

AMERICAN RODDING

TRUE TALES OF MEN, THEIR MACHINES, AND WHAT IT ALL MEANS

THE GREAT GLENDALE CRUISE

Hot rodders take back the streets!



Happy days are here again. At least they are for the city of Glendale, California, where an annual hot-rod cruise has become an important part of the community's plan to renovate its downtown business district.

Fittingly, the event is called the Glendale Cruise Night, and it takes place in the middle of the summer. Last year's event, the second annual, was held July 22 (this year's Cruise Night is scheduled for July 20 — for information call 818/548-6464). More than 250 hot rods, customs, and clas-



sic cars lined the three city blocks that were closed for the cruise, and the '96 event should be bigger yet.

The Glendale Cruise actually evolved from a smaller cruise that was held in a local park several years ago. But when the World Cup Final soccer match was to be played at the Rose Bowl in nearby Pasadena in 1994, the city of Glendale realized it could use that opportunity to attract a large group of people to its community as well. So Glendale decided to promote a cruise night. It didn't hurt that a few workers in



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city hall also happened to be car enthusiasts, and had already been pushing for such an event. As Bob McFall, Glendale's assistant city manager, jokingly put it, "We have a hot-rod department in the dark corners of city hall."

In any case, once the city officials gave the cruise a green light, a list of possible car candidates was drawn up. The feeling was that if outsiders — that is, non-hot-rod enthusiasts — were to be impressed, then they would have to view only quality cars. And so each car had to audition, or "qualify," as McFall said, for the cruise.

As with most civic-center cruises, the Glendale event had a variety of entertainment for the 30,000 spectators who came to enjoy the cruise (admission was free). Freddy "Boom Boom" Cannon was there to sing, with people dancing in the street to the rock-and-roll sounds. And of course all the eateries and local shops kept their doors open for business, so there were plenty of indoor attractions as well.

Plans for the '96 Glendale Cruise Night include possibly closing four or five city blocks for the event, and to coordinate special showings of vintage hot-rod movies at the recently restored art deco Alex Theater. And next door to the Alex Theater a new micro-brewery with an adjoining restaurant will be opened for business.

As for the '95 cruise participants, several of them left town with award trophies, while the remainder cruised home with invites for '96. Because the feeling in cities all over — and especially in Glendale, California — is that hot rods are cool for business.

—Dain Gingerelli

**1995 Glendale Cruise Night
Award Winners:**

Mayor's Choice:

— Jeff Cann, '28 Ford delivery truck.

Police Chief's Choice:

— Joe Norris, 1950 Ford coupe.

Fire Chief's Choice:

— Joe Bell, '57 Chevrolet.

City Manager's Choice for Best Motorcycle:

— Raul Yanez, Harley-Davidson.

Chamber of Commerce's Choice:

— George Bistagne, '32 Ford phaeton.

Fireman's Club Choice for Best Flames:

— Chuck Stein, '37 Ford.