

THE NEIGHBORHOOD FILES, ARTS

Free Festival for Families Coming to Carrollwood in April

Ninth annual "Northdale Family Fun Festival and Parade" arrives April 9

By **Deborah Bostock-Kelley** March 11, 2011

Whoever says you can't get something for nothing may not have heard about the Northdale Family Fun Festival and Parade on April 9 from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

This is the ninth year that The Northdale Civic Association, in conjunction with Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department and Northdale Park, will host this community event.

The free celebration will kick off with the Gaither High School Marching Band leading a small parade of vendors, mascots, entertainers and a fire truck into Northdale Park, 15550 Spring Pine Drive.

"This is a free event. Any money earned goes back into the community – into the marching band, sheriff's office charities and our firefighters," said Ann Frisbie, President of Northdale Civic Association. "Last year, we had over 3,500, visitors and we expect the same this year."

The Northdale Family Fun Festival has 25 confirmed vendors, and includes games, face-painting and inflatables for the kids.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will hold a bicycle rodeo for the kids and give out safety helmets.

A diverse entertainment lineup offers something for all ages, and includes: Carrollwood Cultural Center's Sounds of Swing, Irish music and dance, karate demonstrations and a performance by students of Mary Jo's Performing Arts Academy.

The Florida Garden Railroad display will be set up on the basketball court area of the school. "We are delighted to have the Florida Garden Railroad display back again this year," said Frisbie. "It was a big hit with the kids."

Publix, along with local restaurants including Beef O' Brady's, McDonald's, Grille 116, and Boston Pizza - among others - will provide food samples to attendees.

Erin Newsome, a Carrollwood resident who brought her family to the event last year, enjoyed the festivities.

"My three kids had a blast," she said. "It's a fun family outing, and it's especially nice that in this economy, everything is free. We will definitely be coming back."

For more information on this free event, go to the Northdale Civic Association's website (<http://www.northdale.org/Northdale/NCACalendarOfEvents/Index.htm>).



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