

The Do-Dah Parade

June 7, 2025

Step-off at 11 a.m. Gates open at 9 a.m.



Overview:

The "Do-Dah Parade" is Saturday, June 7, 2025 at 11 am. The parade is 41 years old and has been a tradition of laughter and a bit of "silliness" as companies and organizations take to the street to make a satire parade, something people can laugh about and remember. It is about community and bringing people together to celebrate where they work, their businesses and to share that with the community through laughter!

Do-Dah started in 1984, when WKMI organizers designed the parade as a way for companies and organizations to provide unique entertainment through a satire and host a parade that wasn't "stuffy." The purpose remains the same – create the un-structured, spontaneous, and totally hilarious parade. Each year, participants are challenged to reinvigorate the meaning of "Do-Dah" (a satire based on irony and/or an iconic use of a person, place, event or thing).

This is the application for the parade. You can either use this paper application or you can sign up online (preferred) at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoDahParade>. Please complete the application and send back by May 16. Applications will be accepted after this date, but placement will be at the end of the parade (with Santa).

Here are the parade highlights:

1. Units must be themed either through a stated satire or the yearly theme. This year's theme is **"Once Upon Time."**
2. Do-Dah Parade depends on the parade units being entertaining. That means that everyone needs to wear costumes that either follow the theme, have a satire, or decorated to create a visual appeal on the streets.
3. The parade application fee is \$70 for nonprofits and community groups; and \$85 for for-profits. There are affordable sponsorship opportunities available to provide great exposure for your company including free entries. The entry fee for the parade pays for less than 10% of the cost to host this event. Sponsors help the event be more sustainable. We would love to send you a proposal, please email deb@eventkalamazoo.com or call us at (269)388-2830.
4. Please make sure to complete **all** portions of the application including the waiver statement. Remember, you can conveniently submit this application online (preferred). Confirmations will be sent via email. If you do not receive email confirmation within a week of sending in your application, please call us (269-388-2830). The final line-up information will also be posted about two weeks prior to the event at www.dodahkzoo.com.

There are two ways to participate in Do-Dah: a) unit based on a spoof or a satire of a person, place, event or thing; or b) have your unit fit the theme of **"Once Upon a Time"**. In the application, you will provide a description which will be used to promote your participation prior to the parade and create human interest stories. Remember, businesses that connect the theme to the costumes make more impactful "WOW" experiences.

- ❖ Entries are arranged in the parade based on their entertainment value. Your entry placement will be determined based on how you theme your unit, how you describe it. The more decorated and themed your unit is, the better the return rate. Parade vehicles **MUST** be decorated as part of the theme.
- ❖ **ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE IN COSTUME!** This means general street clothes do not qualify as a costume.
- ❖ Each unit needs a parade banner or sign promoting the organization or group to help people to vote.
- ❖ Vehicles and floats must be of good working order and state licensed-approved.
- ❖ Semi-trucks will be placed at the end of the parade lineup.
- ❖ We reserve the right to not accept or remove a unit if it is offensive, inappropriate, unsafe, or poorly reflects the integrity of the parade.
- ❖ Due to the nature of the event and the cost for city services, entry fees cannot be refunded.
- ❖ **Entry fees must be paid a week prior to the event.**

2025 Theme Guidelines

Take your pick: 1. Join with the true satire OR 2. Follow this year's theme

If your company would like to be a sponsor, please KELC Events

at 269-388-2830 or check out the Do-Dah website: www.dodahkzoo.com

Applications can be completed online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoDahParade>

Upon receipt of the application, a confirmation with an invoice for payment will be sent via email.

Payments must be completed prior to the event.

“Once Upon a Time” Theme: If embracing a satire feels a tad daunting, consider following the 2025 theme through creative planning. The theme for this year is “Once Upon a Time,” and you can take it from the perspective of a storybook, a historical look back at your company, or a look back at a “time when....”

This open-ended theme allows for creativity and even an opportunity to really promote your business. We believe that Do-Dah provides an opportunity to be creative about your promotion of your business and what you do to make our community amazing. Businesses are encouraged to make signage, carry a banner, and promote who they are and what they love to do. The Once upon a Time theme also allows the creativity to think back to when you started your business and the vision you had for your product. Have fun with this theme.

Satire: an attempt or imitation that is so poor that it seems ridiculous – but in good taste. Amusing - Imitation - a piece of writing or music that deliberately copies another work in a comical or satirical way. Think “Saturday Night Live” as an example of satire. Just watch an episode of Saturday Night Life to get ideas. Seriously!

Let's Stimulate Creativity

Thanks to the support of the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation and their challenge for creativity and artistic expression for the Do-Dah Parade, a series of Ideation Initiatives will be conducted to coach entry units on creativity, satire development, and the simple tricks of decorating.

Watch the Facebook posts, Instagram ideas, and videos on how to make a parade unit engaging. These posts are quick, easy DIY projects that participants can easily imitate and use in their unit. The spirit of Do-Dah is fun and unique. If you are using the satire theme, it's all about making good, light-hearted fun of ourselves.

Word of Advice: Call us, we love to brainstorm on themes, decorating, and even event day preparation. We will work to make it easier on you. With the theme being “**Once Upon a Time**”, the options are endless. Bottom line: have fun with it!

Do-Dah Parade

General Parade Information and Guidelines

The Purpose:	The Do-Dah Parade has been in existence for 41 years, since 1984, and was designed to create a laughable parade that provides entertainment through a satire, spoof, or a theme while promoting local businesses.
Parade Date:	Saturday, June 7, 2025
Check-in:	The parade begins downtown at the Bronson Healthcare Group Parking Lot on Lovell Street and ends in the same location. Parade units are assigned a specific parade staging location. A representative from the parade unit must check-in with the official by the time stated in the final information packet. The lot opens at 9 a.m. for check-in.
Parade Time:	Parade steps off at 11 a.m.
Parade Route:	The route starts at Lovell Street and Jasper, then travels on Lovell to Rose Street, Rose Street to Michigan Avenue, Michigan Avenue to Portage Street, and Portage Street back to Lovell Street. Cars cannot park along the parade staging areas and streets. And there is no parking or viewing on Bronson Park side of Rose St. from Academy St. to South St.
Viewing Stand:	You are performing the entire time you are on the street – this is why you are in costume. Units may not stop to perform; performances must have “momentum.”
Noise Restrictions:	Please do not use horns or sirens unless an emergency exists. Sound amplifier range must be limited to your entry.
Animal Units:	You are required to have someone cleaning up behind your animal (especially horses) at all times. A fine will be assessed for clean-up expenses. The parking lot can be hot, please make sure that your animals are cared for with water and safety from the hot pavement.
Signage:	Signage must be appropriate and complement the satire theme. Vehicles must be decorated to match the theme.
Parade Vehicles:	Only vehicles designated on your application will be allowed in the staging area. Band equipment vehicles will be allowed in the staging area, but not on the parade route. ALL UNITS MUST BE DECORATED COMPLETELY and follow the theme/satire.
Floats:	<u>Trailers are not allowed in the Bronson Healthcare Parking Lot area</u> (this is a risk management directive). If you have a trailer, please check the float box in the application. Trailers must be state licensed-approved and all safety and precaution measures must be implemented. Approved railings and seating is required for anyone traveling on the float. Floats cannot exceed 12 feet high from the ground.
Distribution:	For the safety of others, <u>no items may be thrown</u> from your parade unit, including candy, souvenirs, and balloons. Items for distribution <u>must</u> be approved. Designated walkers should be used to hand the items to the spectators.
Disclaimer:	The Do-Dah Parade Committee reserves the right to remove any entry from the parade before and during the parade if the entry is not as stated in the parade application, or is otherwise deemed unsuitable.
Final Note:	We all want every unit to be able to promote who they are and what they do. This is community. The entries that are themed, costumed, and really funny will up-stage the units that are not. If you want to be remembered, follow these instructions for a successful entry.

PLEASE “Like” our Do-Dah Parade Facebook Page
And, make sure that you check out our website at www.dodahkzoo.com!

Questions can be directed to: Matt Slagell, Event Director | KELC Events
1417 S. Burdick St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001
269-388-2830 – director@experientiallearningcenter.org
www.dodahkzoo.com

2025 Do-Dah Parade Application | June 7

Applications can be submitted online (preferred)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoDahParade>



☐ Enclosed is a check for \$_____ payable to KELC Events.

Name of Organization _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

Fax _____ Mobile _____ E-mail _____

Previous Participation _____ Years _____

Parade Unit Decorations | Parade Themes | Satire

☐ Our unit is following a Satire

☐ We are following the “Once Upon a Time” Theme

Please describe the satire or satire OR how you will fit the “Once Upon a Time” theme (you pick one or the other):

Parade Unit Description

The following information will help to determine placement in the parade line-up. Please note that if there are changes to the information supplied below, it is the responsibility of the organizer to inform parade officials. **Units with trailers are considered as floats.** Large vehicles and trailers are placed with the floats.

Please check all that apply to your entry:

☐ Float ☐ Vehicle ☐ Marchers ☐ Music ☐ Equestrian ☐ Other _____

Estimated number of members included in unit _____ (units may have 100 or less members).

☐ Float Entries: Actual length of float/flatbed _____ by _____
Please describe vehicle carrying the float _____

☐ Vehicle Entry: If more than one vehicle, please describe _____
____ Check here if this is a large vehicle. Size: _____

☐ Marchers: How many marchers are in the unit? _____
Marchers must wear costumes. Describe: _____

☐ Music: Please describe the type of music _____

Please describe what your entry/float/decorated unit will look like – please attach a copy of your drawing.
Please let us know if your event unit description changes.

Please write a 25-word announcer copy for your unit to be used for the taping of the parade.

☐

We would like permission to distribute materials; (please explain) _____

Waiver, Release and Indemnity Form

On behalf of this unit and its participants, our organization, business, association understands that the KALAMAZOO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CENTER, and THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO, its officials, agents and employees, and sponsors will not be responsible or liable for any injuries, damages, and/or loss of property as a result of me or any member of my group (parade unit) taking part in the "Do-Dah Parade." Further, our organization, business, association agrees to indemnify Bronson Hospital together with its officers, directors, employees, agents and tenants. In addition, I agree to indemnify Bronson Hospital from all claims, liability, damage or loss arising from my activities in the staging area of the "Do-Dah Parade." On behalf of this organization, business, association and its members, I have read all the rules associated with the parade and agree to compliance.

Signed: _____ Date _____
(must be 18 or older to sign this form)

Name _____ Organization _____

Legal Address of Organization _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ E-mail Address _____

Application Deadline: May 23, 2025

Applications received after this date will be considered on a space availability status.

Application fee is \$70 for non-profits and community groups; and \$85 for for-profits, with payment to KELC Events
Upon approval of the application an invoice will be sent. Payment can be made via credit card with a 3% service fee.

Applications submitted after May 23 will be accepted and added to the published lineup.

Submit to: Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center | 1417 S. Burdick St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001 | Fax: 269-388-3083

Parade Confirmation and Notification Procedure:

- Approved applications will receive an email confirmation along with an invoice within 3-4 days of receipt. Please call if you do not receive confirmation of receipt within a week of your application submission.
- **IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE a final confirmation packet by May 30 please call 269-388-2830.**
- Final Confirmation of entry will be e-mailed by May 28 and include a complete line-up and event day instructions.
- It is the organization's responsibility to communicate the line-up assignment, location, and time to their members.
- The name listed on the application (organizer) will be our point of contact for the event.
- The parade line-up will be available on the web at www.dodahkzoo.com closer to the event date.