



2023 PARADE AMBASSADOR MANUAL

OCTOBER 28, 2023 at 7 PM



Welcome to the 2023 Fantasy Fest Parade!

The Fantasy Fest 2023 parade route will be a monumental celebration in honor of the 200th anniversary of the US Navy's presence in Key West! Characters in uniforms and horned creatures will gallivant through the streets in celebration!

To keep all the fun safe and entertaining, it's best to follow the rules and guidelines in this manual.

Though only 20 blocks long, there is room for missteps and there is a constant threat of mishaps on the parade route, so –

Please read and get acquainted with all the information in your
Ambassador Manual!

Overview

The parade begins several hours in the line-up area, before the 7 PM step-off, when the mayhem will fill the streets of Key West. We will meet in the line-up area, have a group picture taken, and then disperse to the parade route.

REMEMBER:

We need to give direction to the participants, but we also want them to entertain. The parade is a moving theatrical show that needs to keep moving in an orderly way. We want the participants to amuse and interact with the crowd safely.

We are all a team, please direct the drivers and walkers politely. Try to use humor to direct and instruct but ask for help from the team captain and/or law enforcement if necessary.

Once on the street, you will be responsible for the pacing of the parade. However, watching people is very important, on either side of the barricades, to keep everyone safe. Not every block is the same, so it is important to stay alert.

When the parade is completed in your block, you may be assigned to another area to help that group of ambassadors.

The parade is overseen and run by the Parade Coordinator, Parade Ambassadors, local enforcement personnel and Team Captains. You, the Parade Ambassadors, help uphold the law of the land for those in tune but off key, who may attempt to beat the odds. Sensible discipline, patience, and good humor are your best tools. When in doubt, talk to your Team Captain or law enforcement.

Ambassador Meeting

Save the Tricks & Treats for Later

Parade Ambassadors are entrusted with the safety of the parade's entrants and spectators. It's a big responsibility. Ambassadors must be sharp, attentive, and quick to react. That means they must be sober for the duration of the parade. Once the parade is over... it's time to release your inner musician and dance or sing to your favorite toons!

The MANDATORY Ambassador Meeting will be Wednesday, October 25th at 5 PM in Opal Key Resort's Truman Ballroom.

Check-in begins at 4:30PM and the meeting will start

promptly at 5PM.

Please arrive early so we can get everyone checked in!



At the meeting, you will meet your Team Captain, receive your parade street assignment, Ambassador t-shirt, and any late-breaking news.

The Police Department, Fire Department, and parade staff will be

PARADE SCHEDULE

4:30pm-5:30 pm	Volunteer Sign In
6:15 pm	Annual Ambassador Photo
6:30 pm	Ambassadors take their positions on the street
7:00 pm	Parade steps off from Truman Annex

Preparing for the Parade

If you do not attend the Mandatory Ambassador Meeting you may not be able to participate as an ambassador.

PLEASE contact parade staff to get instructions if you cannot attend the meeting.

The line-up takes place at the Truman Waterfront area. It is at the far-western end of Southard Street.

Several Ambassadors will be working throughout the day registering parade entrants, lining them up, and signing in the rest of the Ambassadors.

Ambassadors receive their special souvenirs and wristbands at the line-up area.

Ambassadors are scheduled to arrive between 4:30 PM and 5:30 PM.

It takes time to check everyone in and extra help may be needed, so please be on

time or early. If things are going smoothly, you may just be on standby for a while. Once it gets hectic, however, you may be assigned tasks. You may help with lining up entrants, distributing materials, and providing essential services before the parade begins. Again, if you are able to lend a hand, please arrive early.

Stuff to Bring

Bring hand sanitizer, water, sunglasses, Band-Aids, a hat, a pen, and paper.

Whatever you bring should fit in your pockets or a small, wearable bag that allows your hands to be free and does not get in your way.

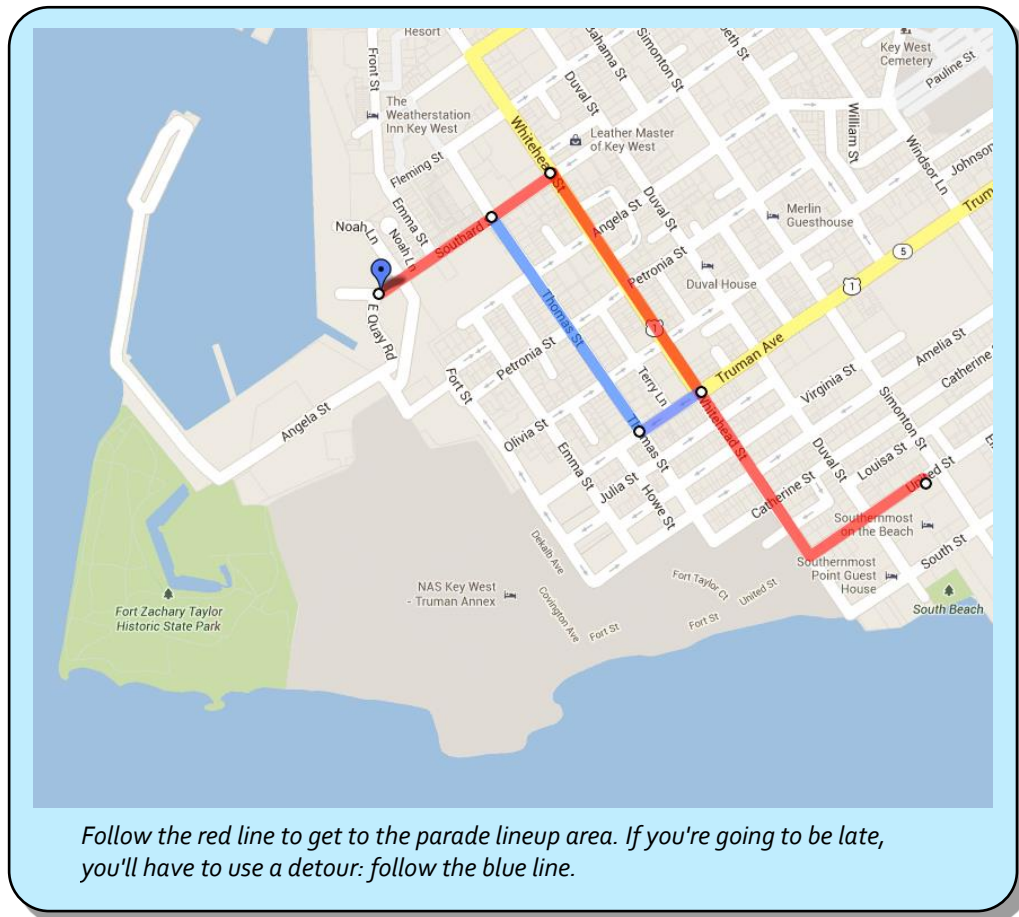
You may wear costume elements, but you must wear your official Ambassador shirt & wristband so they are clearly visible.

On the Day of the Parade

Allow plenty of travel time

Duval Street will be closed for the Promenade, so approach the line-up area via United Street. Turn right on Whitehead Street, then left on Southard and take Southard into the Parade Line-Up Area.

At some point in the afternoon, Whitehead Street will be blocked at Southard and latecomers will have to turn left on Angela, right on Thomas and then left on Southard. Angela is a narrow street, crowded with parked cars and overhanging trees -- another reason we stress to arrive early!



Please try to carpool or bike if possible. We have parking but it is limited. Please help us out by limiting the number of cars we have at the Truman Waterfront.

ALONG THE ROUTE

Flying Objects

The currency of the parade route is the almighty string of beads. Entrants should toss beads deep into the crowd, so spectators aren't tempted to pass through the barricades onto the street. If necessary, remind entrants and spectators about this simple rule.

Beads are the ONLY items they can throw from their float. PERIOD! If you see anything else being thrown, notify law enforcement immediately.

Clothing is NOT Optional!

Although the atmosphere is relaxed, **nudity and lewd acts are not allowed**. This is a costume-and-entertainment parade, so entrants are expected to be in costumes!

NOTE: Body paint does not count as a costume.

Simulated lewd acts are still considered lewd acts and can lead to an entrant's removal from the route. If you see nudity or lewd acts, notify that float's monitors immediately! Ask them to have their group members cover up or stop their behavior. If they do not comply, please take note of their parade number and the current location then contact your TEAM CAPTAIN who will be in touch with the Parade Coordinator over the radio for further instructions.

Wristbands

All participants in the parade are required to have wristbands. If you have people entering the parade without wristbands, ask law enforcement to help usher them back off the street.

Rules of the Route

One Way Passage



Travel in the parade route is ONE WAY! Sometimes parade participants will get to the end of the parade (United Street) and then turn around and want to walk back down the route on the inside of the barricades. This causes congestion at the end of the parade and is problematic for spectators. Ambassadors in the 1100 & 1200 blocks should be especially vigilant.

Please direct these people off the parade route even if they're wearing a wristband. If they want to get to Lower Duval, they need to do so on the other side of the barricades.

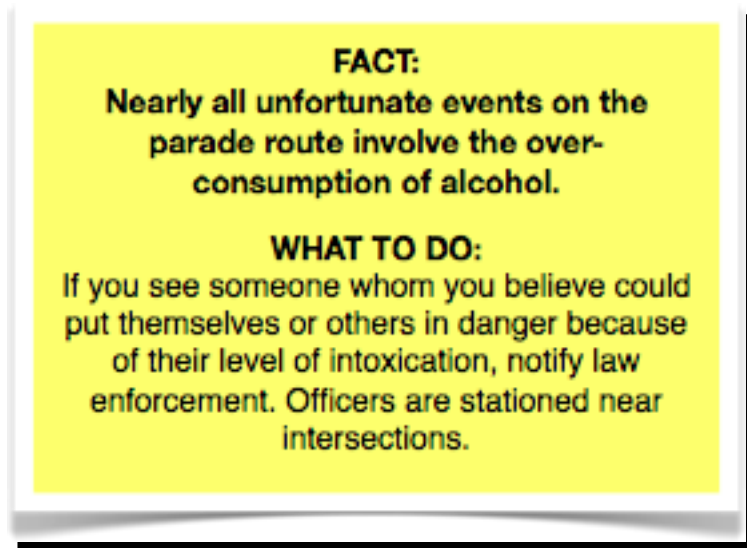
If they are uncooperative, try to find out what group they are associated with and note their costuming or line-up number. Let Parade Staff know after the parade and they will be suspended next year.

Teamwork

Team captains and their teams who start at the beginning of the parade route may be asked to move to another position along the route to help after the parade has passed their initial assignment. (If you are willing to move to another assignment during the parade, please notify parade coordinator Beth Moyes).

Protocols

Introduce yourself to the law enforcement officers near you on the parade route so they will know you if you need them later. Let them know you are the official Parade Ambassador for that block and that you are there to help with parade pacing. Many of the officers are from other areas of the county or state and may not be familiar with the parade, the ambassadors, or the festival in general, so exchange a little information.



Your Crowd

Get to know your section of the crowd before the parade arrives. When you establish a rapport, you can ask them to help you keep things orderly later. Be sure to let them know how to recognize Parade Ambassadors (unique shirts and medallions) and try to have fun with them. Just don't forget that keeping an eye on the parade is job #1

Problem People

Not all spectators are created equal. If you have a serious problem with someone that you can't resolve, STEP BACK! Note the location. Inform the nearest police officer and ask him or her to deal with it. You are a volunteer and do not need to put yourself in harm's way. Let law enforcement take care of it!

Mind the Gap

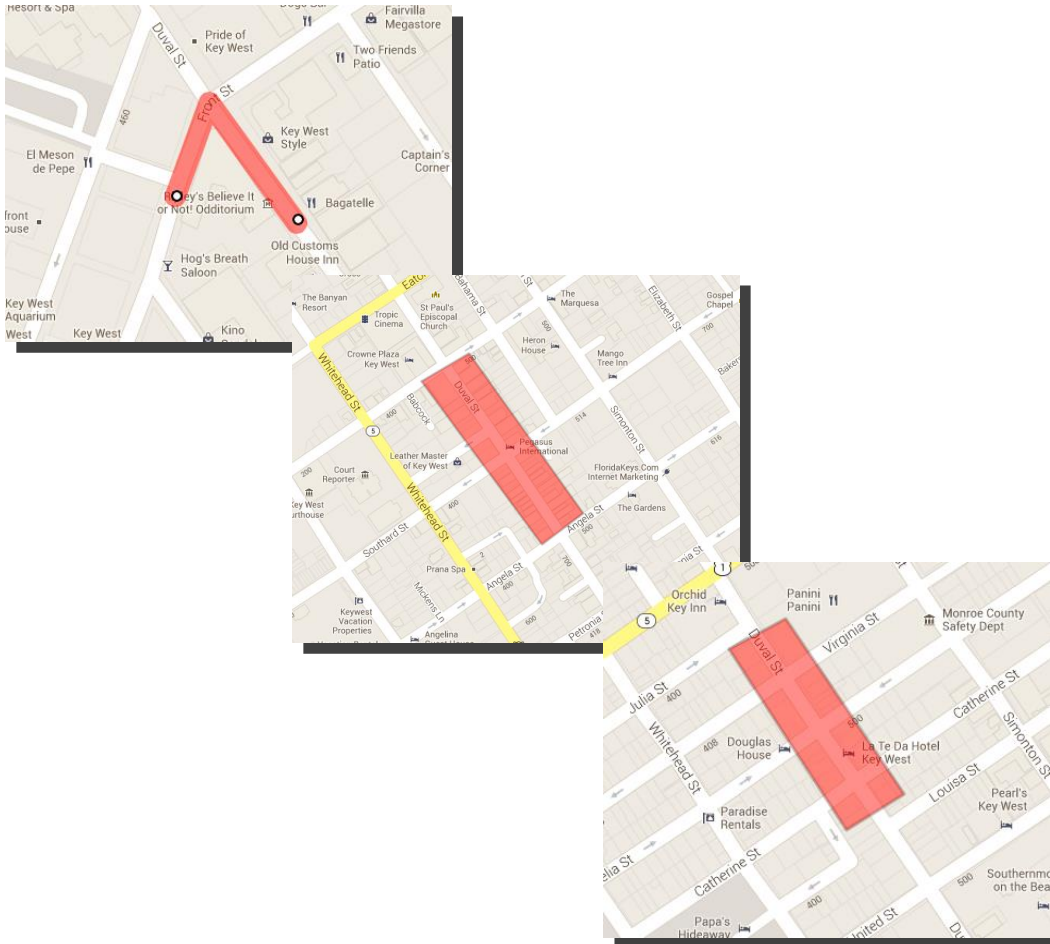
Stay alert to the progress of the parade. When you see a gap developing, take action.

The parade is about entertaining the spectators.

Dead space doesn't cut it.

Connect with the driver of the entrant in front of the gap and slow them down. If you are closer to the trailing edge of the gap, pace them so they are equal distance from what is in front of them and what is behind them. Pace the drivers by putting your hand on their window and walk with them until the pacing is resolved.

Gaps tend to develop in the 100 block of Duval (after the Wicked Turn), in the 500 and 600 blocks (after the Media Stand) and in the 1100 block (after the Judges stand).



Ambassadors in those areas need to be alert for gaps.

You are a team! Work together! Captains need to notify upcoming blocks of possible gaps especially if there is a breakdown or other emergency. Communication is key!

MEDIA & JUDGES STAND

The spawning ground for gaps.

Entrants will be stopped for photos at the media stand (Fleming & Duval). Their time there could be 30 seconds up to a minute and a half. Ambassadors in the 400 block need to let entrants know to get on the driver's side of the float in order to get the best photos. Ambassadors in the 500 block need to pace vehicles appropriately by watching how long the Media Stand is holding the floats.

Entrants may perform a short (1 minute or less) skit or dance for the judges' stand (Truman & Duval). Ambassadors in the block prior will alert the groups that the performance area is coming up. Ambassadors just beyond the judges' stand will pace the groups to avoid gaps in the parade. Keep the units evenly spaced. Slowing down the units ahead of the gap works better than speeding up the ones behind. Ambassadors should approach the driver of the units behind a gap, put your hand on the windowsill and walk them along so they are equidistant from the group in front of them and behind them.

OUR GOAL IS TO KEEP THE PARADE MOVING AT A GOOD PACE!

Walking Groups

Large walking groups tend to straggle. Walking groups need to be sure NOT to get too close or too far from other groups. As an Ambassador, it is important that you make sure each walking group displays its number! Most of them have monitors that should keep them together. If the monitors are not pacing the group well, HELP THEM!

Small walking groups do not need their monitors in the official shirts, but they need to be aware of their surroundings and listen to the directions from the Ambassadors.

Questions?

The Parade Coordinator, Liz Love is available before the day of the Parade at the office: (305) 295-9112 cell: (479) 200-4689
or parade@fantasyfest.com