Peoria Area Community Events (PACE)
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November 11, 2026

NOTE: THE PARADE STEPS OFF AT 9:15 AM

For Immediate Release

Central Illinois Santa Parade – Peoria, IL

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Peoria Area Community Events (PACE) ANNOUNCES 2026 SANTA PARADE

PACE is pleased to present the **139th Annual Santa Claus Parade,** the longest continually running holiday parade in the country**.** The parade is scheduled to step off at **9:15 a.m.** on **Friday, November 27, 2026**. The parade features costumed characters, novelty walking units, decorated floats, marching bands, and of course ***Santa Claus*****.** Costumes and floats depicting the parade theme **"A Holiday Tradition for the Ages"**

Santa's helpers (all volunteers) have been busy painting, repairing and adding new features to some of the **22** floats that PACE owns. The parade telecast is sponsored by **Busey Bank** and the telecast is **live on WMBD-TV beginning at 9:30**. PACE is introducing 2 new floats this year. **North Pole Mail Train and SCP Kart**

After years of dedicated leadership by PACE and countless volunteers, plans are underway to transition responsibility for the parade to the Peoria Park District beginning in 2027 with a full transfer in place for 2028. The 2026 and 2027 parades will provide an opportunity for both organizations to work together sharing knowledge and experience to ensure a seamless transition that honors the parade's remarkable history. With continued support from community partners, sponsors, and volunteers, the goal is to preserve the magic of this longstanding tradition while building a sustainable foundation for generations to come. **Emily Cahill, Peoria Park District Executive Director** says "We are honored to be able to carry on this tradition for our region". "PACE'S history will be hard to live up to and we hope that the community will come alongside us as we work to live up the standard they have set"

The Santa Parade began in 1887. Since 1989 Peoria Area Community Events have produced the Central Illinois Santa Parade as part of their commitment of providing events to contribute to the quality of life by involving the community in events that celebrate and reinforce pride in the Peoria area. It is time for new leadership after 37 years. "We are excited to transfer the tradition to the Peoria Park District. Their connection in the community will offer new and exciting things for the parade. "After co-chairing the parade for the past 37 years I am excited to transition the parade to the Peoria Park District. They are experienced in producing events in Peoria and I know they will do an excellent job" **said Susie Stockman**

The parade route begins at the Peoria Central Firehouse on Monroe & Bryan Streets, then proceeds on Monroe to Main, left on Main Street, left on Adams and will end past the Peoria County Courthouse on Fayette

A special thank you to the **City of Peoria's Tourism Grant** and **Discover Peoria"** for assisting in securing sponsorships for the parade.