

Car buffs, businesses showing interest in All American Cruise

Written by Sue Mason Staff Writer

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All American Cruise

Time/Date: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, July 13

Location: Wayne Road between Joy Road and Glenwood in Westland

Details: Car

🔗 enthusiasts will be able to watch the classics to the customs cruise Wayne Road in Westland. Plans are in the works for areas along the almost five-mile route where cars can park for viewing by the public.

Contact: For information, call Don Nicholson at (734) 658-5296 or send an e-mail to don@donnicholson.net. There also is an All American Cruise Facebook page.

For five years, car enthusiasts have been invited to cruise Michigan Avenue, but with the event put on hold for 2013, they can head north and cruise Wayne Road in Westland.

Dubbed the All American Cruise, the event will be held Saturday, July 13, and will stretch from Glenwood on the south to Joy Road on the north. The cruise is just under five miles long and has already attracted plenty of interest.

“It was approved in November by the Westland City council and we broke even last week,” said organizer Don Nicholson. “Westland businesses are jumping on board, the cruisers are talking about it. The city is excited, the businesses are excited. With all the support, I think it will be an excellent event.”

“I think we're looking at another major event in Wayne County. I think it'll be as accepted as the Hines Drive cruise,” Nicholson said.

Making plans

The Westland resident has been the organizer of the successful Cruisin' Hines Drive and Cruisin' Michigan Ave events. The Hines Drive cruise was an instant success with 20,000 cruisers turning out in 2011. That number doubled in 2012 and Nicholson expects an even bigger turnout in 2013.

“The Hines Drive cruise already matches the Woodward car count and we're limited to classes of cars

🔗,” he said. “And it's also now part of Autopalooza and sanctioned as one of the best cruises in southeast Michigan. I'm very happy to have it accepted and be there with the Dream Cruise, the Concours d'Elegance, MIS and the Detroit Grand Prix in just two years.”

Plans for the Wayne Road cruise are evolving, and Nicholson is working with Westland Chamber of Commerce President Brookellen Swope on the event. The chamber's events committee is looking at ways to promote Westland during the cruise.

“We're very excited to see a new event, especially one like this,” said Swope. “We've always been supportive of events like Brews, Blues and Barbecues and it's nice to see something new and different that will highlight

businesses in Westland down Wayne Road and highlight what Westland has to offer.”

So far, a car show featuring pre-war vehicles

☑ will be held at the Westland Historic Village Park. The first 75 cars to park there get dash plaques, Nicholson said. He added that with so many different locations along the route, businesses can host areas for cars to park.

Since Nicholson created the All American Cruise Page on Nov. 12, he has been getting responses from cruise fans. Activity on the page is more than double that of the Cruisin' Michigan Avenue Facebook page and close to the numbers for the Hines Drive cruise page, he said.

“Businesses are calling me to get on board which is nice,” he said. “This is the most excitement I've had with a new event. If you drive a car and someone's looking at it, you're going to keep driving. Cars are only driven around where people are watching.”

More support

The Michigan Avenue cruise, while popular, hasn't generated enough sponsorships to covers costs. Nicholson estimates he has lost some \$70,000 over the five-year span. The cruise stretches from Wayne to Dearborn, and 80 percent of the sponsorships come from businesses in Inkster, Dearborn and Dearborn Heights.

Nicholson is hoping to use the hiatus to fan interest in the cruise among Wayne businesses. The Woodward Dream Cruise is 16-17 miles long and the only traffic jam is for four or five miles. The Michigan Avenue also is 16-17 miles long and the only congestion is in downtown Wayne, he said.

Wayne has been the hub of the Michigan Avenue cruise and Nicholson is sending letters out to the Wayne Chamber of Commerce in hopes of getting commitments to support the event. If he is able to raise enough money, he will restart that cruise.

“The whole idea of events in city areas is to bring business to the business community and put on free entertainment for the people,” he said. “I know people complain about the traffic, but it's one day a year.”

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