

Two unions enter floats in Starlight Parade

This year's Portland Rose Festival Starlight Parade will have entries sponsored by two unions: the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) and the American Federation of State County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

NALC Branch 82's entry is a "haunted post office" float. Oregon AFSCME's is a light-filled float with a screen projector depicting pictures of members, followed by a marching unit.

NALC Branch 82 has taken part in the Starlight Parade since at least 1989, says Sue Canfield, the union's parade coordinator. This year, they'll be entry number 45, about mid-way through the parade, just after the Evergreen High School Marching Band and West Coast Extreme All-Star Cheerleading.

Canfield said 25 letter carriers will march with the union's banner, wearing their U.S. Postal Service uniforms, but done up to look like vampires. Six others costumed as werewolves and vampires will ride the float.

The staging area for the NALC Branch 82 contingent will be Northwest Davis between Park and Ninth Avenue.

"It's good publicity for both the union and for the post office," Canfield said. "We always get a warm welcome from the public."

Oregon AFSCME, participating in the parade for the first time, will showcase the work their members do in the community, said organizer Rodney McCambridge.

"We want to show folks, 'We're your neighbors. These are the jobs we do,'" McCambridge said.

About 60 AFSCME members from around the state are expected, including Oregon Health & Science University employees in scrubs, uniformed corrections officers, and road crew workers. They'll wear green AFSCME T-shirts, and march with their union banners behind a float that projects pictures of AFSCME members doing their jobs — such as tailpipe inspectors, fire marshals, and parking meter readers.

The AFSCME contingent will be entry numbers 98 and 99 in the parade, toward the tail end, just after the Clackamas High School Marching Band and the Sunshine Division Portland Police Bureau float.

Thanks to members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, AFSCME has the use of a garage at Port of Portland Terminal 2 to construct the float. The AFSCME contingent will gather at Northwest Ninth and Glisan.

Both groups will assemble in their staging areas about 6 p.m., Saturday, June 5. The parade, which this year is known as PGE/SOLV Starlight Parade, starts at 8:30 and winds through downtown Portland. It will also be broadcast live on KGW NewsChannel 8 from 9 to 11 p.m.

The Rose Festival Starlight Parade is a light-hearted night-time alternative to the bigger Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade. It is preceded by the Starlight Run, a 5k downtown race by about 4,000 runners, many in individual and group costumes.

NW labor history group to convene in Portland June 11-13

"The Union Makes Us Strong: Inspiration, Guidance, and Hope During Hard Times" is the theme of the 42nd annual Pacific Northwest Labor Association conference, June 11-13, at the downtown Portland campus of the University of Oregon, 70 NW Couch Street.

The conference opens with a plenary session at 7 p.m., June 11. An awards banquet is slated for Saturday, June 12, at 6:30 p.m.

The keynote speaker Saturday morning is Kim Bob, executive director of Interfaith Worker Justice. Plenary sessions will include Margaret Hallock of the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics; Chuck Sheketoff of Oregon Center for Public Policy; Tom Chamberlain, president of the Oregon AFL-CIO; Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council; Oregon State Sen. Diane Rosenbaum, and others.

Panels and workshops also are planned.

For a complete conference schedule, log on to <http://www3.telus.net/robbgibbs/PNLHA>.

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