pm, The Thistles

What's New?

This month, we launch a new look for "On the Street," along with an expanded format. Ten months of the year, you'll be able to enjoy four pages of downtown news instead of two. How will we pay for this? By offering our downtown businesses some marketing opportunities. Please support the businesses that help publish this newsletter!

Part of our new format is an opportunity for you to "shout out" a message to someone near and dear. We'll publish four "Shout Out" messages each month. See page 2 for details and pricing.

Is there something you'd like to see covered in "On the Street"? Contact Main Street Director Patrick Reagan.

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Cruise-A-Thong 2010

Oil your bicycle chain, pump up those inner tubes, and strap on your favorite pair of thongs—flip flops, that is. On June 19, Portland hosts its second annual Cruise-A-Thong, “a race for the average Joe” (or Jo). In this “triathlon for the chronically unambitious,” racers compete in a short bike ride, a short trip down the Grand River in inflatable watercraft, and a short walk in thongs (flip flops, that is, for those of you old enough to remember their former name).

This year’s event will raise funds for the Portland Community Arts Council.

The rules warn racers: “Scoring is capricious, deliberately obtuse, subject to whims of unqualified judges; note that golf scoring may apply. Ratty chairs or couches located at the comfort stations may be awarded to participants who will then be obliged to take them home.” The winner is the person with the most average score. But bonus points may be either awarded or deducted for things like “consumption of edibles, costumes, and/or snorkels, sandals

lost during the race, or any other feature that may distinguish a participant as more or less than average.”

Racers are also put through an intense application process, in which they’re required to reveal, for example, whether they’ve ever taken performance-inhibiting drugs, fallen down in a race, or capsized an inflatable vessel.” “We can’t let just anyone in,” said PCAC board member Michelle VanSlambrouck. “There’s a real art to being average, and we’re looking for the most average of the bunch—no overachievers allowed in this race . . . or underachievers, either, for that matter.”

PCAC Director Rush Clement urged racers to enter early. “We’ve had a lot of interest this year, and we want to include as many people as possible,” he said. “The more people who sign up early, the better prepared we’ll be with shirts, race headbands, party food, and ratty sofas for the comfort stations along the way.”

Potential participants can get more information and an entry form at www.portlandcommunityarts.com or by joining the Portland Cruise-A-Thong Facebook page. Entry fee is just \$15.

Racers may pre-register (preferred) or show up around 11:00 on June 19. The race begins on the Boardwalk in downtown Portland, at the Bridge Street bridge, and ends at the Frosty Boy & Peppermint Twist.

Organizers warn racers that the race is BYOB (bring your own bike) and that

Scoring is capricious, deliberately obtuse, subject to whims of unqualified judges.

racers will be penalized for every

gear on their bike. For those without bikes, Portland Pedal Paddle will have a limited number of bikes for rent for \$6 each. Racers are also encouraged to bring their own tubes; however, Portland Pedal Paddle will donate the use of tubes on a first-come, first-served basis. Racers must bring their own flip flops—one for each foot. A party will be held at the Peppermint Twist immediately following the race (donations appreciated).

The PCAC will also be the beneficiary of a pre-event Bloody Mary Showdown at Jerry's Pub and a Maragarita Mix-Off at Duke's. Entrants provide one gallon of their favorite recipe and a \$10 entry fee. Small tastes for People's Choice awards will be available for \$2 each. Entry & participation details can be found on the PCAC website.

Farmers' Market Every Saturday morning

Summer has arrived with plenty of fresh produce at the Farmers' Market every Saturday morning. The Portland Farmers' Market is organized and supported by the Friends of the Red Mill and takes place on Saturday mornings from 8:00 a.m. until noon at the Red Mill.

For more information on selling your own produce or other goods, stop at the Farmers' Market any Saturday morning and talk with Friends of the Red Mill representatives.

Please support this wonderful service they provide to our community. It's also a great time to catch up with friends and neighbors. See you at the Red Mill!

"Thank you, teachers and support staff, for all of your hard work this school year. Your dedication is always appreciated!"

"Happy 23rd Anniversary Peter -- Who'd've thunk it? I love you -- Georgie"

We'll print up to four shout-out messages each month. Limit is 20 words; price is just \$25. Contact Main Street Manager Patrick Reagan to reserve your space.

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Thursdays on the Grand

The Portland Community Arts Council's "Thursdays on the Grand" concerts take place at the Two Rivers Park band shell every Thursday from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Here's this year's line-up:

- *June 3 - Thieves Like Us
- *June 10 - Pat White
- *June 17 - We Three Strings
- *June 24 - Blue Jello
- *July 1 - Pete Trappen
- *July 8 - The Thistles
- *July 15 - The Royal Ramblers
- *July 22 - El Kabong
- * July 29 - Jeff Speas
- *August 5 - Bailey's Comet
- *August 12 - The Franklin Brothers
- *August 19 - The Grand Ledge Bums
- *August 26 - Rush Clement & friends - All-Star



Jam to close the season

Thursdays on the Grand concerts are always free, thanks to the generosity of our wonderful music community. Thanks also go out to Jon Brown, who coordinated this year's concerts. How can you help? By attending concerts and



supporting the downtown businesses that make PCAC events possible. So grab a picnic supper from one of our downtown eateries, and pull up a blanket for the next concert!

Third Friday Art Walk

The Third Friday Art Walk takes place on the third Friday evening of every month, from June through November in downtown Portland. Portland Main Street and the Portland Community Arts Council have teamed up to bring great art and great music to the downtown.

Third Fridays begin this year on June 17, with art displayed at various downtown Portland businesses. We'll also feature music in the street and in some businesses. Bring your family . . .

bring a date . . . bring yourself. These are the experiences we remember when we look back on our lives--the sights and sounds of our community.

If you would like to perform music at a Third Friday Art Walk or have your art work displayed at one of our downtown businesses, contact PCAC Director Rush Clement at 517 647 6545.

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Portland Rodeo Days June 12-13

Here are the details from the Portland Rodeo Days Facebook page. Become a fan today & get all of the latest news about this great event near downtown Portland.

"In 1956, Portland was known as the Rodeo Capital of Michigan; a few of the people of Portland are trying to put Portland back on the map and make it the Rodeo Capital again. This is the 4th annual Rodeo that Portland has had, and they are planning to come back each year.



Not only do we have great entertainment, but good food also. Bailey's will be there, along with our own Maria's Tacos. This year's rodeo will be a "Ranch Rodeo." We feature Brahma Bull Riding . . . the meaner the better, Wild Cow Milking, Branding (with paint), Broncs, and our famous donkey relay races, with our local merchants and citizens of Portland, doing their best to ride them to the finish line.

EMC Brandt Clark, World Professional Bull Fighter of 2002 & 2004 will be doing the announcing this year. If you need a good laugh, our clown Kenny Schapucker will certainly do the job. So set your calendar for June 12, 2010. and we will be seeing you there.

Verlen Kruger Memorial events, June 25-26

On June 26, 2010, at 4:00 p.m., a life-size bronze statue of Michigan's Paddling Legend, Verlen Kruger, will be dedicated during an Unveiling Ceremony at Thompson Field. The memorial is a seven-year effort by friends and acquaintances, including the Smith family from Portland. The Memorial's sculptor, Derek Rainey, will be on hand for the unveiling.

Governor Jennifer Granholm acknowledged the Kruger Memorial: "Verlen Kruger was a legend and a hero far beyond the waters in Michigan that he loved and lived on. His passion grew from his Michigan home and spread to other states, countries and continents. His greatest legacy is that he sparked that same passion in a whole new generation, and I know this memorial will inspire generations to come."

Verlen Kruger first stepped into a canoe at the age of 41; then, over the next 42 years, he

paddled more than four times the distance around the earth, over 100,000 miles. On December 13, 1983, as he completed his 28,000-mile Ultimate Canoe Challenge (which ended in Lansing), he paddled and stopped at the very spot in Portland where, 27 years later, his Memorial Statue would be dedicated.

Kruger died of cancer in 2004.

The general public is invited to participate in a Memorial Paddle on the Grand River on Saturday morning, before the dedication ceremony. Launch from Sebewa Creek, at the end of Erdman Road, Sunfield, at 10:30 a.m., and paddle 9 miles to Thompson Field.

Kruger's authorized biography, All Things Are Possible. The Verlen Kruger Story, 100,000 Miles by Paddle, by Phil Peterson Sr., tells the inspiring story of this humble man who motivated paddlers world



wide by setting Guinness and other records that stand today. Peterson will share Verlen's story on Friday, June 25, at 6:00 p.m., in the Portland Public High School Auditorium. Autographed books will be available

For more information, including details on purchasing a brick for the Memorial site, log on to www.verlenkruger.com. Please join us at one or all of these events honoring this Michigan legend.

- www.verlenkruger.com

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New summer hours:

Monday thru' Wednesday	7am - 6pm
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Saturday	8am - 4pm
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Enjoy a pulled-pork sandwich with chips & cookie available on Thursday nights this summer for Thursdays on the Grand. Special price of \$5.50 plus take 10% off your drink purchase when you present this coupon. Enjoy the show & eat well too!