64th Annual

13967 Marquesas Way, #50
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
mdrboatparade@gmail.com
mdrboatparade.org
#mdrboatparade
501(c)6 non-profit

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PLEASE READ
NOTICE FROM
US COAST GUARD
ATTACHED

2026

Dear Boat Parade Entrant,

Thank you for entering the 64th Annual Holiday Boat Parade. Please find all information necessary to compete in the Boat Parade.

Please fill out the **BOAT THEME and DESCRIPTION** forms. Our announcers and media folks need info on your boat.

A **MANDATORY** Parade Skipper's meeting will be held on Saturday, December 12th , at 9:00 a.m. at the Burton Chace Park Community Center at 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey. **PLEASE NOTE** each entrant will receive two (2) ID numbers for placement on your vessel. Numbers need to be returned at the Awards's Ceremony on Saturday evening. Please follow guidelines for **lighting** and **placement** of numbers so we can identify and photograph your entry.

In order to recognize the extraordinary work you have done on decorating your boat, photo slide presentation and awards will be presented at an Awards Ceremony at Pacific Mariners Yacht Club located at 13915 Panay Way, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 at 8:30 pm after parade. Please pick up wrist bands at the skippers meeting for two entries to the Awards Ceremony.

We look forward to having a wonderful Holiday Boat Parade. Please visit the Boat Parade web site at **mdrboatparade.org** for any updates or additional information. Also, follow us on all our social media.

Thank you,

Diane

Diane Barretti
Holiday Boat Parade Entry Chairperson

Holiday Boat Parades

December 2026

USCG Sector LA/LB Inspections Division

The holiday boat parade season is upon us. People will be flocking to the waterfront to look at lights and celebrate the holidays. Passenger vessels as well as private vessels will be going out on evening excursions and joining boat parades. As in past years, Coast Guard Marine Inspectors will be conducting additional inspections of vessels involved in the parades and evening trips. Here are a few pointers and other things that everyone should be aware of to minimize impact on safe and legal operations.

Pointers on safety and legal operations:

General safety hazards for ALL boat operators:

- Illegal charters
- Overloaded or unsafe electrical systems due to Holiday lights
- Too many passengers – affect stability of vessel – stay within maximum capacity
- Recreational boats cannot charge passengers to board - illegal and will be fined

Spot checks may be conducted on certified T-boats:

- Adequate number of lifejackets
- Merchant mariner licenses onboard
- Adequate number of crewmembers
- Compliance with vessel security plans

Special local regulations:

- All persons and/or vessels not registered with the sponsor as participants or official patrol vessels are considered spectators.
- No spectators shall anchor, block, loiter in, or impede the through transit of participants or official patrol vessels in the regulated area during the effective dates and times, unless cleared for such entry by or through an official patrol vessel.

Goal: Safe operation for holiday boat season. Please assist any Coast Guard inspector walking the docks. Inspections will be done well before boarding passengers or getting underway. Any help you provide our inspectors who are just trying to do their job is appreciated.

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HOLIDAY BOAT PARADE 2026

MANDATORY

SKIPPER'S MEETING

Meeting : Saturday, December 12th, 2026

Burton Chace Park Community Center
13650 Mindanao Way
Marina del Rey, CA

For:

- Parade instructions and line-up procedures
- Two (2) ID numbers for your vessel will be given to each boat entrant
- Two (2) wrist bands for entry to Awards Ceremony

Boat Name: _____

Entry # _____

This is your Entry # for the Parade. Please bring this with you to this Skipper's meeting.

64th Annual 2026

BOAT THEME AND DESCRIPTION

13967 Marquesas Way, #50
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Our theme this year is

"Hollywood Under The Stars"

To assist us and the media in identifying your boat in the Boat Parade, please fill out this description of you decorations, your theme and any additional information about your boat and crew. Please do so before December 12th, by emailing to: entry@mdrboatparade.org.

Entry #_____

Boat Name_____

Boat Theme _____

_____

Power _____ Sail _____ Electric _____ Other _____

Size (Length Over All)_____

Charter_____Corp_____Yacht Club_____Individual_____Organization_____

Music_____Live Band_____Vocals/Singers_____Video Projection_____

Animation_____

Description of Boat Decorations _____

_____

Special Features _____

_____

64th Annual 2026

PARADE ENTRANT SKIPPER'S INSTRUCTIONS

SKIPPER'S MEETING: MANDATORY MEETING FOR ALL ENTRANTS! Saturday, December 12th, at 9:00 a.m. at Burton Chace Park Community Center located at 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey. You will receive a final briefing and instructions with any updated changes.

ID NUMBERS: Each entrant will receive two (2) ID numbers for your boat. Place numbers on your STARBOARD side, one at BOW, one MID SHIP. ID numbers MUST be lit for judging identification. Numbers in illuminated lights (rope lights) are acceptable. **If numbers are not properly lit and placed, we will not be able to photograph your entry.** PLEASE NOTE all two (2) numbers must be returned at the Awards Ceremony or entrant will be charged a replacement fee. If not returned at Awards Ceremony please contact us via email: mdrboatparade@gmail.com for more info.

COMMUNICATIONS: All Boat Parade Skipper's are requested to monitor **VHF CHANNEL 68** for immediate instruction or assistance throughout the parade.

PARADE INSTRUCTIONS: Enter channel by 5:45 p.m. Fall in line as you enter. Enter with your LIGHTS ON! If you experience problems, go to the center of the Parade route and contact the operations boat. We will have chase boats available to assist you. Parade will officially terminate at 8:00 PM at which time the Marina will be open to all traffic.

5:45 pm Lightshow begins and 6:00 pm Parade starts. All boats sound blasts on whistles and or horns. Keep moving at 4 knots. Make at least 3 complete laps. DO NOT BUNCH UP! KEEP THE LINE MOVING! Pass slower boats to their port (your starboard). All turns must be made in **FRONT** of stake boats positioned at north and south ends of channel. NOTE: All motorized vessels must have reverse gear.

MARINA SAFETY: The Sheriff's Harbor Patrol will be in charge of boat traffic and safety during the Parade. Requests for their assistance are to be directed to the water operations vessel command post on Channel 68.

MARINA TRAFFIC: Vessels not officially in the Parade requiring transit through the Marina during the Parade will require a Sheriff's Harbor Patrol escort.

MARINA SECURITY: The Sheriff Harbor Patrol and or Coast Guard may do random security checks on vessels.

FINALE: After making at least 3 complete laps, continue in line until you reach your own basin before returning to your slip. PLEASE DO NOT CROSS THE MAIN CHANNEL, (unless cleared with the operations boat).

AWARDS CEREMONY: Will be at Pacific Mariners Yacht Club located at 13915 Panay Way, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 at 8:30 pm after parade. Please pick up wrist bands at the skippers meeting for two entries to the Awards Ceremony.

AS ALWAYS, OUR SUCCESS IN THIS EVENT REQUIRES EACH OF US TO ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE ROAD AND SAFETY FIRST IS THE PLEDGE. DURING THE EVENT THE MARINA IS NOT "CLOSED" TO BOAT TRAFFIC BUT MOVEMENT IS "RESTRICTED". MOVEMENT FOR VESSELS OTHER THAN PARADE PARTICIPANTS REQUIRE A SHERIFF'S HARBOR PATROL ESCORT.

Boat Parade Decoration Guide

Music and Lights are very important

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parade I.D. numbers MUST be displayed on your STARBOARD side. One at BOW and one MID SHIP, and well-lighted for judging and emergency identification. If numbers are not properly lit and well placed, we will not be able to photograph your entry.

All boats must be under auxiliary power for circling the parade route. Average speed is 4 to 5 knots. The harbor will be under restricted usage the afternoon and evening of the parade, and spectator craft will not be permitted in the parade area. Non-parade vessels entering and leaving the harbor during these hours are requested to contact the Harbor Master for escort.

Towing is permitted **ONLY** with prior approval of the Parade Committee. Tows must be well-lighted and within about 10 feet of the mothership.

No fireworks, rockets or flares are allowed. Inland Rules of Road are in force, and all rules and regulations of the U.S. Coast Guard and Harbor Master must be followed.

Parade line formation will be under the direction of the Parade Committee Boats. Every Parade participant should practice steerageway at night before the evening of the Parade to familiarize himself/herself with boat movement in darkness.

Running lights must be operative and visible. Procedures regarding safety and possible emergencies for hazards will be covered at the Skippers Meeting.

JUDGING:

Your boat will be judged from the **STARBOARD** side only. Judges will be stationed at a number of sites around the Parade route. This should encourage the entrants to stay close to the shore and provide a uniform level of entertainment for the entire Parade route. Your Parade I.D. numbers must be well lighted for the judges. Since the boat entrants pass the judging sites several times during the course of the Parade, judges will award points each time, which will be averaged later.

DESIGN:

A design is the first step in successful decorating. Keep the design simple, concentrating on the basic theme you select. A good single idea, effectively carried out, will have the most impact on judges and spectators. Many colors of lights can be used but a single color or white is most effective. Consider the number of crew aboard, and make their costuming an integral part of your design. Costumes can be rented, or made simply of muslin or cotton, and painted. All members dressed in a single color, white or black, and use accessory items like hats, vests, large ties, belts, etc..to match your theme.

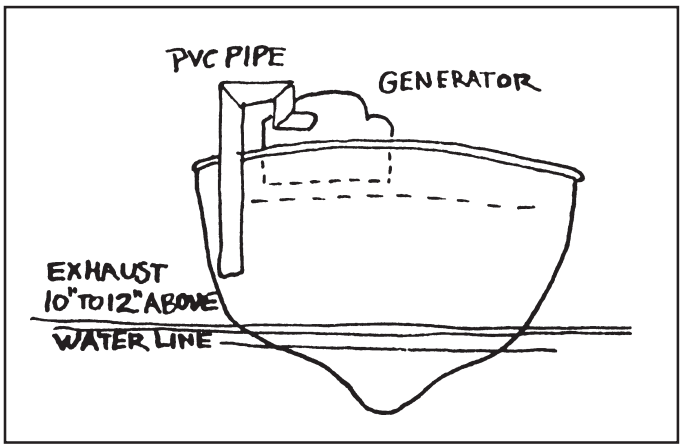
DECORATIONS:

Decorations don't have to cost a lot but they must be fireproof or fire-retardant. Although plywood is best, heavy cardboard reinforced with wood stringers, or foamcore can be used for signs, props or backgrounds. They can be painted with non-soluble paints, glittered, or covered with decorative sheeting, aluminum foil, mylar or plastic sheets. Under good floodlights, these can look like a million. Large flat areas should have holes or flaps cut in them so they do not act as sails. Sailboats can make use of their rigging to haul displays, light strings aloft. You may want to have 25' to 50' extension cords, power surge cords, duct tape, nylon line and floodlights on board.

SAFETY TIPS:

Check your boat's ballast weight when fully decorated and with crew aboard and balance accordingly. The use of a walkie-talkie is advisable from deck to skipper, the noise of engine, generator and music make it nearly impossible to be heard. Have one person in charge of the CO2 fire extinguisher by the power plant.

GENERATORS:

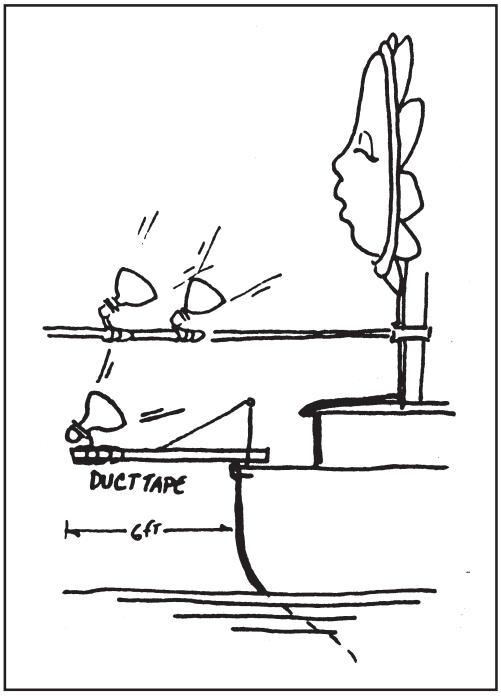


Determine how large a generator you will need. Don't underestimate the wattage, as your lights will be dim. Rentals are available, pay in advance if necessary to reserve yours. Mount the Generator securely on an open deck area where an exhaust extender hose can go over the side away from decorations. The generator can be placed on a piece of carpet and held down with 2x4s to help deaden the noise.

Pre-measure the fuel for the generator, check with your manual to find out how much gas it holds, and how much juice it puts out. Have 3 or 4 gas cans ready with the pre-measured amount of gas in each, so that there will be no spillage while refilling during the parade. Use 4 people to refill the generator while underway in the parade: one to hold the funnel, another to pour the PRE-MEASURED amount into the generator, the fourth to carry the CO2 extinguisher. REMEMBER THAT GASOLINE CAN EASILY IGNITE ON THE OUTSIDE OF A HOT GENERATOR. If batteries are used, stow them, so nothing can be dripped on them to cause sparks and a fire.

LIGHTING:

Be sure that your hard work and care with props and signs are visible by using flood or spotlights placed out from the side of the boat. 2x2s can be used as outriggers to carry flood secured at one end, and extended approximate 6ft from the hull. Strings of lights of many colors can be exciting, but colors restricted to a specific plan, or a single color are most effective. Twinkling or "tracer" lights can be knockouts. Strings of lights and other decorations can be easily and safely fastened to rails, deck fittings, etc..Using plastic garbage bag ties. Be sure that none of your lights shine directly on the skipper. The glare might make it difficult to see other boats.



SPECIAL EFFECTS:

Special effects and animation can be as varied as your budget, but you might consider as useful to your design the following: balloons, color wheels for spots, fog machines, bubble machines. Some animation can be effective without motors or other power drains. Consider "kid power", a crew member pulling a rope, block and tackle, lifting a lever, turning a crank that moves props or rotates lights.

MUSIC:

Music can be an important part of your overall presentation. Carefully pick music to fit your theme and mood. Place your speakers on the starboard side, where your audience will be.

BOAT PARADE “DO’S AND DONT’S”

64th Annual 2026

“ DO’S ”

HOW TO IMPRESS A JUDGE

1. **BE DIFFERENT**
   DO - Use light patterns other than just lining your rails
   DO - Use Animation

2. **BE COLORFUL**
   DO - Deck displays and light with a lot of variety and color that demand attention
   DO - One, two or even three colors in specific patterns can be very attractive

3. **BE BRIGHT**
   DO - The more lights, the better the impression
   DO - Light the objects on your boat, you want to be seen from a distance

4. **BE VISIBLE**
   DO - Can your decorations be seen clearly from 300 to 400 feet?
   DO - Make things BIG. Is your ID number on the starboard bow?

“ DONT’S ”

1. **DON’T PASS OTHER BOATS** *“...we had 2, 3 and even 4 boats abreast go by us...”*
   - #1 boat (closest to the judges) get the most attention
   - #2 boat gets some attention
   - #3 boat may be ignored
   - #4 boat WILL be ignored

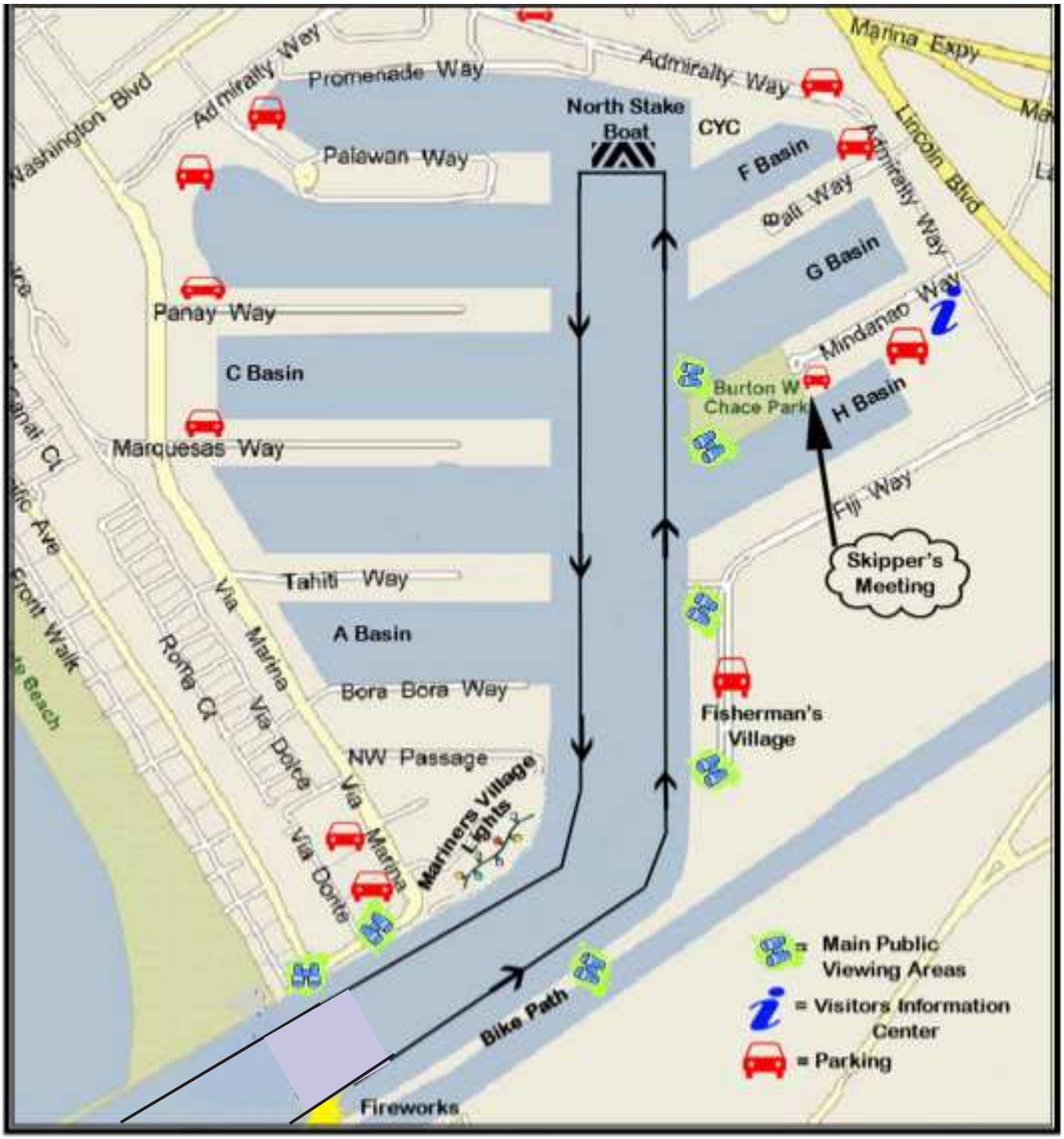
2. **DON’T MAKE YOUR PARADE NUMBER HARD TO FIND**
   - We do not judge you until we find your number
   - If we see your number as you approach, we have sufficient time to look you over
   - Numbers mounted on the bridge or salon windows are usually found when the boat is about 10 degrees past us
   - Many bow numbers fold in half because of the wind, and are not readable
   - Many times we can only identify the boat by the stern number. In those cases, the boat is judged only from the stern

3. **DON’T TRAVEL AT 8 + KNOTS**
   - By the time we see and record your number, you are gone
   - We do not see details of your decorations

4. **DON’T TRAVEL IN THE CENTER OF THE CHANNEL**
   - The center is 500 feet from the seawall. You are very difficult and often impossible to see. Your numbers are not visible, so you are not judged.

5. **DON’T FOLLOW THE BOAT IN FRONT OF YOU REAL CLOSE**
   - The front boat gets most of the attention
   - 2nd boat gets some attention
   - 3rd boat gets about as much attention as a boat going 9 knots

Marina del Rey Holiday Boat Parade Route
mdrboatparade.org





CAPTAINS

- **Above chart is not for navigation. Please watch for NO SAIL and NO WAKE buoys.**
- **Do not sail around Stake Boats. Sail as diagramed, to the inside.**
- **Do not cut your route short, follow too close or pass the boat ahead of you. You may not be seen by the judges on shore or on the boats. Stay out of the center channel.**
- **People drive long distances to see your boats. . .slow down and let them enjoy. People will line the whole route.**
- **Stake Boat Locations: North Stake Boat; South Stake Boat at the Marina Breakwater.**