LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE

Saturday, December 5, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Enclosed In This Information Packet:

- Lights Fantastic® Parade Guidelines
- Waiver & Release Form
- Parade Registration
- Super Float Instructions

ALL FORMS DUE NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 20, 2026 PLEASE

The Lights Fantastic® Committee is looking forward to receiving your registration(s) and working with you this year as we present the 35th Annual Lights Fantastic® Parade. With your participation, we hope to bring another exciting and successful event to our community and surrounding region. Please read through your packet of information. This packet will explain how to participate in the parade, what the acceptable standards for the parade are and when registration forms must be received in order to participate.

Both the Parade Registration Form and the Waiver & Release Form must be filled out, signed and received by the registration deadline. If the Waiver & Release form is not completed your registration form will be returned.

We have also enclosed a Description Sheet; we use this information at the main stage to announce your float. **Websites, and phone numbers will not be read. PLEASE FILL OUT COMPLETELY.**

Specific information regarding the December 5th parade will be sent to you and/or your organization following the November 20th registration deadline for the parade. Entry numbers will be provided on the day of the parade when you arrive.

Note: Pedestrian units who registered by the due date are generally placed near the front of the parade.

Late entries of any kind may be placed near the end of the parade.

On behalf of the Lights Fantastic® Planning Committee, we look forward to another wonderful parade.

Sincerely,

Lights Fantastic® Planning Committee

Email: lightsfantasticparade@gmail.com

35th *Annual LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE*

2026 PARADE GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

** NO REGISTRATION FEES REQUIRED **

FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

Dates to Know: Parade Registration Deadline 11/20/2026

Parade: Saturday, December 5, 2026 at 6:00PM

GUIDELINES FOR FLOATS

- **ALL UNITS MUST USE CREATIVE LIGHTING.**
- **ALL UNITS MUST BE DECORATED WITH A MINIMUM of 5,000 LIGHTS. Units that do not meet this requirement may be turned away at the time of the parade.**
- A "Holiday/Fantastic lights" theme is **preferred.**
- Floats MUST NOT exceed 13' 6" in height (measure from ground level.)
- If using a generator:
  - carry extra fuel
  - an approved 5 pound ABC Fire Extinguisher is required
  - do not attempt to refuel while your float is in motion/during the parade.
- A fire marshal will inspect all entries using a generator. Those not complying with the safety precautions will not be allowed in the parade.
- Trailers must be attached to the pulling vehicle in a legally acceptable manner.
- Glow Sticks and battery operated lights are *discouraged* as the main source for lights on floats.

GUIDELINES FOR MARCHING BANDS

- **ALL UNITS MUST USE CREATIVE LIGHTING, SUCH AS BATTERY OPERATED LIGHTS. (Glow sticks are discouraged.)**
- Marching bands should expect to perform **continuously without stopping their forward motion.**
- Musical performances should continue all the way around Town Square.

GUIDELINES FOR PEDESTRIAN UNITS

- **ALL UNITS MUST USE CREATIVE LIGHTING, SUCH AS BATTERY OPERATED LIGHTS. (Glow sticks are discouraged.)**
- ALL PEDESTRIAN UNITS should expect **to perform continuously without stopping their forward motion.**
- Pedestrian units are **encouraged to walk in an organized fashion**. This allows for an even flow of the parade helping to avoid wide gaps between entries.
- Youth organizations are encouraged to participate. **Please consider using a lighted float to carry children because of the length of the parade route. Young Children usually cannot walk the distance of the parade.**

GUIDELINES FOR ANIMAL UNITS

- **No Animal units will be allowed in the Lights Fantastic Parade**

GUIDELINES/CHECKLIST FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

No "Santa Claus" Entries

- **ABSOLUTELY NO USE OF EITHER LIVE OR REPESENTATIONS OF SANTA OR MRS. CLAUS**

NO THROWING OF GOODIES/GIVEAWAYS/HANDOUTS

- Entries are not permitted to throw or in any way distribute candy, literature, or any other items or "goodies" from a parade unit or from participants accompanying or on a unit.

Signage

- All entries are required to have a well-lighted sign with the name of your business/organization

Fire Extinguisher

- Approved 5-pound ABC extinguisher is required for any entry using gasoline/flammable substances.

Sound System

- Entries with sound systems must mark **"yes"** on the registration form.
- MUSIC MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE HOLIDAY THEME.
- Be sure your sound system can be heard well over the noise of the parade.

Lineup

- All entries will receive further instructions concerning lineup for parade day **in late November.**
- All entries need to give an ACCURATE description and length on the registration form. (Floats with towing vehicles – include the total length.)

Recognition rather than Judging

- NO ENTRY will be JUDGED. All entries receive a recognition award at the reviewing stand.

Parking

- Parking for the parade participants will be available at designated locations TBA in November.

End of Parade

- The parade ends on Washington Street south of Main Street (near the Consume Cannabis Co).
- A map of the parade route will be sent with your parade packet information in November.
- Units may not leave the parade route until reaching this traffic safety point.

Insurance

- We encourage units participating in the parade to check into insurance implications related to your entry's participation. LIGHTS FANTASTIC® DOES NOT PROVIDE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR PARTICIPANTS.

Political Parties or Candidates

- NO ENTRIES representing political parties or candidates will be accepted.

All Requests for exceptions to the rules or line up requests MUST be made to and APPROVED BY the Staging Coordinator. Your request may not be accommodated without approval.

PARADE REGISTRATION FORM
Registration Deadline: November 20, 2026
Parade Date: December 5, 2026

Mail Completed Forms to:
Lights Fantastic® Parade
C/O Carbondale Park District
PO Box 1326
Carbondale, IL 62903

CONTACT PERSON (S) *Please Print or Type Form*

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: DAY: _____ EVENING: _____

E-MAIL: _____ FAX: _____

NAME(S) OF YOUR ORGANIZATION: _____
Briefly state the nature and purpose of your organization:

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR 2026 PARADE ENTRY

[Attached is a Description Sheet to be used to fully describe your entry in detail. This is essential for planning advance publicity/public address announcing. Be complete, please.]

☐ Float ☐ Pedestrian Unit ☐ Antique/ Novelty Vehicle

Band: ☐ Univ. ☐ High School ☐ Jr. H.S. (Middle School) ☐ High School/Jr. H.S. Combo

Entry Title: _____

Theme of Entry (if any): _____

Height: _____ feet
[must not exceed 13'6" from ground level]

Length: _____ feet
[include towing vehicle, if any]

Total Number of Lights: _____ [be as accurate as possible].

Will you use a sound system? ☐ Yes ☐ No

The WAIVER & RELEASE FORM must be completed, signed and dated or registration form will be denied and returned to contact person.

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

"As a participant in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE, the undersigned recognizes and acknowledges that there are certain risks of personal injury, and the undersigned, individually and as agent for all who are involved with this particular entry, agrees to assume the full risk of any injuries, including death, damages or loss which may be sustained as a result of participation in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE."

"The undersigned, individually and as agent for all who are involved with this particular entry, agrees to waive and relinquish all claims the undersigned may have a result of participating in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE against the Carbondale Park District, the Carbondale Park District Commissioners, the Lights Fantastic® Committee, the City of Carbondale and their respective officers, agents, servants and employees; and does hereby fully release and discharge the Carbondale Park District, the Carbondale Park District Commissioners, the Lights Fantastic® Committee, Carbondale Tourism, the City of Carbondale and their respective officers, agents, servants and employees from any and all claims from injuries, including death, damages or loss which the undersigned may have or which may accrue to the undersigned on account of participating in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE."

"The undersigned, individually and as agent for all who are involved with this particular entry, further agree to indemnify and hold harmless and defend the Carbondale Park District, the Carbondale Park District Commissioners, the Lights Fantastic® Committee, the City of Carbondale and their respective officers, agents, servants and employees from any and all damages and losses sustained by the undersigned or anyone involved with this particular entry and arising out of, connected with, or in any way associated with participating in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE."

This Waiver and Release has been thoroughly read and understood and is given in consideration of the privilege to participate in the LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE. This Waiver and Release has been executed by the undersigned, which has the authority to represent and bind all involved with this particular entry.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2026

_____

Individually and as authorized agent for:

_____

(Print Name of Organization)

By:_____

Entry Description Sheet

This form is divided into two categories. The first is the physical description of the entry: design, lighting, colors, objects, people, music, and so forth.
The second section is space for you to help us best describe your entry as it passes the announcing platform.

SECTION 1: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF ENTRY.

SECTION 2: Promotional Information for public announcement during the parade. In 50 words or less, please use this space to best promote your entry. We reserve the right to edit.

35th Annual LIGHTS FANTASTIC® PARADE
2026 PARADE GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

COMMERCIAL FLOAT ENTRIES

Guidelines for Commercial Floats.
All commercial business entries are asked to keep in mind that this is a festive holiday parade and that designs must adhere to the celebration of the event first and business advertising second.

- All floats must have a **minimum of 5,000 lights. Units that do not meet this requirement may be turned away at the time of the parade.**
- Commercial vehicles are not permitted as entries (including such vehicles mounted on floats), **consistent with the holiday/festive lighted theme**. Certain types of vehicles are accepted; registered antique vehicles, support vehicles for pedestrian units, and novelty vehicles (e.g. Shrine Motor Patrol). However, if you have an especially unique idea that is **consistent with the holiday/festive lighted theme** of the parade, please contact Lights Fantastic, lightsfantasticparade@gmail.com
- **Must not exceed 13' 6" in height** (measurement from ground level).
- **Commercial Message** (e.g. product or business name) **cannot exceed more than 25%** of the entire float design.
- All Commercial Float entries must adhere to the general participant guidelines, including the restriction on representing Santa Claus in any form on the float.
- **Complete Entry Description Sheet in Detail.** Entries that do not comply with these guidelines may be prohibited from participating in this or subsequent parades.

Questions? Please direct questions about the Commercial Float Guidelines for the 33rd Annual Lights Fantastic® Parade to lightsfantasticparade@gmail.com

SUPER FLOAT ENTRIES

Make your entry stand out from the crowd. Be a SUPER FLOAT!
By being a SUPER FLOAT ENTRY, your business or organization receives:

- Special recognition at the announcing stand.
- Extra coverage in promotional spots and announcements.
- A special award on parade night.

To qualify as a SUPER FLOAT your entry needs to have 10,000 lights or more.
Just write the total number of lights, as accurately as possible, on the Parade Registration Form and your entry will be identified as a Super Float!