



National Night Out Block Party Guide

A guide for residents working to improve their neighborhoods

Dear Brownwood Resident,

An easy way to organize a neighborhood block party is to host one on National Night Out – held annually in Texas on the first Tuesday in October.

2024 will mark the 13th year Brownwood has participated in National Night Out. The event has several goals which are outlined throughout this packet, but each neighborhood should put together the type of block party that will appeal to that specific neighborhood.

You don't have to live in a neighborhood of single-family homes to be involved in a block party. Block parties can happen everywhere including apartment buildings or even in a park.

This guide is organized so that all the necessary information, forms, and "do's and don'ts" are in one place. So don't hesitate! Gather a couple of neighbors, follow the instructions in the guide, and invite everyone to join in the National Night Out for Brownwood on October 1st, 2024.

*Canned food drive to benefit Good Samaritan Ministries - neighbors are encouraged to bring canned tuna to the party to be collected by the Brownwood Police Department for GSM. A travelling Tuna Trophy will go to the party gathering the most cans of tuna!

For more information or to register as a block captain, contact the Brownwood Police Department at 325-646-2525.

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About National Night Out

It's America's Night Out Against Crime!

National Night Out (NNO) is a unique event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and is held the first Tuesday in October.

National Night Out is designed to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness.
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs, such as Neighborhood Watch
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships
- Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back against crime

Along with the traditional display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils, cities, towns, and neighborhoods 'celebrate' NNO with a variety of events and activities such as:

- Block parties
- Cookouts
- Visits from local police and sheriff departments
- Parades, exhibits
- Flashlight walks, contest, and youth programs

NNO has proven to be an effective, inexpensive, and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. Plus, the benefits our community will derive from NNO will most certainly extend well beyond the one night.

10 Reasons to Have a Block Party

1. To have fun - no excuse is needed to celebrate!
2. To meet your neighbors. When you know who lives in your neighborhood, the more likely you are to identify strangers or suspicious people.
3. To increase the sense of belonging in your neighborhood.
4. To organize a Neighborhood Watch group
5. To make additional connections within the community. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club, baby-sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.
6. To plan a campaign for traffic slowdown, get better lighting, or address other interests.
7. To "use" the street for one day, to, for example, rollerblade, play hockey or play other games.
8. To meet some of the old-time residents in the neighborhood and learn the neighborhood's history.
9. To have a neighborhood clean-up day, play some good music and barbecue once all the work is done.
To start a yearly neighborhood tradition of getting together at least once a year!

How to Get Started

Gather a few neighbors and divide up the tasks. Decide on a possible theme, activities, etc. Decide what to do about food.

Start knocking on doors and letting the neighbors know about the event and getting feedback and volunteers. Start with the neighbors you know best and go from there.

NNO for Brownwood is to be on October 1st from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm. Feel free to adjust the time to fit your neighborhood to some degree. Think of an alternate plan in case of poor weather.

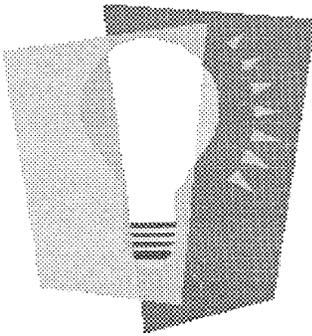
Go door to door:

- Hand out an invitation (use the one included in this guide or create your own).
- Ask people to fill out the Block Party details sheet and let them know where to return it (use the one included in this guide or create your own).
- Recruit volunteers.

Decide if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or will people be able to invite friends/relatives (if yes, how many). Make this clear in your flyer/invitation.

Good Ideas

- Make sure you have a sign-in sheet with the names of everyone who attends the party and everyone you contacted; after all, the idea of a block party is to connect neighbors.
- Identify special talents your neighbors might have - you may be living next to a magician, singer, dancer, artist, radio host or prize-winning cook.
- Plan lots of activities for children.
- Include activities that encourage people to meet each other. Use nametags and include children by asking them to create the tags.
- Make sure that people with disabilities can participate in the activities and include their attendants (those with Seeing Eye dogs or in wheelchairs).
- Institute a bathroom policy "everyone to use their own" so that home security is maintained.
- Inspire clean up after the party by rewarding children with a prize for packing up garbage.
- Have a block/street clean up as part of the party.
- Distribute an evaluation form to participants (to get a good response, number the forms and have door prizes for returned entries).

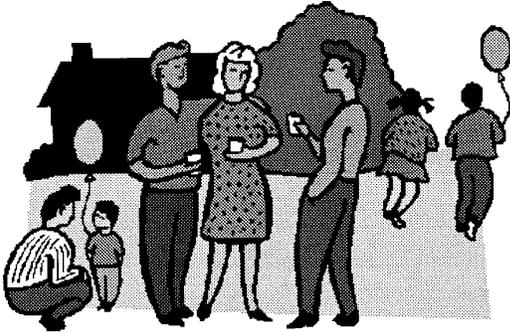


REMINDER

- Alcohol is only permitted on private property, not on city streets or in parks.
- Residents should observe security precautions, for example, lock doors to houses, and keep equipment in sight.
- In hot weather, food spoils quickly: all perishables such as mayonnaise, salads or meats should be stored in coolers and be kept at the proper temperature.
- Food cannot be sold on city streets unless the proper permits have been obtained.
- Loud amplification of music is prohibited.
- Observe safety precautions for all activities, for example, keep barbeques away from activities for children.
- If closing your street for the block party, post signs the day before reminding everyone to remove cars and that the street will be closed.



YOU ARE INVITED TO



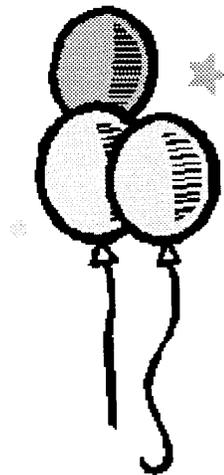
A BLOCK PARTY On National Night Out!

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____

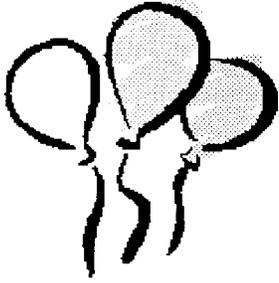
THEME/EVENT: _____



To RSVP, or to help, please phone:

_____ at _____, or

_____ at _____



Block Party Details

We are glad you can join us for National Night Out:

On Tuesday, October 1st at _____
(date) (time)

We are asking each family to bring:

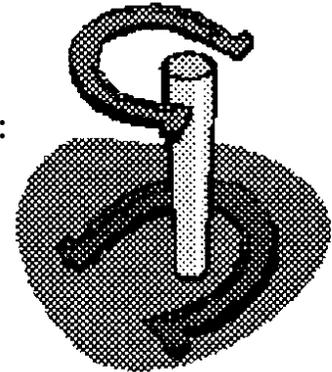
- chairs to sit on
- your own meats or vegetarian food to barbecue
- 1 salad and 1 dessert to share (make enough for _____ people)
- your own beverages or coffee and tea will be provided
- your own non-breakable plates, cups, and cutlery
- other

In addition, do you have the following that could be used:

_____ A barbecue pit

_____ A table

_____ A cooler



Do you have a talent that you would like to share with us?

Suggestions for activities you could organize.

Please return this form by _____ (date) to:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

National Night Out

Evaluation Form

To help us plan future block parties,
your feedback is appreciated.



What were the 3 best things about this block party?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What 3 things would you change for next time?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How would you like the neighborhood connections gained at the block party to be maintained during the year?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are you willing to help with the planning of future neighborhood events?

Yes _____ no _____

if yes, please leave your name and phone number

with _____ at _____

Please leave this form at (address) _____

Thank You

Suggested Activities for Getting to Know Your Neighbors

Neighborhood History

- Cultural Connections
- Have everyone bring their favorite family dish.
- Teach everyone how to say three things in another language.
- Use a map to indicate where everyone originally came from.
- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighborhood and what he or she likes best about it.
- Identify any special people that lived in your area such as the longest resident, politician, artist, eccentric, hero, etc. Have partygoers guess who, what, where through charades and other games.

Neighborhood Action

- Discuss what issues/concerns people have (keep this to a predetermined time: remember, a block party should be fun).
- Establish teams to explore how to resolve the concerns.
- Make plans to have a neighborhood clean-up.
- Build a bench, plant a garden, paint street numbers, or plant a tree as part of the block party activities.

Fun Family Activities

For Block Parties

- Invite a clown, balloon artist, or magician
- Have games using water balloons
- Rent a "Jump House" but remember it must not be placed on the street, so use a neighbor's yard
- Play hide and seek
- Do face painting (Remember to use non-toxic paint)
- Organize a kids talent show or parade
- Use sidewalk chalk (Make it a game for the kids and give out prizes)
- Play Pictionary© or charades
- "Name that Baby" (Have everyone bring a childhood photo and see who can guess who's who)
- Play Musical Chairs
- Rent a Popcorn or Snow Cone Machine



The National Night Out Sponsor for 2024

The City of Brownwood