



Photo by Payton McCormick

# Holidays & Events

# Christmas in Vernon

Thanksgiving night is the traditional night that the Christmas lights are lit on the courthouse square. The lights are a must see if you are in Vernon during December.

On the second Saturday in December, Vernon celebrates Christmas with a western twist.

“Christmas on the Western Trail” involves a number of activities, including the arrival of Santa Claus that afternoon along with downtown festivities from horse rides to motorcycle rides there are activities at a number of locations around town. Vendors set up around the decorated courthouse with crafts, art and other items, giveaways and drawings, and a host of other attractions for the enjoyment of residents and visitors of all ages.

That evening, the Lighted Christmas Parade winds its way through down-

town Vernon with floats, antique and classic cars, bands, horses wagons, carriages and various other entries, all brightly outlined in lights and the long-anticipated arrival of Santa Claus on a colorful float. The parade lights up the December night as it makes its way past spectators who gather in downtown Vernon for the exciting event. It’s a very distinctive way to celebrate the holiday and bring a sparkle to the eyes of the spectators.

Prizes are awarded to the best decorated floats. The parade is sponsored by Vernon’s Christmas Parade Committee.

# July 4th

Hosted annually by the Vernon Volunteer Fire Department, the City of Vernon provides a dazzling display of lights around the eve of July 4th to celebrate independence. The show is typically 30 minutes to an hour long and is located at the Vernon Lion’s Football Field.

# Summer’s Last Blast



Photo by Payton McCormick

In 1990, the Vernon Street Machine and Classics Association sponsored an event they called the Vernon Super Cruise. Thirty-seven cars showed up, and very few of them actually cruised.

Those first efforts, however, have evolved over the past years into an event that brings thousands of vintage and classic cars and vehicles and their owners to the streets of Vernon while an additional several thousand spectators line the curbs to watch, listen to music, host tailgate parties, and enjoy a full schedule of activities.

The year 2017 marked the event’s 28th year, and Summer’s Last Blast continues to explode onto the scene each August, drawing visitors from all across the country. In the week preceding the Summer’s Last Blast weekend, concerts, car shows and even a “Redneck” car show are all held at various businesses, while the weekend traditionally kicks off on Friday evening with a rocking concert in Wilbarger Auditorium.

In the past, such well-known artists as the Crickets, The Vels, Classic Rock All Stars, Crew Cuts with Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels, Gary Lewis and the Playboys, The Crystals, Kraig Parker, the Legend Lives On, 1964 Beatles Tribute, The Cowsills, The Return Beatles Tribute, Johnny Rogers, and Kraig Parker have been

among those entertaining the concert-goers.

Following the concert, Burnout Contests heat up the streets as drivers show off by “smoking their tires” for prizes.

An extreme BMX bike demonstration is also held.

On Saturday, a number of activities are held downtown while vintage vehicles and classic cars fill Orbison Park, headquarters for the event, as cruisers wait for the Nostalgic Cruise, the centerpiece of the weekend. The restricted Cruise, for vehicles 1978 and older, begins at 7 p.m., Saturday, filling Wilbarger Street from one side of town to the others while spectators line the curbs with live bands, vendors and a chance to view some of the finest classic, antique and vintage vehicles around.

The success of Summer’s Last Blast, which now draws multitudes of visitors of all ages from throughout the United States, is the result of careful planning and dedication by members of the sponsoring organization.

Vernon Street Machine and Classics Association members have deliberately stayed focused on their original goal: to bring a quality car event to Vernon.

While there are similar car happenings around the country, Summer’s Last Blast remains one of the premiere, “not-to-be” missed events.