

GUIDE TO PLANNING A VILLAGE DAY

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VILLAGE DAYS, THEY'RE ALL THE RAGE!

For years now, people in Newton have been coming together to plan annual Village Days. Village Days are an opportunity for families and individuals to enjoy the health, vigor, and fun of the season. We celebrate village life with performances, great food, races, parades, and rides for the kids. Many villages in Newton hold them every year, so why not yours?



Every Village Day starts with the effort, planning and organization of a small group of people who give their time for the sake of the whole community. But it is these people who also have the chance to choose the unique theme that embodies their Village.

This Guide explains the Who, What, and How of planning a Village Day, so that you can tailor the model to your community's style and volunteer base. Each section describes the basic responsibilities of one of the Core Team Members, who together compose the few, very important people who make Village Days possible:

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| I. Volunteer Coordination | V. Publicity |
| II. Entertainment | VI. Permitting/City Interface |
| III. Road Race | VII. Overall Organizing |
| IV. Vendors | |

Thank you to the following people for their support and input:

Theresa Fitzpatrick, Waban Improvement Society, Srdjan Nedeljkovic and Janice Bourque, Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council, Matt Cuddy and Pam Boiros, Newton Villages, and Alderman John Rice.

Guide designed by www.betsyblazar.com

I. VOLUNTEER COORDINATION: POWER TO/FROM THE PEOPLE



Village Days start and end with people. While the volunteers on the Core Team work hard in the weeks and months before the Village Day, labor is needed on the Day itself, for everything from setting up stages and helping vendors with their booths to directing traffic and moving trash cans. Set up and clean up can require a lot of muscle power. Typically, a crew of 20-25 people is needed, but eager, athletic participants can be found in our communities. And the best part is that the **volunteers involved in Village Day will be encouraged to bring along their friends and family.**

TIP!

- In Newton Highlands, they hire high school students for \$7/hr. They provide reliable labor, and bring their friends to the Day!

II. ENTERTAINMENT: DANCING IN THE STREETS

At Village Days, music is key. The extent and theme of the entertainment will vary for each Village Day, depending on the community's desire and capacity. Fun and successful Village Days in the past have included:

Music:

The choice of musicians goes a long way to setting the mood of the Village Day, and can be a great opportunity to showcase what is unique about your village! The Entertainment Coordinator will want to provide a stage, sound equipment, and even a sound technician for the performers.

TIPS!

- Attracting local talent will bring friends and family to the Day.
- Every Tony, Waban has been trying out a jazz theme for their Village Day.

Rides

Whether it's frolicking on the moonwalk, whizzing around the mini-coaster, or chortling on the merry-go-round, both kids and adults (but, especially kids) love rides. If you choose to pay for the rides in advance, you may need at least \$4,000, but ticket sales can cover costs.



TIP!

- Because it's big, Highlands Village Day can contract with a company that provides the rides for free. But if it rains, the rides don't show.

Silent Auction:

Highlands Village Day runs a silent auction every year, adding to the excitement of the event, and attracting more mature participants.

Food:

Since human beings rose from the animals, we have come together around food. But, interacting with the Health Department may require patience. See Permitting and Vendors section.

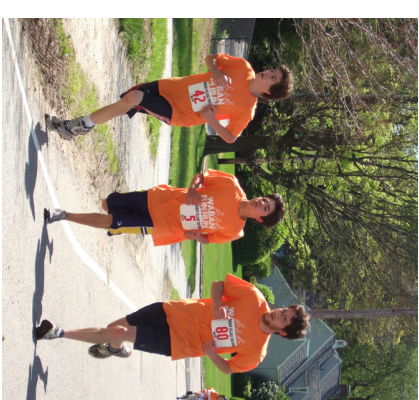
Bike Parades and Dog Parades

Let your pets strut their stuff. Some Village Days like to plan parades for everything from canines to bicycles. People of all ages enjoy lining up to show off what they've got.



III. ROAD RACE: THE FEW, THE PROUD, NEWTON RESIDENTS

Nothing spells family fun in the sun like some healthy competition. Just as the Greeks who came before them did, the residents of both Waban and Highlands cherish athletic contest. Charging an entrance fee to the runners can defray costs. Make sure that you plan a safe and fun route for the runners to follow. Road barricades must be planned in advance with the city, and are usually dropped off the night before. Also, setting up a water station in the shade can save overzealous competitors from heat exhaustion.



TIPS!

- Both Waban and Highlands make t-shirts for everyone who participates in the race. T-shirts can also be sold to raise funds.
- Make sure your runners wear sunscreen, keep cool, and drink lots of water.

IV. BOOTHS AND VENDORS: SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP

With all of this fun, excitement, and sun, one almost forgets about the consumer within. Let's not! **Vendor booths are not only one of the best ways for Village Days to raise money, but are also an attraction for people of all ages.** The Vendor Coordinator takes on the challenging task of finding appropriate vendors and convincing them that the Village Day will be worth their business. But the job is also fun; the best way to find vendors is just to go to similar events and street fairs, and talk to people.

There are a few different types of vendors at Village Days:

Commercial Vendors: These are typically professional artists or craftsmen who use Village Days to sell wares and promote their business. Village Days charge \$40 or more for a Commercial Vendor Booth, making them potentially a real asset. But, they can be hard to attract. If Commercial Vendors want to sell food, they will need a special 1-day permit with the Health Department. See Permitting section.

TIP!

- We don't want to host the same vendors at every Village Day, so try to find original vendors to suit your theme.

Local Merchants: Usually Village Days offer free booths for the local businesses in the direct vicinity. These merchants are a part of the community, and are often involved in events throughout the year. What is convenient is that restaurants' food permits often carry over to the street, exempting them from the special permitting process.

Village Vendors: Lots of kids like selling their homemade arts and crafts projects. At a busy Village Day, there is opportunity for an industrious tot to make a chunk of change. Every Village is also home to artists who may want to exhibit their talent to the world. Generally, the Village

Booths are priced lower than Commercial Vendors, around \$20 to \$25.

TIP!

- Kids in Newton Highlands cashed in selling duct tape wallets.
- What do your kids make?

Non-Profits: Non-profit organizations like to set up booths to raise awareness and recruit members. You can find organizations whose work aligns with the themes and goals of your Village Day.

V. PUBLICITY: MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF

Fun increases exponentially for every person who comes and enjoys the festivities. Village Day publicists create banners to hang over the streets that will be blocked off, newsletters describing the awesome activities, and flyers to post all around Newton. Another great idea is contacting school PTOs, so that both parents and kids get excited for the Day. The Village Day group might also want to set up an information booth on the Day itself, which would need to be staffed. **Your message should be clear and simple: this Village Day will be awesome, so bring your family, bring your friends, and bring your dog for the Dog Parade.**

TIPS!

- Advertising on NewTV is a cheap and effective way to get the word out.
- A press release to the Newton TAB can work well, too.
- Young adults and Seniors are harder demographics. How will your Village Day attract them?

VI. PERMITTING: HAVE FUN, AND PLAY BY THE RULES

Dealing with the Permits, Police, and Liability might be the most difficult task on the Core Team. That being said, **City Hall is enthusiastic about people planning community events like Village Days.** All you have to do is talk to the right people, and your Day will be made easy and safe.

Liability must be dealt with for the unfortunate possibility of someone getting hurt during the Village Day. There are two approaches. Waban Village Day takes out Short Term Event Insurance, which cost them \$383 in 2010. Newton Highlands Village Day is protected under the City of Newton's liability, because it is organized by the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council.

Road Closures are managed by a volunteer Auxiliary Police Officer assigned by the city's Traffic Bureau. This Officer will assist in directing traffic, and is in communication with the Newton Police in case of an emergency. For added security, officers at

the Middlesex Sheriff Department do pro bono work for these types of events.

Permitting is primarily an issue for vendors and tables that want to provide food. The organizers at both Newton Highlands and Waban have described the licensing process with the Health Department as difficult. While local restaurants are covered by their licenses, any Vendors who want to serve food need a special 1-day Permit. Generally, Village Day organizers ask that the vendors acquire these permits. If your Village Day group wants to sell food itself (like hamburgers or hot dogs), whoever is preparing the food is required to take a special class on food safety.

TIP!

- Starting your own Neighborhood Area Council can make access to many of the City's resources much easier.

VII. OVERALL ORGANIZER: HEAVY THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN

The biggest role on the Core Team is the Overall Organizer. They are the ones with the vision, the ones with the gumption to realize it, and perhaps they are the ones who decided to pick up this Guide, read it all the way to the last page, and say to themselves, "With all of these awesome opportunities, why wouldn't I plan a Village Day?" Good question. **The Overall Organizer works hard to make the Village Day what it is; their reward is a remarkable and unique community celebration.**

Here are a few of the responsibilities of the Overall Organizer:

Location: The Village Day's location must allow enough space for all the planned activities without closing busy streets. Waban, for example, sets up its Village Day just south of

Beacon Street. The selected site will largely determine the layout of the Village Day, which in turn affects the way that attendees interact with the different events and activities.

Schedule for the Day: Your schedule will be influenced by the duration of certain events (i.e. the Road Race), as well as what times you think your area will get the most people passing through. In the column to the right are schedules for Newton Highlands and Waban.

TIPS!

- Newton Highlands' schedule:
- 8am-- Set up; 11am--Road Close; 12pm--Road Race; 5pm--Clean up
- Waban's schedule:
- 8 am--Set up; 10am--Fun Run; 11 am-3pm--Events; 3pm--Clean up

Picking a Date: Finding the right date is really important, both to maximize the number of people and to avoid conflict with the other fun summer events going on in Newton and the Greater Boston area. Be mindful of religious holidays. Sundays are generally more available than Saturdays, but that may depend on your community's unique demographic. The Highlands Village Day falls on the 2nd Sunday in June, whereas the Waban Day is the Sunday before Memorial Day. The most important thing is to pick a good date and to stick with it, so that your Village Day quickly becomes a tradition.

TIPS!

- Lots of people go on vacation in August.
- Rain dates are notoriously difficult.

Community Service Award: The Highlands Village Day gives an Award every year for outstanding service. It can be a great way to bring together the community and recognize important contributions.

Managing the Budget: Anywhere from \$3,000-10,000 is needed to get a Village Day started. You can consider sponsorships to raise more money and have more fun events and activities. Talk to business people in your community!

Itemized Budgets for Waban and Highlands

Item	Newton Highlands	Waban
Date	2nd Sunday in June	Sunday before Memorial Day
Hours (time)	5 hrs (12am-5pm)	5 hrs (10am-3pm)
# of Rides	5-6	5
Cost of Rides (\$)	0 (Vendor covers cost)	4,000
# of Booths	60 (45 paid)	20 (1st yr), 10 (last yr)
Cost of Booths	70- food vendors, 60- non-newton, 50- newton residents 40- non-profits 15- kids	40- Commercial, 25- Local
Cost of Insurance (\$)	0	383
Liability Solution	Neighborhood Area Council	Short-Term Event Insurance

Contact List

Contact	Position	Phone	Email
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John Rice	Newton Highlands Organizer		jrice@newtonmagov
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