

Flagler Beach Fireworks and “Freedom For All” Parade on July 4; Palm Coast Fireworks July 3

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FlaglerLive

July 2,
2018



Flagler Beach's epic fireworks show has been a city favorite roughly since the Middle Ages. (© FlaglerLive)

Last Updated: June 27, 2018.

Independence Day fireworks in Flagler Beach this year–2018–will be fired on Wednesday, July 4, at 9 p.m., off the Flagler Beach Pier (a pier shortened by 163 feet, thanks to [Hurricane Matthew](#)). Flagler Beach's Holiday Parade will begin at 10 a.m., rain or shine. The parade is sponsored by the Flagler Beach Rotary. [A parade entry form is available here](#). The deadline is July 1. The theme this year is “Freedom For All” (last year it was “Home of the Brave”).

Palm Coast fireworks are scheduled for Monday, July 3, at Central Park in Town Center, at 9 p.m. See further below for details.

In past years Flagler Beach Independence Day celebration stretched over four days. This year, with the celebration falling in mid-week, the July 4 events will be held on the day itself only, though Friday the city will also host its First Friday festivities, which have been drawing thousands every month.

On July 4 there will be no vendors, live music or the like, though a few sponsors will make possible a host of games and a kids zone in Veterans Park. DJ Vern will provide recorded music all day. There'll be a corn hole tournament, an ice cube eating contest, potato toss games, and a variety of other contests.

The parade is expected to be of some length, this being an election year, when candidates take advantage of the large crowds to parade and hand out literature. It is forbidden for people on parade floats to throw candy or other items from the floats themselves, but they may hand out goodies in person.

The Pier has been open for business, fishing and pleasure. But while in previous years the pier closed only on the day of the fireworks, this year it will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday, to accommodate the pyrotechnicians of Fireworks By Santore, the Flagler Beach company that will set up fireworks all day in preparation for the evening's show. The pier will reopen Thursday, July 5, at 6 a.m.

Take advantage of the free parking and free shuttle that'll be provided off the island. (See below for details.)

Parking on Independence Day in Flagler Beach is, as always, catch as catch can. But as has been the case for the past two years the city has made arrangements for a shuttle service and plenty of parking in two areas on and off the island.

Free parking is available on the island at Santa Maria del Mar church, with some 300 parking spaces. Free parking is also available at Flagler Square (the former Food Lion Plaza, now home to Badcock Home Furniture), with free shuttle service to Veterans Park. Two years ago the city launched what turned into a successful off-site "Park & Ride" shuttle service as a way to relieve traffic congestion and sea dune parking concerns.

Coach-style buses will shuttle visitors from Flagler Square to Veterans Park and back, starting with two buses at 8 a.m. and continuing until 11 p.m. on July 4. The number of



They'll keep you moving safely. Click on the image for larger view. (© FlaglerLive)

buses will increase to five as the day progresses. The designated loading/unloading locations for passengers are as follows:

Westside: Flagler Square (2501 Moody Blvd, south side of SR 100, just west of the CVS Pharmacy at the corner of John Anderson Hwy). East side: Veterans Park (2nd Street South between South Central Avenue and South Daytona Avenue).

Last year transportation was provided by Palm Coast Transportation. The company has since been sold to Gainesville-based Candace Transportation, which will be providing the shuttles. The buses will *not* stop at any other location. If you have any questions regarding the “Park & Ride” shuttle, contact Flagler Beach Police Chief Matt Doughney at (386) 517-2020.

“Everything is free, the event in the parks are free and the shuttle is going to be free,” says Flagler Beach City Manager Larry Newsom. But Flagler Beach government is footing the \$6,000 bill charged by Candace Transportation.

The lack of walk-overs has led too many people to trample the dunes on the way to or from the beach. City officials are pleading with beach-goers not to use the dunes or park on the dunes and to put in the extra steps to find a usable walk-over. “People need to use the beach access points that are available,” Newsom said. “They need to realize we’re still rebuilding, no parking on dunes, and what they need to do is respect the signs that identify no parking. It’s more restrictive on the south side of 100 toward Volusia County, it’s very restrictive on the parking there. There is some parking allowed north of 100.”



The Flagler Beach Police Department is again requesting that aerial drones and floating sky lanterns stay grounded over the July 4 period. The increased use of aerial drones by the public over the past few years, along with the release of numerous floating sky lanterns after the 2015 fireworks presentation, prompted the request.

Newsom said the Flagler County Sheriff’s Office and Flagler County Fire Flight will also be available for aerial assistance.

“One of the most efficient methods used by Law Enforcement to address the egress of traffic associated with large events like the Fourth of July, is a helicopter serving as our ‘eye in the sky,’” said Flagler Beach Police Captain Matt Doughney. “The helicopter allows us to

identify traffic problems in real time and create solutions that are not easily recognizable at ground level.” The helicopter will be flying after the fireworks.

In cases requiring an emergency response by Fire Flight, the helicopter may be required to land in a public area or near the beach. Flying drones in or near an emergency helicopter pose a risk to the pilot as well as the general public and under FAA guidelines, unless you have a permit, they’re unlawful in Flagler Beach due to our close proximity to Flagler County Airport. “While the floating sky lanterns may look beautiful, they create a serious conflict with airspace,” Doughney said. “The last thing we need is a pilot dodging flaming lanterns!”



Doughney is also cautioning revelers and visitors: agents with the Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco will be back in town on July 4, and will be patrolling for underage drinking or drinking in public. Underage drinkers face a civil citation, others face a misdemeanor notice-to-appear, if they are caught drinking. Drinkers impair their judgment, Doughney said. “The last thing we want is a tragedy, so we try to curb underage drinking,” he said.

In addition to help from the state agency, the Flagler Beach Police Department will have the assistance of numerous Flagler County Sheriff’s deputies, one officer from the Bunnell Police Department, and four from Daytona Beach.

Finally, keep in mind that while medical marijuana was legalized in Florida by an overwhelming popular margin, recreational marijuana, alas, is still illegal. So if you must smoke, please do so responsibly (it is safer than drinking) and out of public view, where you are liable to arrest.

The annual Miss Flagler County Scholarship pageant, formerly at the Flagler Auditorium, will be held at Veterans Park, taking place at 5:30 p.m. on July 3 with the title of Little Miss Flagler County for ages 5-7, followed by Little Miss Flagler County, ages 8-11, then Miss Junior Flagler County & Miss Flagler County 2018. Younger age divisions begin at 5:30 p.m., the Miss competition begins at 8 p.m. The reigning champion is Daria Tutino.

Palm Coast will have its own Independence Day fireworks show at Town Center’s Central Park. That one will take place on Tuesday, July 3, at 9 p.m., and this year will again be a Santore production (last year the city had contracted with a New York-based company).

The Town Center gathering starts around 5 p.m. with a party around the lake with live entertainment, family fun and games, free prizes, music, dancing, bounce houses, and a cookout. Activities will include face-painting, corn hole and a mini golf putting green. While food and drinks will be available for purchase, coolers and pop-up tents are also allowed. Families are encouraged to arrive early for a huge Palm Coast picnic! There is no charge for entry, parking or participation.

There is no gate fee, no parking fees, no seating fee. Bring your own cooler, fill it with beer and other drinks: that, too, is allowed. Bring chairs, bring blankets, bring your pop-up tent, bring your Kindle.

While most people will gather at Central Park, thousands of others can see the fireworks from area parking lots and backyards. Beginning at 5 p.m., the intersection of Lake Avenue and City Place – and its immediate vicinity – will be closed off. That area at the back side of Central Park is where the fireworks will be set off. Barricades will be set up.

For more information about Fireworks in the Park, contact Palm Coast Parks and Recreation at 386/986-2323.

Palm Coast first held a fireworks show of its own in 2010. The Palm Coast fireworks are never scheduled on the same day as Flagler Beach's so as to preserve the iconic nature of the beach town's signature event.

Palm Coast also has a July 4 event: On Wednesday, it will hold its "By Dawn's Early Light" ceremony at 8 a.m. at Heroes Memorial Park, 2860 Palm Coast Pkwy, near the Flagler County Library.

Guest speakers will be Randall Morris, President of the Flagler Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, and Palm Coast Mayor Milissa Holland. Elected officials from Palm Coast and Flagler County will take part in a reading of the Declaration of Independence, and a U.S. Naval cannon will be fired by Ret. Navy Capt. J. Randall Stapleford. The Palm Coast



Daria Tutino is the reigning 2017 Miss Flagler.
(Flagler County Scholarship Pageants)



Town Center has its own fireworks show. Click on the image for larger view. (© FlaglerLive)

Community Band will perform The Star-Spangled Banner, God Bless America, Stars & Stripes Forever and American Anthem. Flagler County Sheriff's Deputy Kenny Goncalves will be the vocalist for God Bless America. The presentation of colors will be done by the Palm Coast Fire Department Honor Guard, and the Pledge of Allegiance will be led by Mayor Holland and the Palm Coast City Council.

In case of rain, the ceremony will be held at nearby Fire Station 21, 9 Corporate Drive.

Flagler Beach Parade and Other Activities

Parade line-up or staging takes place on Daytona Avenue North between 8 and 10 a.m.

The parade route: east on North 6th Street, south on A1A, west on S. 6th Street, north on South Daytona Avenue. The parade will take place, rain or shine. (If there's heavy rain at 9 p.m., fireworks won't go off.)

Parade awards, sponsored by the Flagler Beach Rotary Club, include Trophies Awarded: Best of Parade, Judges Choice, Best Marching Unit, Best Float, Best of Theme, One Trophy for Best of Parade and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd categories for all other awards. Winners will be chosen during line up and trophies given out as the entry passes the A Frame at the Pier.

An important traffic note from Flagler County Assist REACT:

"For those going to the July 4th Flagler Beach Fireworks please note that right after the fireworks traffic approaching State Road 100 from the north and south will likely be forced west on SR 100 by the Police. This is the fastest way to clear traffic out of the city. No exceptions are made. If you must keep going north or south, plan to head west on State Road 100 to the first place you can turn around and then head back to A1A. Please plan accordingly or avoid the area. As soon as the worst of the traffic is cleared it will go back to normal. Typically this is between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m."



By dawn's early palms. Click on the image for larger view.

(© FlaglerLive)



It wouldn't be the same without the eternal Cindy Dalecki.

Click on the image for larger view. (© FlaglerLive)

A Note on Private Fireworks:

While fireworks are sold in Florida, it is illegal for people without a permit to set off fireworks other than sparklers. The rule comes down to this: "If it leaves the ground where it explodes, it's considered an illegal firework in the state of Florida," says Palm Coast Fire Chief Mike Beadle. That also applies to firecrackers that go boom.

Exceptions apply in narrow circumstances, as when farmers use firecrackers to scare off birds and protect vegetation or fisheries, says Palm Coast Fire Marshal Jeff Pattee. Palm Coast passed its own ordinance setting out restrictions and prohibitions on fireworks. That ordinance, Pattee said, is almost identical to state law on the matter. That law [may be read here](#).

See Also:

- [The 2017 edition](#)
- [The 2016 edition](#)
- [The 2015 edition](#)
- [The 2014 edition](#)
- [The 2013 edition](#)
- [The 2012 edition](#)



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<https://youtu.be/AliNKpiKT9w>

Note: the comments below include archived comments from previous editions of Independence Day fireworks schedules, with the oldest at the top.