



NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION

A neighborhood block party is the opportunity for neighbors to get together, meet each other, have fun, and maybe work together on a common activity.

10 REASONS TO HAVE A BLOCK PARTY

1. To have fun – no excuses or reasons are needed to celebrate.
2. To provide an opportunity to know your neighbors and where they live.
3. To establish friendships.
4. To increase that sense of belonging to a community.
5. To learn a little about each other and know who might need a little extra help from time to time.
6. To meet neighbors on your block that might be able to help you with a gardening problem, or lend you that needed ingredient for your recipe.
7. To encourage neighbors to look after the neighborhood.
8. To help with safety/crime prevention by knowing who lives where and who does not.
9. To increase security by knowing each other's schedules.
10. To develop an opportunity to meet some of the old time neighbors and learn about your community history.

Why do you want to have a block party!!?

PLANNING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY

Things to consider when organizing your event.

GETTING STARTED

- The idea of a neighborhood block party is to bring neighbors together. It's a good idea to find 1 or 2 neighbors to help you with the event.
- One can take the "Lone Ranger" approach, and it can be a great event. However, it may make it more difficult to find someone else to organize it next year.
- The first step is to create an Organizing Committee. It is important to include everyone in the decisions about the event.
- If this is the first time you may want to send out a flyer to explain what a Block Party is, encourage attendance, perhaps share some of the benefits, get opinions on how to handle the food, and possible dates and times to have the event.
- Enlist as many neighbors as you can to help out. Someone can type the flyer; someone else can collect them. You may want to ask some kids to drop the flyers in the mailboxes.



NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY TOOLKIT

TYPES OF BLOCK PARTIES

Which type of block party will work best in your neighborhood? Try not to go overboard, it can make people feel the event is too much work...Keep it Simple! Notice these are separated by how the food is arranged! Food is a central part of life and parties! Make sure to consider your neighbors dietary preferences, restrictions, and food allergies when arranging the food for the event!

- Barbecues - organizers purchase all that is needed and neighbors provide the money; - everyone brings his or her own meat or veggies;
- Picnics -- everyone brings their own meal;
- Pot luck - everyone brings one dish;
- Catered -- everyone shares the cost and the food is purchased.

HOW BIG TO MAKE IT

- Start off with a smaller event rather than a large one. It can always grow, but it is hard to shrink it.
- In selecting who to invite, use natural neighborhood boundaries where possible (i.e. end of the block). If you are planning a street or cul-de-sac party, you need to invite everyone from that area.
- Decide early and make it clear in your flyer if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or whether people can invite friends/relatives (if yes how many).

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!

Location is a very important aspect of Block Party Planning! Is the location accessible and comfortable for all of your neighbors? Is there a plan for inclement or cold weather?

- A neighbor's backyard
- House
- Garage (rain location)
- Common room in a condo unit
- Alley *
- Street *
- Park *
- Meadville Area Recreation Complex!
 - Check out the MARC's website, linked above, for information on renting their pavilions, or having a pool or ice rink party!

*** Because these locations are on public lands, an application or permit may be required.
Safety needs to be an important factor in planning!**



NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY TOOLKIT

CITY APPLICATIONS AND PERMITS

- If you want to close down a street or re-direct traffic, your city may have application requirements.
- Permits may also be required if the event involves a public park, alcohol consumption, sound-amplifying equipment, etc.
- Remember that at the end of the function, public sites need to be cleaned and left in good condition.
- Look online at your city's website and call city hall to obtain more information about the requirements where you live. Often if you search "block party" on the website, you will find policies and additional resources.
- Here are the policies and permits needed to rent the Gazebo in Diamond Park or rent a pavillion at one of the local parks in the [City of Meadville!](#)

Don't let obstacles stand in your way...It is worth it!

THE TIMING TO GET THE EVENT PLANNED

For a first time block party, distribute the first flyer requesting feedback 4 to 5 weeks before the event.

- Adjustments may need to be made if a neighbor already has an event of their own planned.
- Once the Committee has looked at all the suggestions, the final flyer with date, time and what to bring should go out 3 weeks before the event.
- Mid-May through the end of August is a good time for outdoors.
- If there is likely to be inclement or cold weather, consider an inside location!
- A weekend date or holiday is often the best times for the event.
- Have an alternate rainout day planned, just in case.
- Keep in mind who lives in the neighborhood when setting the hours for the party.
- If young children or seniors are living near the party area plan to finish by 9:00pm.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

It is important to keep neighbors informed.

Here are some ideas:

- Flyers can be used with a request to drop back their suggestions for the event in your mailbox.
- Information can be gathered from your neighbors by going door-to-door. This adds a personal touch and people often offer to help.
- A casual approach can be used to inform neighbors as you see them out working in their yards.
- Neighbors can be called on the phone. (If you don't know your neighbors, a reverse directory telephone book can be used. They are available at libraries.)



NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY TOOLKIT

- Make an extra effort to get your new neighbors out to the event.
- To reach neighbors in Townhouses, apartments and condos, it is best to approach the manager. They will let you know how to get in touch with the residents.
- Take every opportunity to talk it up in the neighborhood as often as possible prior to the event.

ROLE OF THE ORGANIZERS

- Make decisions about the set up.
- Act as a greeter at the event.
- Introduce new neighbors and help them make connections.
- Make sure the clean-up is done. (You may wish to inspire clean up by rewarding the children with a prize.)

SET UP

- Set up a sign-in book for records for the next year, and it can help develop a contact list for the neighborhood.
- Nametags can be a great help.
- Decide what you want neighbors to write on their name tags (e.g. -first and last names, house numbers).
- Line up tables for the food and have a few garbage cans available.
- Decide whether you will coordinate or everyone will bring their own Tables and chairs Plates, cutlery and cups, Beverages. If using barbecues, who will bring them?
- Institute a bathroom policy “everyone to use his or her own”, so that home security is maintained.
- Decide if pets are allowed.
- Be ready to oversee the clean up after the event

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

What should we do during the event?

- Visit and eat. Over the centuries, food has always had a very social component in societies.
- Games for kids (some organized, some they can plan themselves).
- Take time to introduce one another and point to one’s house. This can be done in a game format.
- Encourage the talent in your neighborhood to come forward such as musicians, magicians.



NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY TOOLKIT

OTHER WAYS TO GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

- Christmas gift exchange
- Garden tour party
- Neighborhood garage sale
- When in doubt, ask your neighbors for ideas.

FINAL REMINDERS

- Neighbors should observe security precautions by keeping back doors locked and equipment in sight.
- Remember when setting up tables and chairs that emergency vehicles may need access.
- You may wish to post signs the day before the event to remind everyone to remove cars for events involving street closure.

HAVE FUN!

Learn more about My Meadville online at: MyMeadville.us

Reach out on Facebook at: Facebook.com/MyMeadville



CITY OF MEADVILLE
APPLICATION FOR PERMIT
USE OF DIAMOND PARK AND/OR GAZEBO
 (TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT)

NAME OF EVENT AND ORGANIZATION *(if applicable)*: _____

DISCRIPTION OF EVENT: *(i.e. purpose, activities etc.)* _____

DATE(S) OF EVENT: _____ ESTIMATED NO. OF PERSONS _____

DATE(S) AND SET UP TIME: _____ START TIME: _____ END TIME: _____

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

- Email Address: _____

REQUIRE GAZEBO? YES ___ NO ___ (\$75.00 NON-REFUNDABLE FEE - PAYABLE AT CITY CLERK'S OFFICE, 894 DIAMOND PARK, MEADVILLE, PA 16335) (\$75.00 FEE INCLUDES ELECTRIC FOR GAZEBO) - PLEASE SEE REGULATION # 6 ON REVERSE SIDE.

WILL YOU REQUIRE STREET CLOSING OR BARRICADES? YES ___ NO ___
 ****APPLICANT RESPONSIBLE FOR PICK/UP RETURN OF BARRICADES TO STREETS GARAGE****
 ****\$25.00 FEE FOR BARRICADES - PLEASE SEE REGULATION #4 ON REVERSE SIDE.****

FOOD VENDORS? YES ___ NO ___ - Please contact the PA Dept. of Agriculture – 717-805-1637 (for licensing questions)

NOVELTY VENDORS? YES ___ NO ___ # OF VENDORS: _____

REQUIRE TEMPORARY STRUCTURES OR SIGNS? YES ___ NO ___
 (IF YES - ALL OTHER EQUIPMENT SUCH AS PICNIC TABLES, ADDITIONAL TRASH CANS, TENTS, PORTABLE TOILETS AND SIGNS, ETC. AT EXPENSE AND ARRANGEMENT OF APPLICANT)

TYPE OF EQUIPMENT AND WHERE? (Describe or draw/attach map on reverse):
 (The City reserves the right to determine location and limit number of structures.)

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

***All applications for permits must be received by the City Clerk's Office not less than 15 days nor more than 60 days prior to the date of event. (Applicant seeking Core First Amendment Activity, absent reasonably exigent circumstances, file applications not less than 4 nor more than 60 days prior to the date)

Payment must accompany application.

NOTE: No amplified sound on Diamond , Monday-Friday between the hours of 8a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1:00p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (except holidays).

(TO BE COMPLETED BY CITY STAFF)

DEPARTMENT	DEPARTMENT/APPROVAL
PUBLIC WORKS	
POLICE	
FIRE	

(2015)

(See reverse for special permit fees)

SPECIAL FEES FOR PERMITS

The following may apply to permits for special events:

1. A fee of \$50.00 per event will be charged for the use of City electric outlets. The fee is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
2. The use of fireworks will require approval by the Fire Chief. The permit cost is \$100.00. The fee is payable at Meadville Central Fire Station.
3. The Fire Chief must approve bonfires. The fee for the license is \$15.00.
4. Barricades for street closings may be obtained from the Meadville Public Work's Department Garage. A fee of \$25.00 is required. The permittee is responsible for the pickup and return of the barricades. Fee is payable at City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
5. A fee of \$75 is required for reserving a park shelter. This fee must accompany reservation and is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
6. A fee of \$75 is required for reserving the Gazebo in Diamond Park (this includes the electric at the Gazebo.) This fee must accompany reservation and is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.

**Certain events may require a coordination meeting with City Staff.
Applicants are encouraged to apply, as early as possible, to avoid delays,
confusion or unnecessary costs.**

**CITY OF MEADVILLE
APPLICATION FOR PERMIT
DAILY SHELTER RESERVATION**

**Please note you are renting shelter only - Park will remain open to public
(TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT)**

(SHELTER RENTAL HOURS ARE DAILY FROM DAWN TO DUSK)

(NO RAIN DATES)

NO OVERNIGHT CAMPING PERMITTED EXCEPT WITH CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL

EVENT: _____

DATE OF EVENT: _____ NO. OF PERSONS: _____

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Email Address: _____

PHONE: _____

(\$75.00 NON-REFUNDABLE SHELTER RENTAL FEE - INCLUDES ELECTRIC)

START TIME: _____ END TIME: _____ SET UP TIME: _____

WILL YOU NEED ELECTRICITY? YES ___ NO ___

(Please note that only certain parks have electric - review list below in making request)

PARK REQUESTED: **HUIDEKOPER** **CORA CLARK** **H.P. WAY**
 KENNETH A. BEERS, JR. BICENTENNIAL* **SHADYBROOK***

(CIRCLE ONE)

*PARKS WITH ELECTRIC

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

(TO BE COMPLETED BY CITY STAFF)

DEPARTMENT	DEPARTMENT APPROVAL (Initials/Date)		FEE PAID	YES	NO
PARKS/STREETS					

SPECIAL FEES FOR PERMITS

The following may apply to permits for special events:

1. A fee of \$50.00 per event will be charged for the use of City electric outlets. The fee is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
2. The use of fireworks will require approval by the Fire Chief. The permit cost is \$100.00. The fee is payable at Meadville Central Fire Station.
3. The Fire Chief must approve bonfires. The fee for the license is \$15.00.
4. Barricades for street closings may be obtained from the Meadville Public Work's Department Garage. A fee of \$25.00 is required. The permittee is responsible for the pickup and return of the barricades. Fee is payable at City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
5. A fee of \$75 is required for reserving a park shelter. This fee must accompany reservation and is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.
6. A fee of \$75 is required for reserving the Gazebo in Diamond Park (this includes the electric at the Gazebo.) This fee must accompany reservation and is payable to the City Clerk's Office, 894 Diamond Park, Meadville, PA 16335.

Certain events may require a coordination meeting with City Staff. Applicants are encouraged to apply, as early as possible, to avoid delays, confusion or unnecessary costs.