

Cruisin' Christiansburg

Contributed by Tacy Newell-Foutz

Saturday, May 17 from 2 until 9 pm, downtown Christiansburg will again transform as it hosts the first of four car cruise in events scheduled over the spring and summer.

Over 50 groups representing Christiansburg and Cambria businesses and non-profits are participating in this "test drive" for the May 17 street festival which will feature vintage cars driven by Grand Classic Cruiser car owners for display.

Dale Echols, Grand Classic Cruiser coordinator, agreed to work to shift what has been a summer staple from the NRV mall area to the historic downtown district. "We get a lot of car owners from all over, and the little kids seem to get as big a kick out of these events as do the adults," Echols said. He indicated this first event could be expected to draw at least 200 cars, more if the weather is cooperative. Many businesses or non-profits will be extending their normal Saturday hours and offer specials deals and sidewalk sales, while others licensed in the town are joining in and setting up booths downtown.

The four downtown "Cruisin' Christiansburg" event dates include May 17, June 14, July 19 and August 23. A specially designed tee-shirt has been made to commemorate these events and was sponsored by eight businesses. Another corporate sponsor donated the street banner which will be displayed over West Main Street the week before each event, with additional sponsors supporting all event dates and music performances. Many in-kind donations by area businesses have also supported the planning of these festivals, in addition to a Tourism Development Council grant.

The Town of Christiansburg is sponsoring the June 14 date, which will include grand re-opening ceremonies on Flag Day. A 5K race and Fun Run/Walk will be held, with a main stage providing entertainment throughout the day. A special children's activity area is also being provided by the town.

West Main Street will be closed from Town Square up to just past Dunkley Street, with Hickok Street also having limited traffic between First and College Streets. Street closures will begin at noon.

Event organizers include the Town of Christiansburg, council's Central Business District Committee, Christiansburg Parks & Recreation, Historic Cambria and Downtown Christiansburg Partnership (HCDCP), and the Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center. The HCDCP is also working with the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce on the 2008 Wilderness Trail Festival planning, in the hopes of aligning and expanding event dates and venues in 2009 and beyond.