



Welcoming WNC Procession 2022

Blue Ridge Pride Festival

Inclusion, Y' all

Sep 24, 2022 – Asheville NC



Procession Team Captain – Preparing for the procession

Dear Team Captain,

Welcome to the 2022 Blue Ridge Pride Welcoming WNC Procession! We are so glad that you are joining us. There is certainly a lot of excitement mounting in the community.

This packet provides basic planning information. We will be following up with additional instructions a week or two ahead of the event.

This packet was put together for groups large and small. Don't feel that you need to be as lavish. You are welcome to just show up!

We encourage you to find ways to have fun while making an important statement about Welcome and Inclusion. If you need some ideas let us know! We want the world to see that WNC is bursting with inclusion!

We look forward to seeing you on the 24th. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us:

From the entire Blue Ridge Festival Procession Team,

Email: Procession@BlueRidgePride.org



PREPARING FOR THE PROCESSION

Organize

Register	Establish a team captain to organize the effort and to communicate with us. Individual participants are their own team captain. Captains should register online .
Form your team	We've provided a form you can use. But you don't need to register your team members with us.
Create your theme	You are welcome to just show up. But many teams like to add a little pizzazz. Is there a theme you want to communicate? A cheer you want to share? Get creative!
Assemble your props	Also optional. Create signs and banners. Bring out your tee shirts, caps, and buttons. Or just bring your presence. That is priceless.

Advertise

Post to social media	Get your team to like and share our Facebook Event . Mark that you will be attending.
Recruit others	Download this one-page announcement and share it with friends and colleagues. Contact friends at other organizations. Get them to sign up, too. Share a link to our Procession Home Page and Registration Form .

Prepare

Watch your numbers	We will be continually monitoring estimated headcounts. If your team size changes appreciably, please keep us informed. [Procession Inbox]
COVID	Unless mandated by the government, we are not currently planning to require proof of vaccination or to enforce masks. But we ask you to consider: if you care enough to walk for a safe and inclusive community, is it too much to wear a mask for the half-mile walk?
Stay in touch	If there are issues that affect the procession (e.g., COVID, severe weather), we will send an email and/or a text to our primary contacts. We will also post updates to our site.

Restrictions on Signs & Banners / Distribution of Materials

Consistency with Diversity & Inclusion: Any materials deemed antithetical to a spirit of welcome, diversity & inclusion will not be permitted in the procession.

Public Streets / Sidewalks: While we are on public roads, procession walkers **cannot** hand things out or throw things to the crowd. Walkers must stay in formation. **This is a safety issue.**

Once the festival begins at 11:00 am, festival rules apply: No posters or signs are allowed and no distribution of materials within the festival boundaries is allowed, except by approved exhibitors and vendors within their booths. Once the procession is over, all sign and banners must be put away. We will offer a storage area by the main stage if you need it.



THE PROCESSION, STEP-BY-STEP



- 1. Walkers should plan to meet at the parking lot across from 23 Grove Street between 9:00 and 9:30 am.**
Formation We will use the time between 9:30 and 10:00 to review safety, check banners and ensure that we are within the capacity limit of our permit. **You cannot park in this parking lot, so be sure to arrive in time** (See Parking Map at back of packet). We will have a port-a-john, water, and a trash can at the lot.
 - Team captains: Check in as you arrive. You will be given a numbered spot.
 - Get your team to your assigned lot space by 9:30
 - Be ready to march by 9:50.
- 2. Start** **We will start the procession promptly at 10:00 AM.** This has been negotiated to create minimal disruption to public transportation.
- 3. Public Streets** There is an important difference between a parade and procession. For a parade, all streets and sidewalks are blocked off. **For a procession**, they remain partially open. Police provide an escort and block each intersection as we approach it. We own the east-bound half of the street. There may be west-bound traffic on part of the route.
 - Because sidewalks are open, people cannot bring chairs or block intersections.
 - Because cars can continue westbound, it is critical that we maintain a tight formation.**
 - Because we are being protected from the front and rear by a traffic detail, we need to keep together, especially at intersections.
- 4. Park Entry** Once we enter the park, things are a bit looser. You can mingle a little; you can toss beachballs and hand out beads and buttons to people in the crowd.
- 5. Main Stage** We allow time to introduce and photograph organizations in front of the main stage. You need to keep things moving, but think about a team pose that you can carry off very quickly.
- After the Procession** After the stage ceremony is over, we require everyone to return any signs and banners to their cars or booths, or to store them by the stage. Once the festival begins at 11:00 am, festival rules apply: no posters or signs are allowed and no distribution of materials within the festival boundaries, except by approved exhibitors and vendors within their booths.

Thank you!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is the Procession an LGBTQ+-only Event?

No. It's bigger than that. While the festival celebrates our LGBTQ+ community, we have organized the procession to be inclusive of everyone. No doubt, it will have a pronounced LGBTQ+ accent. But everyone who supports an inclusive community is encouraged to represent themselves. We are stronger together.

What Can We Bring? What Can We Carry?

- ❑ **Masks.** We urge you to bring masks. Have some fun with this. Get themed masks.
- ❑ **Banners, Signs & Props:** You are welcome to bring banners and signs. But bear in mind that you are limited to the width of the eastbound lane and that we will be walking in close quarters. Please don't bring a banner that is so complicated to carry that it could endanger our flow.
- ❑ **Organization Logos:** These are encouraged. We want the world to know that we have a lot of groups, businesses, schools, organizations and communities that believe in diversity and inclusion. Wear and carry your organization identifiers with PRIDE!
- ❑ **Clothing & Costume:** There is no specific dress code. This is about diversity. **Please keep it family-friendly.**

What Shouldn't We Bring? What Shouldn't We Do?

- ❑ **Handouts:** While on Patton Avenue, please don't carry things to distribute or throw. It's a safety issue.
- ❑ **Tone:** We encourage you to avoid negative protest signs. Such signs focus attention on "them". **This day, we want to focus on "us" – on our community and what we aspire to. Focus on what we stand for, rather than against. Remember "Inclusion, Y'all!" is our theme.**
- ❑ **Family- and Community-Friendly:** We leave this to your interpretation. By all means, be you. Express yourself. But try to do so in a way that doesn't distract attention from our message or intentionally provoke discomfort. [This is about creating an inclusive environment in a very public space.](#)
- ❑ **Vehicles / Pets:** We're sorry, but city ordinances don't allow either in the park for festivals.

What About People with Special Needs?

We want everyone to be able to take part in this procession. Unfortunately, our procession route does involve a series of intersections, hills, and possible stairs. Please contact us. We will find a way to include them. A great spot to join a group is near the stage-right area at the end of the procession.

What If Hate Groups Arrive?

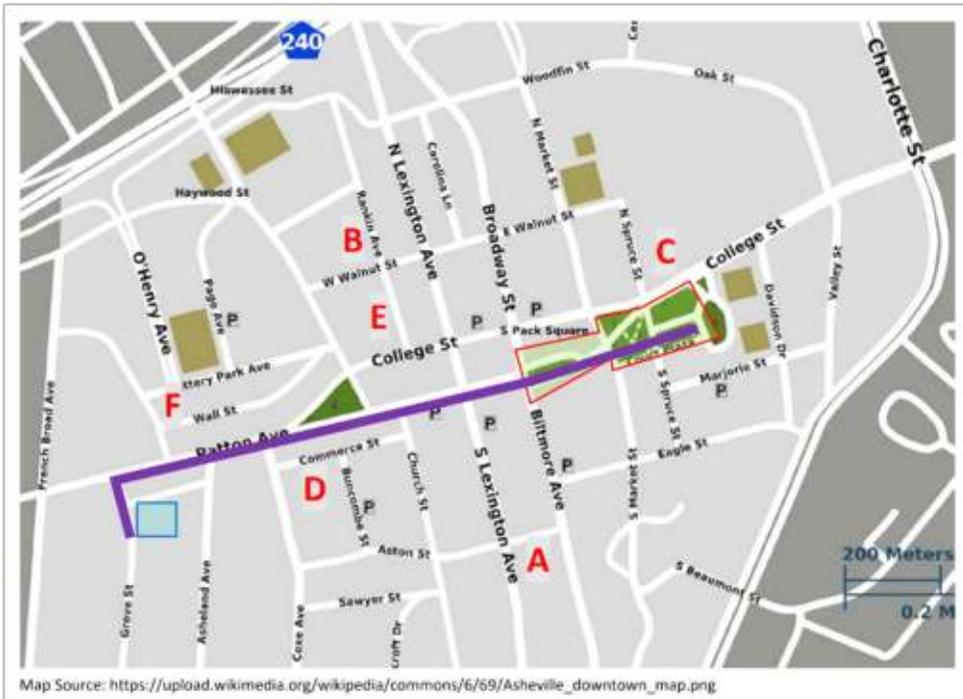
Sadly, some groups target joyful events like ours. Their overriding objective is to destroy the joy and to provoke violence and fear. As the following articles attest, remaining joyful and loving seems to be the most effective response to hate.

- [Clowns Kicked KKK Asses](#) neatorama.com
- [Rewriting an Attackers' Script](#) George Lakey @ WagingNonViolence.org
- [LGBTQ activists bring the dance floor to the streets](#) Sarah Freeman-Woolpert @ WagingNonViolence.org
- [Why Joy Is The Perfect Resistance To A Politics Of Fear](#) Janey Stephenson @ WagingNonViolence.org
- [How to Roll Back Fanaticism](#) David Brooks @ The New York Times
- [How Dancing In The Streets Is Saving Democracy](#) Sarah Freeman-Woolpert @ WagingNonviolence.org



Parking for the Procession

You will not be able to park at the lot where we are gathering. Please arrive early enough to park and get to the lot between 9:00 and 9:30.



Public Garages (Spaces)

- A. Biltmore Avenue (247)
- B. Civic Center (340)
- C. College Street (276)
- D. Coxe Avenue (410)
- E. Rankin Avenue (138)
- F. Wall Street (122)

P. Private Garages

- Procession Start (23 Grove)
- Procession Route
- Festival Area

Procession Route

