

Carlisle Old Home Day County Fair Process

Friday, June 27, 2014

Overview

The Country Fair process is summarized below:

Send out vendor invitations

Sign up the Vendors

Insert Mosquito Notice

Send out Vendor reminders

Prepare for Fair Day

Fair Day

Vendor Invitations

Timing

I generally send out the vendor invitations around the time that the donation appeal is mailed. In any case, invitations should be send out mid to late April at the latest.

I send invites to the regular vendors and give them some time to respond before we place the open invitation in the Mosquito.

I do most of my communication by e-mail.

I address each invitation individually as I consider it bad practice to send an e-mail with a long TO list, as it exposes every vendor's e-mail to all recipients.

I use a mail merge function to merge the vendor's mail address and past years space information into a template e-mail. This keeps me from asking for the same information over and over. If you are familiar with a mail merge process it is a great way to go. There is more than one way to accomplish this depending on the programs you use.

An alternative would be to use a more generic sign up letter and just copy it and send out individual e-mails.

There are two large self-organizing groups at this time-The Farmers Market and Carlisle Artisans. I deal with one person for each of these groups which simplifies my job.

You need to call Jake's Barbeque as he does not respond in e-mail (though he will read it).

Editing the invites.

I have enclosed sample e-mails. The information needs to be edited a little each year depending on the changes from last year. The dates need to be changed. I try to keep the number of date citations to a minimum (1) to simplify the task and reduce the chance of conflicting date information. I use the merge function to put in the date as this reduces the chance of a mistake.

Signing up the Vendors

Vendors

We try to keep a small town craft fair / farmers market atmosphere to the county fair.

No political organizations or groups supporting politically motivated, controversial issues are allowed at Old Home Day.

In addition we do not allow larger commercial vendors (food services, window vendors, etc.) unless they have a clear connection to the town or town sponsored activities.

Keeping Track of information

I use a spreadsheet to keep track of all the vendor information. I am comfortable with spreadsheets and it makes automation of e-mails easier. Any method you are comfortable will work. The key is to keep all the information straight and not lose any. Anything from Index cards, to a text document, to a spreadsheet will work.

I honor all requests on a first come, first served basis. This is an easy way to resolve conflicts. It also is an incentive to the vendors to make prompt replies. Much of the sign up activity occurs in the first two weeks.

I update the information as I receive it. You need to keep track of the number of booth assigned (21 total), the number of spots with electrical needs (available on the church side only), number of tables needed, and special requests/spaces (watching out for conflicts). See the details on assigning spaces for more insight.

I have yet to turn down a vendor request for space reasons. If a vendor requests a space the week before the fair, I may have to ask them to supply their own table, etc. People are good with this as they know they are last minute.

I keep all the vendor e-mails. They are useful and a great double check that you have not missed anyone.

Mosquito Publicity Release

After a few weeks, I'll have an open call publicity release placed in the Mosquito. I usually do this about May 25th or so about 4-5 weeks before old home day. This will attract a few new vendors and remind current vendors to sign up. I contact the publicity coordinator for Old Home Day and place this as one of the scheduled publicity releases. Text of release in in Appendix 5.

Reminding Vendors

Reminding Missing Vendors

A little before all the booths are gone, I'll contact prior year's vendors who have not responded and whom I expect will want a space. They sometimes forget to respond and they appreciate the reminder.

Last booths

A little before all the booths are gone, I'll go over the booth requests to be sure I know the exact number of booths left.

Reminding All Vendors

The last week before the fair, I send out a reminder to all the vendors with set up information. This will avoid several last minute calls about setting up and also make sure the vendors have not forgotten. An example is in Appendix 6

Prepare for Fair Day

Assign the Spaces

Usually I assign the booths based on requests and last year's layout. Our vendors like consistency and it make the process much easier for me. The non-booth spots I usually assign as I get the requests. A little last minute rearranging is often necessary so I wait until Fair day to let most vendors know their space assignment.

Z-fold the Bunting

Take the bunting off the rolls, check for missing grommets and Z-fold it to make the hanging easier.

Envelops for Vendors

Make an envelope for each vendor with the space number as appropriate. I use these to collect the money as well. Helps keep thing straight.

Setup Day Before

Hang Tyvek

Use a few stapes to keep it in place. Secure with wood cleats and drywall screws. Staples will not hold in the wind.

Hang Bunting

Put up bunting using short dry wall screws in every second or third grommet as needed. Pay attention to the 10 and 11 labels on the bunting (not necessarily the wood rolling cores). These go on the 10 booth and 11 booth sides respectively.

Rain contingency: Hang the bunting in the morning, lower bunting only.

Check that electricity is available.

Note: Ferns will bring their own cords and set up their freezer. Need cord(s) for booths.

Fair day

Setup

Extension cords for electricity. You will need two or more 3 plug extenders.

Tables in their spots

Chairs – I promise 1 chair per booth and I keep a small number in reserve if people need more. Some vendors will special request more chairs and I honor these on a first come first serve basis.

Greet Vendors

Put the appropriate envelopes on each booth if it is not windy. Guide Vendors to their spots. Help with issues as appropriate.

During Fair

Usually runs itself. I am around to deal with issues but it is usually quite.

Collect Money

Collect the money. Put in vendor's envelope. Check off on list. Have extra envelopes as some get lost. Also have a few with the treasurer's address in case people need to mail money in. We don't encourage this but it is good to have an answer if you need it. Some people like Ferns always mail it in. This is a good time to interact with the vendors.

After Fair

Collect Chairs and Tables

Take down bunting.

I usually z-fold it again at this time and transfer it to the rolls later on at my convenience.

Take down Tyvek

Police the area for trash

Go home, have a cold drink.

Appendix 1 - Invitation as sent

Hello from Carlisle Old Home Day,

I am pleased to invite you to this year's Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair on Saturday, June 28th, 2014.

I have included a space request form at the bottom of this message. I have filled in some of the information based on my records. Please reply with your space preferences and correct or complete any other information as necessary and email it back to me.

Please read the attached official invitation (pdf file) with more important information.

If you are selling food you must check with Linda Fantasia at the Board of Health to determine if you need a permit or not, as this depends on the type of food being sold (food that will spoil if it is not kept hot or cold is of the greatest concern, but please check).

Her contact information is:

Linda Fantasia / Health Agent - Town of Carlisle

[\(978\) 369-0283](tel:9783690283)

lfantasia@carlisle.mec.edu

We are looking forward to a great Old Home Day and we hope to see you there.

Thank You,

Bill and Pat Schannen

pbschannen@gmail.com

Space Request Form

Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair Marketplace
Saturday, June 28th, 2014

Name: Mary Hult / Carlisle Mosquito

Mailing Address: Carlisle, MA 01741

E-mail Address: mphult@comcast.net

Phone #: [978-369-0448](tel:978-369-0448)

Product or service being offered:

Is electrical power needed?

Is a booth, table, or stand-alone (empty) spot preferred?

If a table or stand alone spot, are you bringing a freestanding canopy for shade?

If you have special requirements please contact us.

Attachment: Carlisle Old Home Day Fair Invitation 2013.pdf

Appendix 2 - Carlisle Old Home Day Fair Invitation 2014.pdf contents

Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair Marketplace

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Country Fair Marketplace at Carlisle's Old Home Day this year. The Marketplace will be open between 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM on Saturday, on Church Street in Carlisle Center. Please plan to remain in operation during these hours.

Covered booths, tables and stand-alone spots are available. We have a limited number of electrical hookups. Spaces, and electricity access will be assigned on a first come basis so please sign up early if you have specific needs.

The Old Home Day Association requires 10% of the vendor's gross sales (including sales of raffle tickets, kids games, etc.) OR a \$25 flat fee if nothing is being sold. This donation helps fund the costs associated with sponsoring Old Home Day activities. Please plan to pay at the end of the fair. Envelopes will be provided in the morning and collected at 1:00 PM.

Access to vendor booths is only from 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM and 8:50 AM to 9:50 AM. Please be on time to set up, as other events will restrict access. The space reserved for you will be labeled with your name and someone will be there to direct you to your assigned space.

Access to Church Street will be from Bedford Road/Rte. 225 south of the rotary, up oneway Church Street the **wrong way**. Green Cemetery will be on your left as you enter. Park in the Carlisle School lot. NO vehicles will be allowed in the booth area on Church Street. This is a change from previous years by order of the Carlisle police. We strongly urge you to bring a wagon or hand truck to unload your vehicle.

(Please note that NO political organizations or groups supporting politically motivated, controversial issues are allowed at Old Home Day).

We look forward to your participation!

Appendix 3 – Invitation in mail merge form

Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair Invitation

Hello from Carlisle Old Home Day,

I am pleased to invite you to this year's Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair on {{Fairday}}.

I have included a space request form at the bottom of this message. I have filled in some of the information based on my records. Please reply with your space preferences and correct or complete any other information as necessary and email it back to me.

Please read the attached official invitation (pdf file) with more important information.

If you are selling food you must check with Linda Fantasia at the Board of Health to determine if you need a permit or not, as this depends on the type of food being sold (food that will spoil if it is not kept hot or cold is of the greatest concern, but please check).

Her contact information is:

Linda Fantasia / Health Agent - Town of Carlisle
(978) 369-0283
lfantasia@carlisle.mec.edu

We are looking forward to a great Old Home Day and we hope to see you there.

Thank You,
Bill and Pat Schannen
pbschannen@gmail.com

Space Request Form

Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair Marketplace
{{Fairday}}

Name: {{Name}}
Mailing Address: {{Address}}
E-mail Address: {{Mail}}
Phone #: {{Phone}}

Product or service being offered:

Is electrical power needed?

Is a booth, table, or stand-alone (empty) spot preferred?

If a table or stand alone spot, are you bringing a freestanding canopy for shade?

If you have special requirements please contact us.

Appendix 4 – Mail Merge CSV (Comma Separated Variable) file example.

This is one possible format. Other process choices might use other formats (ex: Excel file)

Mail,Name,product,Address,Phone,Fairday

alancameron@xxx.net,Alan Cameron / Rail Trail,"324 School Street, Carlisle, MA 01741",978-369-2223,"Saturday, June 28th, 2014"

amy_caggiano@xxx.net,Amy Caggiano / Red Balloon,,978-610-6516,"Saturday, June 28th, 2014"

asmith@xxx.mec.edu,Angela Smith / COA,"information, games", "Carlisle, MA 01741",978-987-7414,"Saturday, June 28th, 2014"

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Appendix 5 – Mosquito Press Release

Booths are available at the Old Home Day Country Fair Saturday, June 2xth, xxxx

Do you have items to sell or want an easy way to showcase your organization?
OHD' s Country Fair is a great way to meet your neighbors, have some fun, and do a little business. Country fair booths and spaces are still available. To reserve your space, please email Bill Schannen at pbschannen@gmail.com or call [978 369-1486](tel:978-369-1486).

Appendix 6 - Vendor Reminder

Hello {{Contact}},

This is a reminder that you have reserved a {{Location}} at the Carlisle Old Home Day Country Fair on {{Fairday}}.

If your plans have changed please let me know and I can reassign the space.

The Country Fair will be open between 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM

The Old Home Day fee of 10% of gross sales (including raffle tickets, kids games, etc.) OR a \$25 if nothing is being sold is due at the end of the fair. Envelopes will be provided and collected at 1:00 PM.

Access to vendor booths is only from 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM and 8:50 AM to 9:50 AM. Please be on time, as other events will restrict access. Your space will be labeled. I will be there to help. Bring a wagon or hand truck to move your goods.

Parking is available in the main Carlisle School lot BUT you will be blocked in until after the Fair is over. Park in a different location if you need to leave early.

Access to Church Street will be from Bedford Road/Rte. 225 south of the rotary, up one-way Church Street the wrong way. NO vehicles will be allowed in the booth area on Church Street. This is a change from previous years by order of the Carlisle police.

See you at Old Home Day,
Bill

Appendix 7 – Vendor Envelope Insert

This placed in an envelope for each vendor with the vendor name on the outside.

Carlisle Old Home Day

Country Fair Marketplace

The Old Home Day Association fees:

10% of the vendor's gross sales (including sales of raffle tickets, kids games, etc.)

OR

a \$25 flat fee if nothing is being sold.

Place fee in envelope. Envelopes will be collected at 1:00 PM.

This fee helps fund the costs associated with sponsoring Old Home Day activities.

Thank You.

Appendix 8 Helpful Tools and Supplies

Booth Set-up / Take Down

Screw Guns

1" sheet rock screws for bunting

Tyvek clamp strips

1 ¾ sheet rock screws for Tyvek clamps

Step ladders

Staple Gun

Other useful items:

Duct tape

Screw drivers

Scissors

Utility Knife

Extra Vendor Envelopes

Envelopes with Treasure's address