



City Celebrates! Gears Up for a Fun-Filled Summer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lee Heald at (508) 996-8253, ext. 205

Leeheald2@aol.com

Urban Adventurers, get ready: Summertime is here, and downtown New Bedford is ready to rock.

Every Thursday, the cobblestone streets of downtown New Bedford will be hopping with festivities as City Celebrates! kicks off July 16 and continues on each of the six non-AHA! Thursdays this summer.

These six nights of celebration—July 16, 23 and 30, and Aug. 6, 20 and 27— promise live music, walking tours, films, kids' activities, lectures, galleries and museums open late, plus plenty of opportunities to shop and dine locally.

City Celebrates! is a FREE event that takes place rain or shine from 5 to 9 p.m. It is presented by the City of New Bedford and the AHA! partners. This night of arts, culture, shopping and dining features four areas of fun for the whole family:

The first area of activity is **Arts on Acushnet Avenue**. Stop in Crowell's Gallery, then hit up the brand-new Novio Pottery and Kiln Gallery on William Street.

The second area is **Summer in the Park**, featuring live music and evening talks at the New Bedford Whaling Museum and National Historic Park on William Street. After you listen, you can poke around the Whaling Museum—the largest museum in America devoted to the history of the American whaling industry.

Kids and kids at heart will want to head to **Kid Central** at the YMCA. The Y will open their batting cages; Carabineers Rock Gym in New Bedford will bring their climbing wall; Solstice Skate Shop will put on a skate jam, and the New Bedford Art Museum will bring its ArtMOBILE.

Head to Purchase and Union streets for **Shopping and Dining**. There's something for everyone in this area. Enjoy sandwiches and ice cream at Café Arpeggio, authentic Mexican burritos and cold ales from No Problemo, wine and tapas on the waterfront at Cork, or a bread-bowl of soup at Destination Soups.

Sit down for a family meal at Freestones or grab a cold fruit smoothie at The Green Bean or The Juice Box. On a Roll offers great paninis and sandwiches, Spicy Lime has the city's best Thai, and Rose Alley Ale House offers a wide selection of beers and the best French Fries in SouthCoast.

After you eat, shop at any number of boutiques in the area—Calico on Union Street is an amazing little vintage indie boutique; The Artificial Marketplace on William Street is a treasure trove of vintage antiques and collectables; BeJeweled on Centre Street has designer jewelry; boutique cosmetics are at BLUSH Beauty Bar, also on Centre Street, and you can't leave New Bedford without a Whale T-shirt from Elaine's on Purchase Street.

"We've created different activity centers for families, arts-enthusiasts, concert-goers and urban adventurers. There's something for everyone," said Lee Heald, program director of AHA! "When we surveyed AHA! Visitors, we found that about 1/3 of the attendees are new each time, so City Celebrates! is a great way to introduce summer visitors to downtown New Bedford."

"There's so much down here in the historic waterfront district, including the National Park, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the UMASS Gallery at Star Store—not to mention all the great new restaurants and pubs that have opened this past year," she added. "This summer is sure to be our best yet."

From I-195 E or W. take Exit 15 (Rte. 18). Follow Rte 18 to 2nd traffic signal; take a right onto Union St. At the first traffic signal take a right onto Second Street and take your first left for parking in Custom House Square or continue two blocks to the Elm Street garage. On-street parking is also available for free after 6 pm.

About the AHA! Project

AHA! (Art-History-Architecture) was formed in July 1999 as a collaborative non-profit partnership to establish Downtown New Bedford as the regional hub for arts and culture. Drawing on the city's diverse cultural resources, AHA! provides free monthly Second Thursday Night downtown celebrations, and pilots cultural economic development initiatives through private and public partnerships. The project operates with a volunteer Steering Committee and a wealth of in-kind programming provided its partner venues. AHA! is a nonprofit project of the **Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts**, a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts. AHA! and Community Foundation offices are at 63 Union Street, New Bedford.

For more information visit <http://www.ahanewbedford.org/citycelebrates09.html>