



- Oakland County
- Wayne County
- Sports
- Community Life
- Entertainment
- Health
- Taste
- Real Estate
- Obituaries
- Forums
- RSS Feeds



Cruise events are piling up

As the countdown shortens for the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise on Aug. 18, Cruise events are rapidly taking shape.

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Birmingham will host more than 600 classic cars packed into downtown, along with automotive displays and live entertainment provided by two driving forces behind the Motor City.

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"We are excited about this year's lineup," said John Heiney, director of the Birmingham Principal Shopping District. "Each year our sponsors like Ford and Chevrolet offer great events, displays and activities for visitors."

Ford Motor Co. will hold its Cruisin' Legends car show at Shain Park

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Throughout the day, there will be more than 100 classic Ford, Lincoln and Mercury cars on display. In addition, Ford partners will have displays, including Saleen, Barrett-Jackson, Steeda and Skunkworks

Also featured will be display by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. You can see the legendary '32 Deuce Coupe with the Ford flat head, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

There also will be a chance to win travel packages to Ford Championship Weekend and the Ford Racing Driving School.

The schedule of activities is:

n noon to 1 p.m.: Edge Karaoke. Family and friends take the stage to sing their favorite '50s and '60s tune. Performers will get a mini-DVD of their act.

n 1:15 to 1:45 p.m.: JDRF Youth Ambassador Message.

n 1:45 to 2:30 p.m.: The Aaron Vaughn Band.

n 2:45 to 4 p.m.: Teen Angels

n 4:15 to 4:45 p.m.: JDRF Youth Ambassador Message.

n 4:45 to 5:15 p.m.: Edge Karaoke.

n 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.: Jerry Sprague.

n 6:45 to 8:15 p.m.: Dallas Hodge.

Chevrolet is cruising into Birmingham to take over the Birmingham Triangle. Located at the junction of Woodward and South Old Woodward, the Triangle will be packed all day, with festivities for the whole family.

The Chevy Racing Tour will featuring NASCAR vehicles, engine displays, interactive games, kiosks and more.

The Chevrolet Music Tour celebrates classic music and cars and there will be games and prizes. Musical entertainment will be offered from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Enjoy music from Deep Kick. Chevy will have more than 60 unique Classic and Tuner Cars, the Chevy SPO Accessories Display and Chevy's full line of cars, trucks and SUVs. Plus this will be a one-time only opportunity to see celebrity classic vehicles and the auto show exclusive concept vehicles.

Event day registration for cruisers is open to individual cars, model year 1978 and older, after 10 a.m. at the registration tent at South Old Woodward and Brown - space is still available, and you should arrive early. Day-of parking is \$20, based upon availability and on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about Dream Cruise parking in Birmingham, visit www.birminghamcruiseevent.com.

All Dream Cruise events and venues are within walking distance of Birmingham's five parking decks, where the first two hours of parking are free.

Camp support

Two downtown Birmingham businesses, Weir Manuel Realtors and Max & Erma's, are lending a hand to Camp Casey.

During the Woodward Dream Cruise weekend, Aug. 17-19, Weir Manuel has agreed to give up its prime-location parking lot so that Camp Casey can set up shop and raise awareness and funds for their cause.

The following Thursday, Aug. 23, Max & Erma's is holding a benefit dinner in which 20 percent of the day's proceeds go to Camp Casey. Diners must have an official flier for their meal to count; fliers can be downloaded from www.camp-casey.org or by e-mailing LaurenMaiman@camp-casey.org and requesting one.

Camp Casey is a nonprofit organization. It travels to horseback riding facilities throughout Michigan to provide a cost-free series of one-day retreats for kids with cancer and their families.

This idea was inspired after founder Molly Melamed, 24, witnessed the effect horses had on Casey Foote, a little girl who died from bone and brain cancer in 2003.

At only 19, Melamed designed, organized and launched Camp Casey while attending Michigan State University. What was supposed to be a one-time activity day for Sparrow Hospital patients has evolved into a mobile day camp throughout all of Michigan.

Now in its fourth year, it has already reached hundreds of kids. Five camps are scheduled for summer 2007.

Visit www.Camp-Casey.org to learn more about this cause.

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