



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Philadelphia250 Will Bring America's 250th Birthday to Every Neighborhood with Citywide 'Block Party Bonanza'

Applications now open: 250 neighborhood block parties will receive Life, Liberty, and Happiness kits to spark celebration and civic pride

PHILADELPHIA (March 25, 2026) – Philadelphia250, a program of the Philadelphia Visitor Center, in partnership with the City of Philadelphia, is bringing America's 250th birthday to the streets of Philadelphia through the Block Party Bonanza. Presented by Comcast NBCUniversal, Block Party Bonanza is a citywide initiative designed to ensure that all Philadelphians have a chance to be a part of the semiquincentennial celebrations. The summer-long program combines Philly's love of community and celebration with a commitment to civic action and will reach every neighborhood with a spin on a cherished Philly tradition: the block party. Applications are now open for blocks all across Philadelphia to participate.

"Ring It On! and the Block Party Bonanza are about bringing this moment to the people," said **Mayor Chelle L. Parker**. "In Philadelphia, nothing brings neighbors together like a block party. With this initiative, we are supporting 250 blocks across our city so residents can celebrate America's 250th birthday right where they live. Thank you to our partners and sponsors for helping make this possible. From Overbrook to Somerton, from Cedarbrook to Port Richmond, we are making sure every neighborhood can see, feel, and be part of it. That is One Philly."

"It simply wouldn't be summer in Philadelphia without the sights, sounds, and spirit of our neighborhood block parties, and Summer 2026 will be no exception," said **Philadelphia City Council President Kenyatta Johnson (2nd District)**. "Block parties are where community comes alive and the unique culture of every block is on full display. City Council has been proud to support Philadelphia250's resident-focused programming, including Block Party Bonanza, because these celebrations reflect the very heart of our

city. We look forward to seeing residents from every neighborhood take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate America's 250th birthday with their families and neighbors."

As part of the Block Party Bonanza, Philadelphia250 will "2026-ify" 250 block parties across the City of Philadelphia with special "Life, Liberty, and Happiness" kits, echoing the famous line from the Declaration of Independence, and designed to spark celebration and civic pride with giveaways, decorations, games, and activities for all ages. In addition to the kits, each block will receive a \$250 grocery gift card, donated by ShopRite, to purchase food and refreshments. All elements of the Block Party Bonanza will be completely free for residents.

Life, Liberty, and Happiness Kits for 250 Block Parties

- The "Life" kit, sponsored by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), will include items to enhance civic life and encourage healthy living. Contents will include seeds provided by Burpee Seeds, garden planters and supplies, misting fans, cooling towels, recipe cards, family gym memberships provided by the YMCA, children's books featuring democratic themes, and more.
- The "Liberty" kit, sponsored by the Union League, will amplify civic pride and give blocks everything they need to celebrate our country's birthday. These will include pocket Constitutions and Declarations of Independence, patriotic decorations and apparel, American flags, party paper products, red white and blue apparel and accessories, and more.
- The "Happiness" kit, sponsored by KPMG, will support the celebration of freedom and creating joy with fun and games for all ages. Contents include patriotic crafts, bubble wands, super soakers, double dutch ropes, sports equipment, games, toys, sidewalk chalk, items donated by each of Philly's pro sports teams, and more.

Super Block Parties for 25 Most Beautiful Blocks – Sponsored by Jefferson

Every year, block captains organized through the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee, a division of the Department of Sanitation, are recruited to compete for the title of the City's "Most Beautiful Block." In recognition for their efforts, the 25 blocks and Block Captains that participated in the 2025 contest will receive Super Block Parties, sponsored by Jefferson, throughout the summer as part of the Block Party Bonanza. These super-sized block party events will be planned and coordinated by the Philadelphia250 team, with input from the block captains, to provide an unforgettable experience for residents.

Super Block Parties will be customized for each block and will be supported by local vendors with no cost to residents, including DJs, face painters, balloon artists, treat trucks, and other surprise elements. Super Block Party blocks will also receive the three “Life, Liberty, and Happiness” kits and a \$250 gift card, donated by ShopRite.

Please note: Super Block Parties are intended for the residents of the Most Beautiful Blocks and are not public events.

School District of Philadelphia Summer School Block Parties

In addition to 250 traditional block parties across the city, Philadelphia250 will bring the Block Party Bonanza to five schools across the city in partnership with the School District of Philadelphia’s Extended Day/Extended Year program. Students will have the opportunity to take a break from the school day to celebrate the milestone anniversary.

“The block party is a summer milestone for any true Philadelphian. Block Parties bring neighbors together, celebrate what makes our communities special, and create lasting memories,” said **Kathryn Ott Lovell, President and CEO of the Philadelphia Visitor Center and Philadelphia250**. “The Block Party Bonanza takes that tradition and elevates it for our semiquincentennial, giving every neighborhood the chance to be a part of America’s 250th birthday. While other events will welcome a combination of residents and visitors, the Block Party Bonanza is a special celebration created by and for Philadelphians. We are so excited to spread life, liberty, and happiness to every corner of the city this summer!”

“Comcast is proud to support the Block Party Bonanza and help bring the spirit of America’s 250th anniversary into every Philadelphia neighborhood,” said **Dalila Wilson-Scott, EVP and Chief Impact & Inclusion Officer, Comcast Corporation and President, Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation**. “As we celebrate this historic milestone, we’re reminded of the strength, resilience, and vibrancy that defines this city and our nation. We’re thrilled to partner with Philadelphia250 to ensure residents can come together, connect with their neighbors, and experience the joy of this once-in-a-generation celebration.”

Applications Now Open: How to Participate in the Block Party Bonanza

The process to apply for a block party in the City of Philadelphia (through the Streets Department), remains unchanged. Every block party applicant approved by the Streets Department for a block party permit is also eligible to participate in the 2026 Block Party

Bonanza. Approved applicants will receive an email with a link to apply for the Block Party Bonanza through Philadelphia250.

Two hundred and fifty approved block party applicants will be selected for this opportunity, ensuring equitable representation across Philadelphia's ten City Council districts. Blocks will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis based on location and event date between May 23 and October 3, 2026.

Learn more about the application and selection process here:

<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/block-party-bonanza>

Philadelphia 250 will rely on volunteer support to assemble and deliver the Life, Liberty, and Happiness kits throughout the summer. Opportunities to participate in this initiative as a volunteer will be announced at a later date.

Thank You to the Generous Sponsors & Supporters of Block Party Bonanza



Organizations across the City are coming together to celebrate America's 250th and support the Block Party Bonanza:

Presenting Sponsor of the Block Party Bonanza:

Comcast NBCUniversal

Super Block Party Sponsor:

Jefferson

Block Party BBQ Sponsor:

ShopRite

Block Party Bonanza Kit Sponsors:

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (Life)

The Union League (Liberty)

KPMG (Happiness)

The specially designed kit boxes for the celebration have been generously donated by Port Richmond-based Weber Display & Packaging. In addition to the kit sponsors, several organizations will support the initiative with thousands of donated items that will make a program of this scale possible.

The following organizations are donating items in-kind for the Block Party Bonanza kits:

Burpee Seeds

Committee of 70

Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation

Global Philadelphia

Greater Philadelphia YMCA

Philadelphia City Commissioners

Philadelphia 76ers

Philadelphia Eagles

Philadelphia Flyers

Philadelphia Phillies

Philadelphia Soccer 2026

Philadelphia Union

The Food Trust

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About Ring it On!

Ring It On! is a sweeping initiative that puts the city's neighborhoods at the forefront of America's 250th anniversary and celebrations while delivering transformative investments across the city. Ring It On! uplifts and showcases the vibrancy of Philadelphia's communities, cultures, and small businesses through a coordinated series of economic

and cultural investments. These investments focus on three key pillars: Activations, Beautifications, and Celebrations, and aim to boost civic pride, strengthen neighborhood economies, and create lasting impact well beyond 2026.

About Philadelphia250

Philadelphia250, a program of the Philadelphia Visitor Center, is the City of Philadelphia's key implementation partner for 2026. It is designed to uplift civic pride and showcase the vibrancy of Philadelphia's neighborhoods, cultures, and small businesses by engaging and providing meaningful ways for residents and visitors to commemorate the nation's 250th anniversary.

About the Philadelphia Visitor Center:

The Philadelphia Visitor Center connects visitors to memorable, authentic, and fun Philly experiences at its four visitor center locations: 6th and Market, City Hall, LOVE Park, and the Parkway. It facilitates the operation of the Independence Visitor Center, the primary point of orientation for Independence National Historical Park and the official visitor center of the Philadelphia region, including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. PVC also operates the LOVE Park Visitor Center, Parkway Visitor Center, City Hall Visitor Center, and Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop transit service, as well as the private event space, The Liberty View at Independence Visitor Center. For more information, please visit www.phlvisitorcenter.com.

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QUOTE SHEET

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Crystal Jacobs Shipman, Sanitation Commissioner, City of Philadelphia:

"Block Captains are at the crux of neighborhood organizing and gatherings. To include everyday block captains in the city's planning for celebrations marking the nation's 250th birthday speaks to how our city values and embraces the diversity of Philly neighborhoods and represented cultures that block captains embody."

Keith Leaphart, DO, MBA, Executive Vice President, Humana Chief Health Equity and Community Impact Officer, Jefferson:

"At Jefferson, we believe strong neighborhoods are the foundation of a healthy city. We are proud to support the Super Block Parties as part of Philadelphia250's Block Party Bonanza, celebrating the residents who take pride in their blocks and bring their communities together. These gatherings reflect the spirit of connection, service, and civic pride that defines Philadelphia, and we're honored to help create moments of joy and belonging for families across our city during this historic anniversary year."

Sandy Brown, Executive Vice President of Brown's Super Stores:

"At ShopRite, we often say 'We Are Here' for our neighbors, and there is no better way to show that than by supporting the Block Party Bonanza. We are honored to help fuel these neighborhood celebrations by providing ShopRite gift cards for each block party taking place. We're not just providing groceries—we're helping neighbors gather, share a meal, and build community bonds as we celebrate the 250th Anniversary together!"

Peter Grollman, Senior Vice President of External Affairs, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:

“Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia is thrilled to celebrate our nation’s 250th alongside children and families in the neighborhoods where they live. Health starts close to home, and our Life Kits were created to promote play, health and well-being throughout Philadelphia.”

Robert M. Cavalier, President, Union League of Philadelphia:

“The Union League of Philadelphia is proud to support the Liberty kits as part of the Block Party Bonanza in this incredible city we have called home for close to 165 years. By providing pocket Constitutions, Declarations of Independence, and items that help neighbors show their patriotic pride, we, in partnership with our foundation, Founding Forward, invite Philadelphians of all ages to reflect on the ideals that unite us as we all proudly celebrate America’s 250th birthday.”

Dave Greed, Managing Partner, Philadelphia, KPMG LLP:

"Block parties were a cornerstone of the community and my childhood growing up in Northeast Philadelphia. As we mark our nation's 250th, that same community spirit drives our commitment to investing in the neighborhoods where our people live, work, and build for the next generation.”

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