Tips for Planning Your Block Party

Getting Started: Make sure you fill out the Block Party Registration Form (click HERE or see links below) - this is an electronic form - OR feel free to pick up a registration form on the 3rd Floor of City Hall at 270 River Ave. Call SUE HARDER at 355-3139, if you have any questions.

Plan the Party: Do what works for you, but respect your neighbor's property and privacy. If you use the street for your party, do not block residents who do not want to participate. Be sure that emergency vehicles are able to enter the block party area at all times.

Coordinate Activities: Your imagination is the limit when planning activities that will make your Block Party memorable. Make activities appropriate for the age group safe and fun. Some suggested activities are listed below:
• Bike decorating contest
• Games like Twister, Limbo, Bingo, and Croquet
• Story time/kids read-a-thon
• Obstacle course
• Watermelon eating contest (no hands is fun!)
• Art contest (use sidewalk chalk for this)
• Volleyball
• Dominoes and card games (try to set tables in shade)
• Cake walk
• Horseshoes
• Visits from City Firefighters, Police Officers (check the appropriate space on the registration form to request visits) always please the kids
• Scavenger hunts
• Neighborhood trivia contest
• Display old neighborhood pictures or memorabilia
• Water games (shaving cream and balloons are essential)
• Paper airplane contest
• Egg toss
• Face painting
• Live band, or other music/dancing (need application for public broadcasting)
• Crafts and baked goods
• Relay races (try balancing an egg on a spoon)

Keep it Simple: Potluck dinners are easiest for beginners. Since many people are near their homes, it is probably convenient for them to use their own facilities and utensils. Ask neighbors to bring their own lawn chairs to the picnic site.

Inform your Neighbors: Get the message out to all your neighbors. It's a good idea to get the word out at least one-month in advance, and to distribute reminders the week of the party. This is a good opportunity to visit with your neighbors and make contact with those you haven't met.

Take block party fliers door-to-door if possible. If you wish to cover a very large area, try dividing your neighborhood into equal sections and working with neighbors to make sure everyone is informed.

Helpful Hint: Make your flier or invitation catchy and informative. In addition to the date, time, and place, list all necessary items to bring, such as food, beverages, ice, and paper goods. Suggest extras, such as lawn chairs, coolers, bug spray, sunscreen, and athletic equipment. Give a brief preview of the party agenda. List phone numbers of organizers.

Have Fun and Keep It Going: Once the Block Party begins, relax and enjoy the fun! Visit with neighbors to gauge their interest in future activities of this type. Some neighborhoods may wish to plan regular activities that promote neighborhood interaction. Anything that fosters a sense of community is a welcome event in any neighborhood!

Consider other events such as annual neighborhood garage sales, a spring clean-up, holiday parties, and beautification projects. If your neighborhood hasn't already done so, you may wish to organize your neighborhood.

Don't forget! Keep the arrangements as simple as possible and the atmosphere relaxed and informal. Nametags are recommended, especially in newer neighborhoods. After all, the point is to get acquainted!

Block Parties are a good place to discuss neighborhood concerns, but don't make your Block Party into a business meeting. It is okay to distribute a newsletter or literature and circulate a sign-in sheet.

Remember that you are not alone. The City of Holland looks forward to receiving Block Party registration forms. We know that your neighborhood is a vital part of the community, and we are here to help you whenever we can.

Web Links

Block Party Registration

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