



WENDY NUGENT/NEWTON NOW

An overhead look of the Newton Downtown Car Show displays the large crowds the event draws. The event is an economic boost for the City of Newton and brings in between 8,000 and 12,000 people annually.



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These are just among the thousands of folks who attended a previous Newton Downtown Car Show.

## Downtown car show going to be nuts

By ADAM STRUNK  
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The Newton Downtown Car Show will have a special entry this year. It's going to be nuts.

Peanuts, that is. The Planter's Peanut Mobile will be an unofficial entry amongst the 300-plus vehicles that will shine and shimmer on Newton's Main Street on Saturday, May 5.

The well-known nut mascot will be there to greet people and take pictures on Sixth Street near Druber's Donuts.

The Newton Downtown Car Show is now apparently a big enough deal to draw a driving peanut.

It draws in an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 people annually. They buy gas in Newton, stay in Newton and spend money in Newton.

The show has come a long way from its humble beginnings in 2005.

At the time, the Newton High School Class of 1965 operated the Fox Theater and brought in a Buddy Holly cover band. Someone suggested putting on a small car show on Main Street.

Newton resident Mike White was promoting the concert at the time.

"I said, 'Guys, this isn't ever going to happen,'" White said. "I said, 'If you get Main Street, Dave and I will help you produce the car show.'"

By Dave, he meant Dave Baughman, or Car Show Dave, as some people in Newton now know him.

The two scrambled and brought in 80 cars.

And ever since, White and Baughman have been filling Newton's Main Street each year with cars and people.

It's not uncommon for participants to come from a dozen or more states. The car show has grown



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Thousands and thousands of people gather at the annual Newton Downtown Car Show every year.

to one of the largest outdoor shows in the region.

"Outside of your indoor shows and national shows, we're one of the larger ones," White said. "We get a lot of cars no one sees elsewhere in the state."

This year should be no different.

The show will feature unique cars, food and beverages and other various events.

New to the show will be a pin up contest, where women will dress up in 1940s and 1950s styles and compete for top honors.

"We've had some local interest," White said. "I think there will be somewhere between 12 and 20 people participating."

There will be valve cover races, where wheels are put on vehicle valve covers and they're raced down a track like a grown up Boy Scout pinewood derby.

Over the years, the show has grown from a Saturday-only show into a weekend event.

Classes schedule their reunions around the car show, and many congre-

gate and take their vehicles on Friday night and drag Main Street just like people did in days gone by.

White said while the annual drag of Main Street isn't an organized event, cars usually group up in the Newton High School parking lot around 6 p.m. They then drive back and forth between Newton's two Sonics, with the group growing longer as others join the line.

Last year, nearly 200 cars joined the procession.

White credited Baughman for doing a large majority of the work with the show. He said both of the men operate a bit like their own board, bouncing ideas off each other, throwing things against the wall and seeing if the ideas stick.

He said one day the two hope to pass the car show torch onto a group or other motivated Newton residents hoping to keep the tradition going. He added anyone interested in volunteering should do so and start learning the ropes.

White said he and

Baughman plan to keep going as long as their health holds out and until they can ensure the car show continues after they're done.

"I think probably when we walk, we want to see it go on," he said. "It's too good for the community and too good for the downtown."

White pointed out that the event brings dollars to Newton. Event goers eat in Newton, buy gas in Newton and stay in Newton. He said the event also shows the city in a good light in local news publications as well as on local and national television.

"That's what it's all about, and that's why we started it was to show people that Newton wasn't such a bad place and that it had something to offer other than just a train going through," he said.

Those interested in going can keep up online and or through Newton Now for more stories about the upcoming car show. For more information, visit [www.newton-downtowncarshow.com](http://www.newton-downtowncarshow.com).

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## Bethel will host first-ever statewide restorative justice conference

FOR NEWTON NOW

NORTH NEWTON—There are many areas in which Kansans are on the front lines in building peace and facilitating justice that benefits entire communities.

But until now, no one event has brought many of these practitioners together at the same time and place. "Restorative Kansas: A Vision for Justice" is a conference that intends to do just that, happening April 19 and 20 on the campus of Bethel College.

The lead sponsor is the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR) at Bethel, in collaboration with the Center for

Conflict Resolution, Kansas City, Missouri; the Kansas Department of Corrections, Victim Services, Topeka; Kansas State University Department of Communication Studies; Mennonite Central Committee-Central States, based in North Newton; the National Association of Community and Restorative Justice (NACRJ); Offender Victim Ministries of Newton; and the Salina Institute for Restorative Justice.

KIPCOR executive director Sheryl Wilson is also the president of NACRJ, a professional organization that mainly serves as a way to get resources to, and promote networking for, restorative justice practitioners in the United States.

Her connections have helped Restorative Kansas draw in nationally and internationally known speakers who have agreed to come "just because they want to help us [in Kansas]," Wilson said. "They want to see us succeed, to see Kansas be on the restorative justice map."

Five people will make up the keynote panel that opens the conference on April 19.

Edward Valandra is the founder of and senior research fellow for the Community for the Advancement of Native Studies, Mission, South Dakota, and an adviser to Living Justice Press, a nonprofit publisher for restorative justice.

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