

60422 Flossmoor party and Bike the Gem on June 4

BY ERIC CRUMP

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The convergence between the date, 06/04/22, and Flossmoor's zip code, 60422, is rare enough that Tom Dobrez, president of Flossmoor's Future, feels comfortable billing a planned June 4 party as a "once-in-a-lifetime" event.

The organization and its partners are planning what they believe will be a celebration worthy of the description.

"The concept is very similar to Hidden Gem," Dobrez said. "We're going to shine a light on all that is great about Flossmoor. It'll be a special day. We hope to see everybody in the village out there."

Dobrez presented the early plan to the Flossmoor Board of Trustees in January, and asked the village to support the event. During and following that meeting, organizers consulted with village officials and citizen committees to refine the plan.

The main change since then has been a relocation of the festivities moving it from Leavitt Park to Flossmoor Park.

Bike the Gem

The event actually will begin off-site with the Bike the Gem ride starting at 11:30 a.m. The third annual ride follows the course of the Hidden Gem Half Marathon.

In previous years, it was held in mid-summer, but Dobrez said the move to the beginning of summer would help bookend the season with the ride near Memorial Day and the race just after Labor Day.

This year, there also will be a new feature, the addition of a shorter ride for younger cyclists.

"The first ride will be 13.1 miles. The second ride is going to be 13.1 blocks," Dobrez said. "It will be an opportunity for our younger citizens to do the Gem and have the thrill of crossing the finish line."

Both rides start at Infant Jesus of Prague school, with riders gathering in the parking lot at the corner of Flossmoor



Provided image

The unofficial map of the short Bike the Gem route. While most adult cyclists will be tracing the 13.1-mile half marathon route, youngsters can follow the more accessible 13.1 block route.

Road and Douglas Avenue. Cyclists should show up about 11 a.m. The rides will start at 11:30 a.m.

The Bike the Gem ride is free, although organizers are asking all participants to register at thedriven.net.

As the ride ends on Sterling Avenue near the Flossmoor Public Library, cyclists can head through the tunnel under the railroad tracks and join the party in the park, which officially begins at 1 p.m.

Music, art, fun and food

When visitors arrive at the park they will be greeted by the sounds of DJ Tony Fields of The Conservatory who also will serve as emcee for the event.

At 1:30 p.m. village officials will welcome guests, and at 2 p.m. the first band, a soul group called Motown Soul Revue, will take the stage.

At 4 p.m. the sounds shift to The Lotus Kings, a Santana tribute band.

At 6:30 p.m. Steely Dan tribute band Deacon Blue will take the stage.

There will be food by Flossmoor Station Restaurant and Brewery and Dunning's Market, plus several food trucks on site with menus ranging from vegan to barbecue to Mexican food and sweets for dessert.

There will be activities for all ages throughout the day, including:

- A whiffle ball home run derby sponsored

by Flossmoor Baseball and Softball.

- A walking tour of Flossmoor's public sculptures sponsored by the Public Art Commission.
- Campground activities for kids sponsored by the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District.
- A "meet your neighbors" booth sponsored by the Community Relations Committee, which will include opportunities to sign up for neighborhood social media and email groups.
- A shopping tent featuring Flossmoor Business Association members.
- A 60422 merchandise tent offering T-shirts, hats and other branded items.

Organizers are looking for volunteers to help ensure guests can find their way around. Volunteers will work shifts of a couple hours at most, so they can still enjoy most of the event, Dobrez said.

"If you want to be an ambassador for Flossmoor we could use your help," he said.

Paying the bills

The village agreed to provide \$20,000 in funding plus some in-kind services, Dobrez said. That will cover about 30% of the event's costs.

The rest will be covered by Flossmoor's Future, sponsorships, VIP ticket sales, merchandise sales and beer sales. Donations which will help support Flossmoor Future's events, including Bike the Gem, the Hidden Gem Half Marathon and the 60422 party can be made through the website www.the60422.com.

So far, two of the three bands have a sponsor. Kluger Furs is sponsoring Motown Soul Revue, and Cutrara & Co. is sponsoring Deacon Blue. Additional sponsors are welcome and can sign up at thedriven.net or www.the60422.com.

The event is free, but VIP tickets will be available for \$85. Most of the ticket price will be a donation to Flossmoor's Future, but VIP guests will receive a special commemorative T-shirt, two drinks and be able to watch the bands perform from the comfort of their own tent, which will come with a private bathroom.

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