

**ST. LUCIE COUNTY CHRISTMAS BOAT PARADE PARTICIPANTS
CAPTAINS' BRIEFING – DECEMBER 10, 2021 -5:30 P.M.
PARADE DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2021 -6:00 P.M.**

Thank you for attending the mandatory Captains briefing meeting this evening. All boats must be registered and receive a number, parade instructions, and provide proof of insurance.

The annual Christmas Boat Parade is presented by the Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast in cooperation with our sponsors. The parade is arranged each year as a holiday gift to the community, providing the season's pleasure to boaters and spectators alike.

The judges are well-qualified individuals. All are briefed and understand the challenge of decorating a vessel, and each brings an appreciation for design, imagination and implementation of your ideas. Please join us in giving them your thanks for their time and expertise!

The parade route is designed so the starboard side of your vessel will always be facing land and spectators. A chart is attached showing the staging area and parade route. **All vessels must complete the entire designated parade route to be eligible for a prize.**

Parade: 6:00 p.m.- 7:45 p.m. (approximately)

Staging Area: Participating vessels will assemble just North of the South Causeway.

Rendezvous Information: Vessels must be assembled in the staging area by 5:30 p.m. following instructions from the Patrol Boats.

All participating vessels will display an identification numbers on the STARBOARD (right) side and on the transom. Each captain should identify the number immediately preceding and following their boat to determine their position in the parade. If you have difficulty identifying either of those vessels Patrol Boats will continually monitor VHF Channel 80 and provide any necessary information. Maneuver at minimum "no wake speed" always in the staging area. After vessels are "holding on station" further movements will be controlled by Patrol Boats or the designated lead boat only. All Skippers are requested to respond PROMPTLY to requests and/or instructions from the Patrol boats.

Patrol Boat #1 will instruct Skippers by number when to join the parade course. Each boat will join the parade in sequence, as directed by the Patrol Captain.

UPON A COMMAND FROM PATROL BOAT #1 ALL VESSELS WILL SWITCH ON THEIR LIGHTS SIMULTANEOUSLY AND BEGIN THE PARADE.

Radios: All Skippers will begin monitoring VHF Channel 80 no later than 5:30 p.m. **Keep Channel 80 CLEAR.** If you must talk to other boats, please utilize another channel. Note however, that while you are not monitoring Channel 80, fleet instructions, warnings or other information may be announced by the Patrol

Captain. As always, Channel 16 is reserved for hailing and emergencies. Boats with an emergency may call the patrol on Channel 80.

Safety rules and Regulations:

Each entrant will comply with the Coast guard regulations pursuant to their type of craft. Each vessel should comply with Coast Guard Inspection requirements. Remember that you are navigating under difficult conditions with many people aboard, heavy waterway traffic and numerous and often confusing lights. Please carefully consider the weight load of passengers and guests aboard your vessel. **DO NOT OVERLOAD YOUR BOAT.** We recommend that operators of particularly small boats check bilge levels frequently. Portable generators should be kept above-decks so that fumes are discharged overboard. Do not overload your electrical circuits and be sure they are properly fused. Extension cords and connections must be suitable for exposed atmospheric conditions, including rain and salt spray. Do not refuel your generator while it is running or when it is hot. Keep your fire extinguisher close at hand.

BE SAFE!! DON'T DRINK AND BOAT!!

Patrol Boats:

Patrol Boats are manned by marine experts who spend months on the water each year. Patrol Boat #1, the lead Patrol Captain, will display red and yellow flashing lights. The Coast Guard Auxiliary will display flashing yellow and red lights. All Patrol Boats are equipped with basic safety equipment and towlines. In the event of a problem notify the Patrol Boat on Channel 80 with the parade number of your vessel, as well as its type and size. In the event of a power loss while in the parade line it is vital that you either have the nearest vessel tow you over the balance of the course or clear the parade line and drop anchor. Patrol Boats will not tow any vessel other than to clear the parade route unless there is an extreme emergency.

RULES OF THE ROAD REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT DURING THE PARADE.

Parade Start:

Scheduled starting time is 6:00 p.m. Vessels will follow the *Lead Boat* at 75-100-foot intervals (about three-four boat lengths), in numerical order, to allow the judges adequate time for accurate assessment and judging. Judging sheets are based on numbers, and the judges have no other way to identify any boat.

BE SURE YOUR NUMBER IS CLEARLY VISIBLE AT ALL TIMES.

Parade Line:

All vessels, including sailboats, will be under power while in the parade line. Sailboat or rowboat skippers who do **NOT** have power **MUST** arrange to be towed by another vessel while in the parade line.

The lead boat will maintain a steady **5-knot speed**, or as otherwise instructed by the Patrol Captain for maximum safety.

Parade Route:	All vessels will proceed in numerical order from the rendezvous area. Boats will proceed following the lead boat and official channel markers ending near the South Causeway. Awards will be announced over VHF radio on Channel 80. The judges will be located on the Summerlin's dock. Be sure to announce your number over the radio as you pass the judges.
Leaving the Line of March:	After completing the parade line, vessels are requested to remain in the area. DO NOT CROSS THE LINE OF PARADING BOATS but wait until the final boat has completed the course.
Prize Awards:	The winners will be announced on Channel 80 and prizes can be collected the at the Fort Pierce Yacht Club.
Other Enclosures:	Your Captains packet contains these pages of instructions, a marked chart, Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast information and a variety of souvenirs provided by local businesses.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE 2021 CHRISTMAS BOAT PARADE!

Without your enthusiasm, there would be no gift from the boaters to the community.