



The majority of local and national media coverage on the city of Detroit is related to negative events. In turn, people nationally, as well as locally, have only been exposed to one side of Detroit: its dark side. The main focus of my writing is to highlight the other side of Detroit - its good side. Knowledge is power and I believe that by exposing people to the positive events that are happening in the city, I can help them learn more about it.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2006**

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## ***Jefferson East Festival Highlights the Weekend***

### **Jazzin' brings music, fun to East Jefferson District this weekend**

It's officially summer, and we here in Detroit know what that means: time for sun, fun - and, of course - festivals!

As Michigan's most populous city, Detroit is no stranger to big-time street fairs.

In the first weeks of June, we've got the [Detroit Festival of the Arts](#) - a free, weekend-long affair that honors the city's fine and performing arts. In late June/early July, thousands flock to New Center for the [Comerica TasteFest](#), a five-day, outdoor food and entertainment extravaganza.

The [Detroit International Jazz Fest](#), featuring local and national jazz musicians, is Motown's Labor Day-weekend tradition, and, shortly after that, it's time for Dally in the Alley - Midtown's end-of-summer, day-long block party.

But that's not all.

It may only be a few years old, but [Jazzin' on Jefferson](#) (JOJ) - a free, four-block street fair celebrating East Jefferson's jazz and blues heritage - is an up-and-comer that's successfully filled the mid-June void in the city's summer-fest lineup, as evidenced by the substantial increase in attendance from 2004 to 2005.

That's good news for the [Jefferson East Business Association](#) (JEBA), the non-profit organization credited with creating and planning the annual event, since the festival's popularity helps JEBA reach its vision of fostering a viable and vibrant business district.

Considering JOJ's mainstay attraction - two stages that will serve as platforms for jazz and blues musicians like Eddie Burns, [Thornetta Davis](#), the Gratitude Steel Band and the John Paxton Trio - it's no wonder JOJ has garnered the attention it has in just two years.

While he can't promise that this year's festival - which runs part of the day on Friday and all day on Saturday - won't be crowded, festival director-Chris Garland says there are several new and exciting changes in store for JOJ 2006:

"The most significant difference this year is that we've expanded the festival from one to two days," says Garland. "That gives anyone that can't make it on Saturday a chance to come out and enjoy the event on Friday evening."

In addition to that upgrade, Garland points out that along with the music stages located on either end of the event, JOJ 2006 will also have an arts stage featuring dance, poetry readings and other non-musical performances.

"We did the art stage last year and it was really popular...so we decided to bring it back again."

Many of the same merchants, about 50 in all, will be back again selling goods and services, too.

There will also be plenty of appetizing cuisine from area restaurants like Angel Wings & Ribs and Big Boy, as well as typical festival food such as elephant ears, french fries, chips and lemonade. Atwater Block Brewery is set to provide water and beer.

Garland notes that there's no shortage of activities for kids at the festival, either, thanks to local businesses and organizations like [Pewabic Pottery](#), [Matrix Theatre Company](#) and the [Cube Gallery](#), who are scheduled to provide educational activities for youngsters.

"There's really something for everyone at this event," he says.

Jazzin' on Jefferson, which will encompass the four-block radius from Chalmers to Alter, runs from 4:00 - 10:30 pm on Friday, June 23, and from noon - 10:30 on Saturday, June 24.

Shuttle service to and from the event will be available at the western edge of the festival near the intersection of Jefferson and Chalmers.

For more information, scheduled performance times or to view pictures of last year's event, please visit the [Jazzin' on Jefferson](#) website.

*Have a question or comment on this post? I'd love to hear from you!*

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