

Bikes, trains and automobiles: Eastend hosts Wheels of Wonder weekend

Scott Schmidt

July is always a busy month in Eastend, and even in the absence of the annual Golf and Curl tournament, 2017 will be no different.

It began this past weekend with the town's Slo Pitch Tournament, hosting three days of fun-filled entertainment that raised money for the Eastend Rink Complex, and it will cap off July 21-23 with a jam-packed Dino Days.

In between will be Wheels of Wonder weekend — a perfect marriage of classic rides, rail cars and two-wheeled hogs, as the annual Rally in the Valley will be kicked off by a stop on the Canadian Coasters cross-country tour. The group first crossed the nation in 1967 as part of the country's centennial, and is in the midst of doing the same for Canada 150.

Eastend is one of just a few stops in Saskatchewan.

"There are only three stops in Saskatchewan for this tour and the first one will be Eastend," says tourism co-ordinator Rosa Vazquez. "They arrive here on July 13 in the late afternoon. We will have supper at the campground (5 p.m.) for the entire

community so they can come and see the cars."

Vazquez says the event will be a great opportunity for locals with classic cars of their own to bring them down to display among the some 100 cars from the tour. "This is great for our community that we can showcase what a beautiful town we have here. So we are very happy about that."

A pancake breakfast and garden market will be held Saturday, 8 a.m. at Town Square, before the Coasters set off to their next destination. But the fun is just getting started, as the North American Railcar Operators Association is hosting an event at 2:30 p.m. showcasing about 25-30 classic railcars.

"They will be at the railroad tracks," Vazquez says. "And people can come and see the railcars and chat with the operators."

And, as the rail tour comes to a close, the Rally in the Valley returns to take over the campground and ball diamonds for three days of motorbike mania. Live music, beer gardens, food and more will be part of the fun,

including several activities for kids to enjoy.

"It's going to be a really fun, long weekend for us," Vazquez says.

A full calendar of upcoming Eastend events can be found at the town's website, townofeastend.com.

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