

## **Article on Urban Bike Tour STREETFEST Set for Two Wheels August 22, 2005**

The [2005 edition of StreetFest](#), scheduled for September 1-3, will see some 1,000 incoming Calvin College students spend a part of their three-day orientation combining service with learning in a variety of Grand Rapids neighborhoods. And this year, for the first time ever, some of them will do it on wheels.

The urban bike tour, a concept developed by Don De Graaf, a Calvin professor of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance and Sport, will take faculty and incoming Calvin students throughout the city, stopping at several StreetFest sites.

"The objective is to introduce students to the city and to also show some of the places that Calvin students have been involved in the city," De Graaf says. For example, we may stop at Plaster Creek and talk about how Calvin biology students are involved in helping clean up that watershed. Or we'll stop in Burton Heights, and we'll talk about how the nursing students are involved with staff from Health Intervention Services."

The cyclists will cover about 20 miles on the tour, De Graaf says, while learning about the issues of the city.

"Our hope," he says, "is that when they return, students will have gained an appreciation for the city and many of the challenges the city faces. We also hope they will be encouraged by the experience to be active citizens in the city during their stay at Calvin and beyond."

Jeff Bouman, director of the college's Service Learning Center likes the idea of a bike tour because it takes StreetFest in a different direction.

"It doesn't directly involve service," he says, "but it's a learning activity that revolves around the city's assets and resources. Knowing what a city has in place is intimately connected with getting involved in the city as a responsible citizen."

Brittney Stelpstra, a Calvin senior from Sarnia, Ontario, is this year's StreetFest coordinator and she says the bike tour is part of keeping StreetFest fresh.

"Every year we ask, how is Streetfest going to change?" she says, "and this is this year's addition."

But many of StreetFest's constants will be visible this year too as students do touch-up painting at Heartside Ministry, yard cleanup at First Christian Reformed Church, food sorting at Second Harvest Gleaners, a rain garden (a garden that filters groundwater) for the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, a cook-out with seniors at John Ball Park Zoo and numerous other undertakings for over 50 of the city's nonprofit organizations.

The StreetFest day begins at 9:30 a.m. when all participants - students and mentors - gather in the Calvin chapel for a half-hour of worship. At 10 a.m. the various work teams will attend breakout sessions where they will meet their mentors and learn about the demographics and the existing resources of the neighborhoods they will be working in.

Following the actual project, the students meet to reflect and evaluate their service experience.

This will be the 13th year for StreetFest at Calvin College.

Local sponsors for the event include [Huntington Bank](#), which provides a large portion of the funding for StreetFest, and [Kentwood and Chicago Drive Cycling and Fitness](#) who will provide all of the bicycles (and other necessary equipment) for the students who will be participating in the city-wide bike tour component of StreetFest.

~written by media relations staff writer Myrna Anderson

