

HOGs invading downtown

By Jocelyn Jones

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An estimated 1,000 proud owners of Harley-Davidson motorcycles will roll into town as Newark hosts the 12th annual Delaware/Maryland Harley Owners Group (H.O.G.) 2004 State Rally, June 17 to 19.

HOG has more than 90,000 members and is the largest recreational motorcycle club in the world. Mike Schwartz of Mike's Famous Harley-Davidson has been involved in a number of HOG rallies. He said Newark is an excellent place to hold the event and that the city seems excited to host the large crowd.

"The community has treated us like royalty," he said.

Motorcycle enthusiasts from across the region as well as the country will be revving up Main Street for three days straight.

Highlights of the weekend include:

- A custom motorcycle show in Newark Shopping Center on June 18 at 6 p.m. Come and vote for the best rides in eight different categories while perusing past some of the most stunning custom Harley-Davidson motorcycles the world has to offer.
- From 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on June 18, live music will permeate through Newark Shopping Center as well as the Academy Lawn. Club Phred, a local classic rock band, will be performing, along with blues singer Ray Dorset a.k.a. Mungo Jerry, making his first American appearance in more than 10 years. And, don't miss Elvis. He'll be swaying those hips with a tribute show that is sure to amuse everyone.
- On June 19 at 6 p.m., a motorcycle parade will cruise through Newark, beginning and ending at Newark Shopping Center. The parade will last approximately 45 minutes, as it makes two passes down Main Street.
- The rally will wrap-up with a block party extending down Main Street, starting at the Newark Shopping Center and extending past Academy Street.
- Live entertainment on two stages is scheduled from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., featuring "Dyin' Breed," with classic southern rock, as well as "Ray Benich and the Blues Blasters."

Event organizers ask that motorists be extra vigilant and cautious, as motorcyclists will abound.

Although Main Street parking meters will be reserved for motorcycles only, there will be free parking, compliments of the city of Newark, in all municipal lots and at all unreserved metered spaces downtown.