

# Neighborhood Cookouts

Whatever name you use in your part of the country . . . Barbecue, Cookout, BBQ, Pork Roast, Pig Pickin' . . . it's a way to build bridges of friendship with your neighbors this summer! Here's one simple plan that you can follow to spread out the work, cover all the details, and enjoy a great time together!

## **A Week Before**

- Talk enthusiastically to a few key neighbors and enlist their support.
- Take a flyer to each person on your block. (See the example on next page.) Be sure to spend time greeting each neighbor; introduce yourself to any neighbors who do not know you (or who might not remember your name).
- Ask several neighbors close to you if they can provide grills and grilling utensils for this event. If you do not have a table to put food on, ask a neighbor if they have one you can use. Card tables work!

## **Anytime Before**

- Buy sodas/lemonade/iced tea/juice/water bottles, etc., for more people than you think will come. (Choose varieties that you will use if there are leftovers.)
- Buy paper goods (plates, cups, napkins, forks, knives).
- Buy mayonnaise, mustard, catsup, and relish.
- Buy nametags (very important)!

## **On the Day**

- Set up the grills and light them so they are ready by your start time.
- Set up food tables, a jar to collect \$1-2 from each person, name tags and markers, condiments, and paper goods.
- Buy ice and put all drinks in a bucket with ice and water.
- Set out a ping-pong table, bocce ball, bubbles, or other games for kids.

## **During the Cookout**

- Give everyone a nametag; encourage them to include their address under their name.
- After everyone arrives, ask each to introduce him or herself and say how long they've lived in the neighborhood. During dessert, ask everyone to respond to a simple, non-threatening question that each person can answer, such as:
  - What do you appreciate about living in this country? (Good for July 4th)
  - What is the most unusual (or first, or fun, or hard) job you've ever had? (Good for Labor Day)
- Be sure to let anyone "pass" if they are uncomfortable responding.

**SAMPLE FLYER**

YOU Are Invited to a Neighborhood



**WHEN:** 5:30 — 7:30 p.m. on **Labor Day**, Monday, **Sept. 4th**

**WHERE:** Bill & Fran’s and Keith & Barbara’s front lawns: 1234, 1236 Main Drive

**WHAT TO BRING:**

- Meat for yourselves to grill
- Buns for hotdogs and hamburgers (if you want)
- Salad or dessert or whatever else you want to share with 4-5 other people
- \$2 each for soda, condiments, paper goods
- Blankets to sit on, or a table and chairs

**PROVIDED:**

- Cold Soda
- Paper goods (plates, cups, napkins, forks, knives)
- Grills that are ready for cooking
- Condiments (mayonnaise, mustard, catsup, relish)

**RSVP by Sept. 2 (Saturday)**

123-4567 — Bill & Fran

If we can do this, anyone can! We are not party people! But don’t forget to cover this event in prayer, asking God to use the time as an opening to deepen relationships.

— Bill & Fran Goodrich