

## Holyoke prepares for June 14-16 excitement

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

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For more than 10 years, mid-June has been an exciting time in Holyoke as the annual Dandelion Daze Car Show has rolled through town. With the car show being put on in conjunction with Holyoke's 125th celebration, even more entertainment has been added to the Friday-Sunday, June 14-16 schedule.

With just over a week left until the fun-filled weekend, plans are being finalized to ensure a memorable time.

Mayor Orville Tonsing, Kathy Olofson, Ardie Besse and Mary Tomky have been the key figures in planning for the 125th celebration. The group began meeting monthly as early as September to create the event.

Brian Akey, Chris Lee, Joe Hall, Nici Bishop, Casey Blake, Shari Simms, Penny Dockins and Brenda Brandt have also lent a helping hand to the planning of the event.



**Those who have spent countless hours to organize and plan the 125th celebration and Dandelion Daze are pictured from left, Brian Akey, Ardie Besse, Kathy Olofson, Mayor Orville Tonsing and Mary Tomky.□**

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### —Enterprise photo

Much of the early planning for the anniversary celebration was centered around looking to neighboring towns to see how they handled their quasiquicentennial celebrations as well as looking back at the activities offered during Holyoke's 100th celebration.

"We pretty much hammered out what we wanted to do in the first and second meetings, then delegated who was going to do what from there," Olofson said.

Holyoke Chamber of Commerce director Mary Tomky said she has received a good deal of interest from people outside of Holyoke including former residents and past graduates.

"I think it is exciting," Tomky said. "It is always great to bring people to town and showcase our community."

Mayor Tonsing noted that the milestone is special because it is a time to pay respects to people who have contributed and helped build Holyoke to where it is now.

"Without them we wouldn't be here today," Tonsing stated.

Festivities will kick off Friday night on the courthouse lawn for a pie and ice cream social sponsored by the city. Prairie Mountain, a band out of Otis, will provide the entertainment for the night.

Some of Saturday's activities include a historical scavenger hunt, horse and carriage rides, RC

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gas powered car races, a parade and of course the 13th Annual Dandelion Daze Car Show.

Floats in the parade will be decorated to represent specific decades. Car registrants have the opportunity to enter into the parade behind the era floats.

Casey Blake, who has been helping with organizing Dandelion Daze, said that having the car show and the anniversary celebration at the same time is beneficial to both parties.

Blake mentioned that many entrants in the car show are from out of town, and the city's attractions through the weekend is something they are sure to enjoy.

Awards for Dandelion Daze include Top 15, Top Gun (Rodder's Choice) and People's Choice.

Brian Akey is the chairperson for Dandelion Daze this year.

There will also be a beard contest and vintage clothing contest. The overall beard winner and the male and female winners for the clothing contest will serve as parade grand marshals.

Mementos of the 125th celebration will be available for purchase throughout the weekend activities including belt buckles, key chains and commemorative coins.

If weather is uncooperative, the activities will move from the courthouse lawn to the Holyoke Vets Club while the beard and vintage clothing competitions will be held at the Peerless Theatre.

Saturday evening will come to an end with an old-time barn dance with music provided by the Frenchman Creek Ramblers.

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Sunday will mark the end of the celebration as the Peerless Theatre will host the melodrama, "Shawnee Lou, the Prairie's Purest Dressmaker," put on by the Phillips County Players.

Booths are still available, and those interested should contact Mary Tomky at 854-3517.

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