



Cruisin' MotorCities 2008 came about as a result of a longstanding desire of many organizations in the greater Detroit community to bring the “spirit” of the Woodward Dream Cruise into downtown Detroit. *Cruisin' MotorCities 2008* was a collaboration between MotorCities National Heritage Area; Ilitch Holdings; the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau; and The Detroit News. The first organizing meeting took place in May; event planning began in June; a press conference was held on June 24th, during which details of the initiative were announced; and the *Cruisin' MotorCities 2008* events took place between August 9th and August 18th.

A primary goal of *Cruisin' MotorCities 2008* was to create a week-long auto-tourism festival leading up to the Woodward Dream Cruise that would include a series of auto-centric events, most of which were free and open to the public. Two of this year's events were fund raisers – one for the Walter P. Chrysler Museum and one for the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy – both of which were private and charged admission. All of the other events were free, and took place in downtown Detroit; at the State Fairgrounds; in Flint and in other locations throughout the metropolitan area. The goal of expanding the spirit of the Woodward Dream Cruise was achieved, and a significant amount of very positive media coverage, led by The Detroit News, was visible throughout Southeast Michigan, and across the country.

A surprise added benefit for the greater Detroit area occurred when Motorcities Dreamakers, a Michigan non-profit organization based in Grand Blanc, joined the *Cruisin' MotorCities* initiative by presenting an “*AutoFair*” at the Michigan State Fairgrounds, and unveiled a plan to deploy a year-round *Auto-Fair* at the Fairgrounds.

Concurrently, MotorCities National Heritage Area recognized the Michigan State Fairgrounds as a site of significant auto heritage within our region; and the Detroit Metro CVB announced that it was placing new emphasis on attracting meetings and conferences to the newly renovated 600-seat community theater and 24,000-square-foot exhibition space at the Fairgrounds. A press conference was held at the Fairgrounds on August 7th, during which Steve Jenkins, General Manager of the Michigan State Fairgrounds, Chris Baum, Senior Vice President Sales and Marketing at the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Doc Watson, Director of Motorcities Dreamakers each presented thoughts and ideas as to how they will be working together to bring new life to the Fairgrounds, year round.

Cruisin' MotorCities 2008 represented a huge and complex undertaking that involved a number of community and business organizations. Not all went according to plan; not all of the events came off as anticipated; but the lessons learned, and the successes of *Cruisin' MotorCities 2008* will enable an array of activities to be planned for summer 2009 that could result in significant economic benefits that would inure to the benefit of the State of Michigan from auto-tourism events.

MotorCities National Heritage Area was established by an act of Congress in 1998, is an affiliate of the National Park Service, and is dedicated to preserving, interpreting and promoting the story of the automobile industry and labor of the State of Michigan. The activities of MotorCities are designed to develop and deploy educational programs that tell the story of the American automotive industry and labor.

Cruisin' MotorCities 2008 provided MotorCities National Heritage Area with an opportunity to “tell our story” in collaboration with major businesses and community organizations in ways that can ultimately provide much needed economic benefit resulting from auto-tourism events within the greater Detroit area...Southeast Michigan...and throughout the State of Michigan.

Cruisin' MotorCities 2008 was a successful first time venture, but at the same time captured but a small percentage of the possibilities that can be realized in 2009, and beyond. Learning from this year's experience we recognize what can be done; what it takes to get it done; and, the need to develop a clear storyline and event-flow so that the media, residents and visitors alike have a complete understanding of exactly what's happening...when it's happening...where it's happening...and how they can get involved or, at the very least, attend.

The following pages contain a few of the comments and images from *Cruisin' MotorCities 2008* that appeared in the local media.

Images and Comments about Cruisin' MotorCities 2008



Spectators check out various low-riders at Campus Martius.

Looking Hot, Hot, Hot: Latin night kicks off cruising with the Detroit Festival of Speed and Style.

Car enthusiasts from around Metro Detroit kicked off “Cruisin’ MotorCities Summer Festival,” with a Latin-themed car show at Campus Martius.

“...what I have done is to bring everyone together – Hispanics, Whites, Blacks, rich and poor,” said Marvin Towns, who spearheaded the Detroit Festival of Speed and Style committee.

Although Saturday was officially the big day, the entire week prior to the cruise was jammed with events and festivities, many located within Detroit all the way from the Michigan State Fairgrounds to Campus Martius, in the heart of Detroit.

“I’m all for more Dream Cruise events in Detroit,” said Westland resident Joe Zundel, who displayed his car at the Campus Martius car show. “Detroit should be included in the Woodward Dream Cruise. It’s all about cars, music and having fun. The Dream Cruise is the big one.”

On Monday, a \$100-plate fundraiser at The Whitney to benefit the Walter P. Chrysler Museum drew about 150 people, more than expected.

There’s a lot of cruisers in the city of Detroit; every year I see more and more,” said John Hall, a life-long city resident who cruises in his refurbished 1964 black Chevy Impala wherever and whenever he can.



The only thing better than a Tiger victory is a victory followed by a party, which is just what hundreds of fans enjoyed Thursday afternoon near Comerica Park. Madison Ave. was blocked off for a Cruisin' MotorCities event, part of a weeklong string of car events that is leading up to the Woodward Dream Cruise.

Dream Cruise events' detour into downtown Detroit a hit with guests.

And the party just keeps getting bigger and better. Spectators had a chance to enjoy classic cars, classical music, food and festivities as the [Cruisin' MotorCities] event wrapped its arms around downtown Detroit, the city that put the world on wheels.

"I think it's absolutely great that they are starting to have events in downtown Detroit," said Al Endres, proud owner of "Simply Orange", an eye-popping 1935 Ford delivery sedan.

Downtown Event Makes Sense to Detroit Cruiser

Robert Edwards of Detroit said he was glad there was an event in his city to show off his classic car. Edwards attended the Woodward Dream Cruise Downtown Detroit Event.

"I drive it everywhere I can," he said about his 1964 Chevy Impala. "When you are into the classic car hobby, you always find out about every event. I live downtown, so this is alright."

"We need to recognize that Detroit is the Motor City and we need to engage (the city) in a way that makes sense," said Dale Dawkins, president and CEO, Woodward Dream Cruise, Inc. "We were able to come up with this event. It's a way to engage Detroit."



Tom Kellman takes a 1925 Model T touring car for a free ride with Kevin Oberle in the backseat at Campus Martius on Thursday.

Earlier in the day, some downtown visitors were able to take a trip back in time when they were treated to free rides in 100-year-old Model T Fords at Campus Martius. Theresa Hill of Detroit took a ride in one of the cars. Hill is happy to see the Cruise involved in the city.

Jim Johnson, a spokesman for The Henry Ford, said the [Model T's] were a hit with downtown patrons.

“It’s been non-stop (traffic),” said Johnson. “The cars have not stood still. That’s what we were hoping for.”

Johnson said that it’s nice to see Detroit get a role in the Cruise’s festivities because of Detroit’s heritage involving the auto industry.

Oak Park resident Angelique Jennings, who grabbed a short trip in one of the Model T’s, said the inclusion of Detroit “fosters suburban and city relationships.”

“I think it shows that they are thinking about the city,” she said. “Suburbanites like myself are thinking about the city.”



Hungry cruisers can get all the classic cruising food they want at what is being described as the biggest outdoor Big Boy in Michigan, if not the United States, at the AutoFair at the Michigan State Fairground.



Chubby Checker, who introduced teens to "The Twist" in the '60s, performs at the AutoFair at the Michigan State Fairgrounds on Friday.



Even the brightly colored Monkees Mobile, based on a 1966 Pontiac GTO and featured in the 1960s TV show "The Monkees," is getting in on the action at the AutoFair at the Michigan State Fairgrounds.



A parade of more than 100 GM classic and iconic vehicles heads up Woodward Avenue in Detroit on Saturday during the GM Century Cruise. The cruise showcased GM cars and trucks from the automaker's first 100 years

The day began early, when about 100 cars started their engines in unison in the early dawn sun just outside the GM World Headquarters at the Renaissance Center. Then, one by one, they started their steady drive up Woodward Avenue. The rare spectacle is just one way GM is marking its 100th anniversary of making cars.

"It's amazing." Said Jeb Rand, 43, of Atlanta, Ga. "I'm honored to be a part of this history."

"This event... hopefully will become a major event on an annual basis," said Chris Baum, senior vice president of sales and marketing for the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau. "All marketed together it can eventually become our local Mardi Gras."

Detroit News Editorial (8/15/08)
"Dream Cruise Should Keep Expanding its Horizons"

The Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise is always a special event for Metro Detroit. It reminds us of our rich car-building heritage, showcasing the beautiful works of art that once rolled off our assembly lines. But it also gives hope that the automakers who built the classics rolling up and down Woodward this weekend are perfectly capable of turning out the next generation of Wow! vehicles.

This year's Cruise is particularly significant because it is taking its first drive into Detroit. Working with the Motor Cities National Heritage Area, a congressionally funded organization charged with exploiting the region's automotive history, the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise associated itself with a number of related events in Detroit under the umbrella of Cruisin' Motor Cities.

It's a significant step toward realizing the potential of the Cruise to become a major regional tourist draw or as Larry Alexander of the Detroit Metro Visitors and Convention Bureau envisions, "Metro Detroit's Mardi Gras."

The Detroit events included a multisite celebration downtown Thursday, and this weekend's swap shop, concerts and "World's Largest Drive-in" at the state fairgrounds.

The hope is that these initial events will go viral and others will be added to them in coming years to create a week-long cruising festival scattered throughout the region.

Some cruisers have resisted breaking the Eight Mile Road barrier, either out of safety concerns or because that's not where they drove during their cruising days of the 1950s and '60s. But so what? This isn't a Civil War re-enactment. Historical purity isn't as important as pulling everyone together in this annual celebration of the car.

There are very few places in Metro Detroit that don't have a connection to the automobile. And that's certainly true of Woodward Avenue south of Eight Mile. The old Piquette plant, for instance, is where the Model Ts were made and is near where Chrysler Corp. was headquartered for most of its history. At the foot of Woodward, General Motors Corp. has its current headquarters in the Renaissance Center.

In fact, a fleet of GM cars will leave the RenCen Saturday morning and travel up Woodward to join the Cruise in a celebration of the company's 100th birthday.

Cruise sponsors made a smart decision in welcoming Detroit in the event's 14th year.

The region's premier summertime event could become even bigger, and much more profitable for the communities along the route, as well as for Metro Detroit as a whole, if the relationship is expanded.

The Cruise should continue expanding its horizons, bringing in a wider circle of participants and sponsors and making the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise a can't-miss event for classic car lovers everywhere.
