

# CITY PARADE MOVES FROM LAST SATURDAY IN OCTOBER TO HALLOWEEN DAY

By MARY SCHLEY

AFTER DECADES of being held on the last Saturday morning in October and then followed by a community lunch at Sunset Center, the city's annual birthday celebration and Halloween parade will be moved this year to 4 p.m. on Halloween (Oct. 31) — a change community activities director Ashlee Wright said she hopes will become permanent.

"If we keep it on Halloween every year, then if it's during the week, it's something kids can naturally move on to to participate in after school," she said. "That's how it used to be during the olden days."

After the parade, she said, kids could "trick-or-treat downtown, have some dinner and then go to Mission Fields to do

some serious trick-or-treating," she said.

Wright debuted the idea of moving the parade to Halloween day at a meeting earlier in the summer, explaining that disruptions caused by the pandemic led her to rethink things.

### Afternoon start

She also decided to change the start time to 4 p.m., rather than having the parade start in the morning as it has in the past, so everyone could stay downtown afterward to trick-or-treat at shops and maybe take in a "haunted Happy Hour" before heading out to knock on doors in search of treats in other neighborhoods.

Just for this year, due to a scheduling conflict with Sunset Center, the parade will start on Mountain View above Junipero,

where Carmel High's homecoming parade usually begins.

"I have letters drafted to our residents on San Carlos Street [the former parade route] thanking them for all their years of support," she added. "They're out there with their lawn chairs every year cheering on the parade, and they've been such good neighbors."

Wright said she wants the residents to know they are not the reason the parade is being moved this year.

Those who live along Mountain View will be advised their street will be closed

from 2:30 to 4 p.m. on Halloween, though if any of them needs to drive in during that time, it will be allowed.

"We'll work with residents, and hopefully they'll be receptive to the change for this year," she said.

After the parade, the city will give away individually wrapped cupcakes in Deventorf Park, in lieu of offering the traditional birthday cake and ice cream at Sunset Center. Carmel Bakery owner Rich Pepe is donating the sweets, Wright said.

"The cupcakes were his suggestion," she said, adding that she and others in her department are researching appropriate wrapping that will meet the city's rules banning plastic and non-compostable single-use containers.

### Free pumpkins!

Commissioners also discussed ways to encourage community groups like the kids at the Carmel Youth Center to participate in the parade and solidified plans to hand out pumpkins during the Thursday farmers market, as they did last year. Residents and business owners will be encouraged to decorate, and Deventorf Park will begin showing signs of the impending Halloween holiday during the week of Oct. 11, according to Wright.

She said she hopes the parade and other festivities will encourage residents and business owners to connect, and will give families who moved here during the pandemic a chance to see a different side of the town.

"I think this is a real opportunity for a good community event," she said.



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

No, he didn't wash his car without a shut-off nozzle. This young man is just enjoying the city's Halloween parade alongside his arresting officer one recent year.

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