

SHENANDOAH APPLE BLOSSOM FESTIVAL®
Grand Feature Parade Float Regulations for 2026

Within the context of the following information, the term “Festival” refers to the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival®, Inc. Violations of the following regulations may result in disqualification and removal of the float from the parade by Parade Marshals who are members of the Winchester Host Lions Club. ***The Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival® reserves the right to reject any application that does not fit the needs of the parade(s) or that it deems to be offensive to a general audience. Any unit deemed on parade day by parade officials to be substantially different from the description on its application or to display behavior, signage, or dress offensive to a general audience may be denied entry into the parade or be removed from the line of march and barred from participation in future parades.***

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. EACH FLOAT MUST BE COVERED BY GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE IN EFFECT DURING ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE SHENANDOAH APPLE BLOSSOM FESTIVAL®. SHENANDOAH APPLE BLOSSOM FESTIVAL® MUST BE LISTED AS ADDITIONAL INSURED.**
2. The Float sponsor must submit complete a Float Application.
3. The Float Application must contain the following:
 1. Name of driver of pulling vehicle. Driver must hold a valid drivers license and be at least 18 years of age on the day of the Parade.
 2. Name of owner of pulling vehicle. Over-the-road vehicles must have a valid registration and state inspection.
 3. Name of liability insurance company for pulling vehicle and policy number. This information is required for both over-the-road and off-road vehicles including farm tractors. Any pulling vehicle loaned by an automobile dealership not covered by automobile liability insurance provided by the dealership must be covered by automobile liability insurance provided by the driver or the float sponsor.
 4. In the case of horse drawn Float, the name of the liability insurance company covering the pulling horse(s) and policy number must be provided.

STRUCTURE

- A. Decorated automobiles, trucks, station wagons, boat trailers, lawn mower trailers, scooters, motor bikes, over the road tractor or trailer or combination are **NOT CONSIDERED** floats and, therefore, will not be accepted to participate in the parade.
- B. **DIMENSIONS:**
 1. MAXIMUM OF 13’ IN HEIGHT MEASURED FROM PAVEMENT TO THE HIGHEST POINT OF FLOAT.
 2. BETWEEN 8’ AND 12’ IN WIDTH AT THE WIDEST PART OF THE FLOAT.
 3. BETWEEN 16’ AND 55’ IN LENGTH – NOT INCLUDING THE TONGUE OR THE PULLING VEHICLE.
 4. The framework must be at least 14 inches from the ground when the float is fully decorated and loaded. No part of the framework shall be so low as to prohibit the float from clearing surfaces and obstacles along the parade route and within the **ASSEMBLY AREA**.
 5. Requests for variance of any of these dimensions must be submitted in writing by **MARCH 1**.
- C. All tires shall be reasonably new and of good quality. Tires must not rub any portion of the frame when the wheels are turned.
- D. “Good” weldments, “reasonably new” materials, and adequate structural design are required. Any float considered unsafe by Parade Officials will not be allowed in the parade.
- E. All visible portions of the float, including the top surfaces and wheels, shall be fully covered.
- F. Floats shall be so constructed and decorated that viewing from either side is equally appealing.
- G. Words that designate the sponsor of the float or it’s title should show on both sides of the float. As long as the words are incorporated **TASTEFULLY AND PERMANENTLY INTO THE DESIGN OF THE FLOAT**, there is no particular restriction as to their location. If the title of the float or its sponsor is going to be designated by temporary signage (foam signs, cloth banners, cardboard signs, vinyl banners, etc.) that are nailed, tacked,

stapled, tied or taped to the float, the sign location is restricted to the skirt of the float and the size is restricted to a maximum of a 2ft. x 8 ft. sign on each side.

- H. Float skirt shall be constructed so as to allow sufficient access for all four wheels to be changed using an **IMPACT WRENCH**.
- I. Only the American Flag and State Flags are permitted in the parade.
 - Other flags as approved by the Festival.

SAFETY

- A. **NO MATERIALS MAY BE THROWN ALONG THE LINE OF MARCH.**
- B. Safety devices must be incorporated into the float for each rider whether seated or standing.
- C. The number of riders per float is limited to the capacity as determined by the builder. Jumping, bouncing or any other movements which may place additional stress on the float structure is strictly prohibited. No riders are allowed to jump on the float from the street once it leaves the line-up area of the parade. Riders are NOT allowed to sit on the side and/or front of the float and have their feet hanging over the sides of the float.
- D. All drivers shall be familiar with the maneuverability of the float; be able to negotiate both right and left turns, maintain parade speed, and to be familiar with changes in elevations.
- E. Alcoholic beverages are forbidden on any float, in any vehicle, or on the person of any participant. Participants consuming alcohol prior to or during the parade will be removed from the line up.
- F. Sufficient wheel and wagon tongue clearances shall be incorporated so that no interference can occur with the chassis or with any structure in any phase of operation of the float.
- G. A minimum of one 5 lb. dry chemical **FIRE EXTINGUISHER** of the multi purpose ABC style is required with each pulling vehicle.
- H. Floats using gasoline-powered generators must be absolutely sure that exhaust fumes are safely ventilated. Thus, creating no danger to float riders.
- I. The following information applies to **SELF PROPELLED UNITS:**
 - 1) Must be full of gasoline and water when lining up for the parade.
 - 2) Starters must be in good working condition and batteries fully charged.
 - 3) Must have extended exhaust pipes so fumes will not be directed to parade viewers, float riders or float driver.
 - 4) All radiators must be of adequate size and must be unobstructed to prevent overheating.
 - 5) Drivers must have good visibility.
- J. Floats temporarily disconnected from pulling vehicles must have wheels of float chocked to prevent rolling.

PULLING VEHICLES

- A. Floats must be pulled by cars, farm tractors, pick-up trucks or 4-wheel drive vehicles (**CLEAN ON PARADE DAY**). No over-the-road tractors permitted.
- B. A float may bear the name of its sponsor. **OTHERWISE, NO ADVERTISING IS ALLOWED ON FLOATS.** The pulling vehicle may display the sponsor's name discreetly. Otherwise, no advertising is allowed on pulling vehicles. APPLE BLOSSOM officials reserve the right to determine what is advertised and to require its removal from pulling vehicles or floats. Pulling vehicles or floats bearing advertising that cannot be removed may be removed from the parade.
- C. Garden tractors should be tested to be sure they are big enough to pull floats up hills!

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Information will be sent approximately two weeks prior to the parade detailing the location and time you are to report to the assembly area.
- B. All floats **MUST ARRIVE** at the assembly area **BY 7:30 A.M. ON SATURDAY, May 2nd**. Units who cannot attend as scheduled must notify the festival office as soon as possible. Parade officials will escort all floats from the Assembly Area to the downtown Line-Up/Judging Area on Cameron Street at 8:30 a.m. All floats **MUST BE**

READY TO MOVE AT 8:30 A.M. You may not hang back using this time to complete your float. If your float is still incomplete, you will have to finish it downtown in the Line-Up/Judging Area. If you hang back in the Assembly Area and miss your escort to the Line-Up/Judging Area, you will forfeit your parade position and you will be placed at the end of the parade.

- C. Floats are not allowed to stop during the parade. If your float does break down, immediately contact the nearest Parade Marshal (there should be one per block) for instructions on what to do.
- D. **Walkers ARE NOT ALLOWED to accompany float in line of march.** Requests for exceptions when submitted in writing with the float application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- E. Float riders must remain on the float through the entire parade.
- F. **Children under the age of 6 on the day of the parade shall not be permitted to ride on floats.**
- G. Participants of any unit are prohibited from walking or marching back through the line of march after disbanding.
- H. Parade marshals are located along the parade route and are clearly identifiable by **YELLOW VESTS AND YELLOW IDENTIFICATION RIBBONS**. Cooperation of float entrants with Parade Marshals is required.
- I. A distance no greater than fifty (50) feet not less than ten (10) feet must be maintained between any two entries.
- J. **ALL AMPLIFIERS AND PA SYSTEMS MUST BE SOUNDED SO AS TO NOT INTERFERE WITH OTHER MUSICAL UNITS AND BANDS.** The Parade Marshal has complete authority in this matter and reserves the right to withdraw any unit that does not comply.
- K. It is recommended that a kit containing appropriate tools accompany the float in the event minor repairs are necessary.
- L. The Festival is not responsible for jewelry, money or other valuables left on the float.
- M. Dressing Rooms will not be provided by the festival for float riders, come dressed and ready to go.
- N. The Parade Marshals are there to assist in any way possible. However, the float builder/participant/sponsor is ultimately responsible for security of float in the **ASSEMBLY AREA AND ENROUTE**.
- O. Drivers of any and all vehicles in the parade and parade areas must have a valid driver's license and be at least 18 years of age.
- P. **THE FESTIVAL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SIGNS LEFT BEHIND ON RENTED FLOATS. THE FESTIVAL DOES NOT PROVIDE SIGNS FOR RENTAL FLOATS!**

JUDGING

- A. ALL floats must be parked in the proper location by 9:30 a.m.

JUDGING WILL BEGIN AT:

Division I Floats -	9:30 a.m.
Division II Floats -	9:30 a.m.
Division III Floats -	9:50 a.m.
Division IV Floats -	10:10 a.m.

- B. All float riders must be in costume and on their float at the proper time in order for their float to be eligible for judging. If riders are not on the float, the float will not be judged.
- C. Floats will not be judged during the parade.
- D. The Judges' decisions are final. The official list of awards will be completed for distribution by approximately **12 NOON**.

E. PARADE ADJUDICATION:

Originality – 20 points
Use of Color – 20 points
Spectator Appeal – 25 points
Excellence of Design – 25 points
Execution of Current Year's Festival Theme – 10 points

F. FLOAT AWARDS

1. **Golden Delicious Apple - Grand Marshall Award - Sweepstakes – Best Overall Float – Professionally Build**
2. **Red Delicious Apple – Lion’s Award - Sweepstakes – Best Overall Float – Non-Professionally Build**
3. **Gala Apple Award – Best Interpretation of Current Festival Theme**

4. **Granny Smith Apple – Community Participation Organization – Professional Built – 1st place**
5. **American Beauty Apple Award – Community Participation Organization – Professional Built – 2nd place**
6. **Lady Alice Apple Award - Community Participation Organization – Professional Built – 3rd place**

7. **Jonathan Apple Award - Community Participation Organization – Non-Professional Built – 1st place**
8. **Empire Apple Award - Community Participation Organization – Non-Professional Built – 2nd place**
9. **Winchester Apple Award - Community Participation Organization Non-Professional Built 3rd place**

10. **Honeycrisp Apple Award – Business Organization – Professional Built -1st place**
11. **Fuji Apple President’s Award - Business Organization – Professional Built -2nd place**
12. **McIntosh Apple Award – Business Organization – Professional Built – 3rd place**

13. **Cortland Apple Award – Business Organization – Non-Professionally Built – 1st place**
14. **Jazz Apple Award – Business Organization – Non-Professionally Built – 2nd place**
15. **Winesap Apple Award – Business Organization – Non-Professional Built – 3rd Place**

16. **Pink Lady Apple Award – Civic & Service Organization – Professional Built – 1st place**
17. **Jonagold Apple Award – Civic & Service Organization – Professional Built – 2nd place**
18. **Ever Crisp Apple Award – Civic Service Organization – Professional Built – 3rd place**

19. **Stayman Apple Award - Civic & Service Organization – Non-Professional Built – 1st place**
20. **Braeburn Apple Award - Civic & Service Organization – Non-Professional Built - 2nd place**
21. **York Imperial Apple Award – Civic Service Organization – Non-Professional Built – 3rd place**

POST PARADE

- A. Float riders – it is the responsibility of the float builder/participant/sponsor to arrange for pick up of float riders in the **POST PARADE AREA**. The Post Parade Area is the block of Millwood Avenue between Cameron and Kent Streets.
- B. Floats **MAY NOT STOP** at “Parade End” at the intersection of Cameron Street/Gerrard Street/Millwood Avenue. Floats **MUST PROCEED THROUGH THAT INTERSECTION** and continue on Millwood Avenue toward Kent Street. Parents and others may meet float riders at McCarthy Tire Company (formerly Duncan Brothers) along Millwood Avenue. **Please notify the parents of your younger float riders of this important rule!!!** Floats can pull over only long enough to drop off riders and may not park. The movement of floats in the Post Parade Area is subject to the direction of Parade Marshals.

The Festival is not liable for injury to parade participants or spectators, or for damage to floats, or damage caused by floats, or damage to vehicles and personal property.

ADDITIONAL NOTES - FLOAT JUDGING

Originality – 20 Points: We do not have the luxury of having brand-new floats every year. Many of the floats appear year after year with modification. This does not necessarily mean that the original design lacked originality. The question refers to each year independent of any previous year: does the float we're seeing this year have an interesting design? **Example of Originality:** Some years back, we had a float that depicted a 13-foot-tall Mother Dragon; and, behind her in a little wagon was a Baby Dragon. The float even punned on "Darggin' Dragon." This would, in our opinion, show Originality. A plain box float with a few decorative touches would, in our opinion, be quite nice; but would not necessarily show originality.

Use of Color – 20 Points: Does the use of color on the float help to carry out the idea or theme or concept of the float? It could be obvious, as in the use of pinks and greens to carry out a Springtime idea; or the use of reds, whites and blues to carry out a patriotic theme. Or, it could be less obvious, as in the use of silvers, blacks and whites to send a message of sophistication; or the use of nursery colors to decorate a float with a child's theme. And, of course, the colors worn by the float riders are very much a part of the color scheme. **Example of Use of Color:** Our own unjudged Queen's Float is nearly all white with touches of gold and green. It gets its color from the shades of Pink or Green in the clothes of the float riders; and, in our opinion, the color scheme helps to carry out the idea of simplicity, of tradition and of the elegance of a springtime wedding or coronation.

Spectator Appeal – 25 Points: What draws the eye of the parade spectator? In our opinion [in descending order]:

- 1-the float riders, especially if they are costumed and moving and doing things like dancing, singing or interacting with one another;
- 2-movement of the parts of the float, such as windmills or teeter-totters or flowing water;
- 3-interesting float props created by the float builders such as unicorns or eagles or outsized toys;
- 4-interesting float props simply added to the float such as flags, banners and balloons; and,
- 5-bright colors in general; glitter, confetti, colored foil.

Humorous depictions are crowd pleasers; but complexity and sometimes be missed when it is remembered that "Spectator appeal" is judged by the casual spectator [not the judges] in 30 seconds. That is all the longer a float will be in front of a spectator.

Excellence of Design/Structure – 25 Points: In our opinion this is much more than just a question of: is the artistic design of the float well balanced? It should include: Is the float more than a simple box? Does it have a difficult design that probably required the input of engineers and designers and carpenters? Does it show unusual strength for handling float-riders; or does it allow for unusual movement of float parts? Does it show float props in unusual and difficult positions by use of techniques such as cantilevering? Does it show the use of unusual materials such as steel which were then decorated to disguise their use? Or heavy rubber mats; or spray foam; or plywood and cardboard molded into unusual shapes? Or the interesting use of fabrics?

Execution of Current year's Theme – 10 Points: What we value most is a total float concept based on the theme. **The 2026 theme is "Keep Blooming Together."** It is nice when any float has added signs with the Theme logo on them; or, has children wearing Theme t-shirts; but if they appear to be simply added to a float that has little to do with the actual theme, we don't value that as much. **Example of Execution of a Past Theme:** A previous Theme was "**Live, Love, Bloom!**" We, the float department, take the cover design from the Official Souvenir Program Book each year and recreate it on the Theme Float which is the first and last float in the parade. The cover design was a large billboard with the theme listed on it with three apple blossoms in the colors of Pink, Green and White. We would consider this to be an attempt at a total float concept of the theme, we would place more value on this than a float that had, for example, a circus theme and had simply added theme logos to the sides of the float.

Float Builders and Supplies

Shaw Parades

John Shaw, Jr.

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Swanton, MD 21651
Phone - 301-697-9901
Email - jshaw@shawparades.com

John Shaw, III

246 Shaw Street
Frostburg, MD 21532
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Email: jshawjr@shawparades.com

Website - www.shawparades.com

Kirby Parade Floats, LLC

Owner: A.D. Kirby
783 Muddy Springs Road
Lexington, SC 29073
Phone 803-359-3134
Website - www.kirbyparadefloats.com
Email: AKirby6@sc.rr.com

Cline's Floats, Inc.

7570 Long Island Road
Catawba, NC 28609
Phone 828-241-3133
Website - www.clinesfloats.com
Email - clinefloatsinc@yahoo.com

Float Supplies

Walt Evans Decorators, Inc. --- Known as *ParadeFloatStuff.com*

8812 N County Rd 225 W
Brazil, Indiana USA 47834
Call us at: 888-446-7621
Fax us at: 812-203-0315
Website: ParadeFloatStuff.com
Email: info@paradefloatstuff.com

Anderson's – School Spirts – Prom's – Float Decorations

(Look under Homecoming - Parade Float Supplies)

Website – Andersons.com

Phone Orders: 1-800-338-3346

Amazon

Website - Amazon.com

Wayfair

Website – Wayfair.com