

TurkeyTALK

MAY 2009

chicago
festival
association

CREATING AN ICON TEDDY TURKEY COMES TO LIFE



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With a suffering economy and families looking for a great entertainment value, what better than a FREE parade filled with the nations best marching bands, performing units and giant helium balloons? We need your company's help to make it happen!



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There is a reason that each year's McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade looks magnificent and effortless at the same time. What is it that makes the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade successful and crowd-pleasing year after year?



8 - Behind the Scenes with The Barefoot Hawaiians

For the past 10 years, no matter the weather, paradise has come to Chicago in the form of hula dancers, fire dancers and musicians known as The Barefoot Hawaiians. We sit down with director Gwen Kennedy and discuss the group's exciting performances each year.

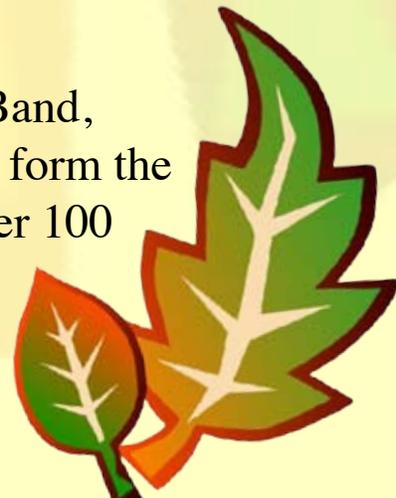


10 - Creating an Icon: Teddy Turkey Comes to Life

How does a simple drawing turn into a real character that spreads holiday cheer 365 days a year? We sit down with Karen Dollmont of CustomMascot.com and ask her about bringing Chicago's favorite turkey to life.

PARADE FUN FACT

Last year's parade featured the U-46 United Marching Band, combining over 400 high school students from Bartlett, IL to form the parade's largest marching band. In this group, there were over 100 drummers pounding out their melody to the nearby crowd.



Volunteer at Chicagoland Speedway - raise money for the Parade



We are looking for Parking Lot Attendants to create a safe and fun environment for race goers in July and August for both NASCAR and the IRL (respectively). For each volunteer that helps out, Chicagoland Speedway will make a donation to the McDonald's® Thanksgiving Parade! **So, we need everyone's help!** For more information on these opportunities, call Dan at 312.235.2217 or visit www.chicagofestivals.org and click on the "Volunteer" tab.

Photo: NASCAR Community

Enjoy the parade in celebrity style - VIP Experiences now on sale



Enjoy star-studded treatment and purchase your VIP Experience for the 2009 McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade today! This is the only way to see the great first-hour performances LIVE and in person. Enjoy television zone seating, lite continental breakfast and convenient VIP restrooms.

Visit www.chicagofestivals.org to purchase your VIP Experience package today!

Photo: Ralph Childs

Sponsor the Equestrian Program - Majestic and Powerful



Horses are beautiful and powerful creatures, combining elegance with quickness. Spread the same message about your organization by sponsoring the parade's equestrian program. This package includes sponsorship of 12 units, getting thorough exposure throughout the broadcast. Also included is print advertising and radio exposure. A great way to exhibit social responsibility while receiving a measurable return on investment.

For more information, contact Phil at 312.235.2216.

Photo: Dan Higgins

Be in the 2009 Parade - Unit Applications are due by May 29th



Don't miss the chance to perform in front of 5 million television viewers nationally and over 425,000 on-street spectators by applying to perform in the 2009 McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade in downtown Chicago. If your performance is unique, amazing and exciting, we are looking for you!

Visit www.chicagofestivals.org to apply to be in the 2009 McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade today!

Photo: Johnny Boston



McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade



Why Event Sponsorship is More Important Than Ever ...

by Phil Purevich

“The more things change, the more they remain the same ...”
 --- French Proverb

In 1934, our country was nearing the end of the Great Depression. A group of local businessmen thought that a Christmas parade on State Street would be the perfect way to lift the spirits of Chicagoans and an effective way to increase retail activity during the holiday season. They were right on both counts,



In 1934, a steam engine train pulled the first holiday parade into the city to the excitement of the onlooking Chicagoans.

and parade which started in 1934 continues today as the McDonald's® Thanksgiving Parade.

As we look at the parade in 2009, America finds herself in the midst of one of the worst financial downturns in the last 75 years. We need the help of businessmen and businesswomen to make sure that the parade goes on! Together, we can lift the spirits of Chicagoans, our visitors watching the parade in person, and the millions watching at home on our national broadcast. We will offer what America needs - free family entertainment!



In 1967, the Chicago Fire Department leads Mayor Richard J. Daley down the parade route.



Santa greets the crowd in front of Liggett's Drug Store during the 1935 parade.

There are many reasons to be a parade sponsor. To be an upstanding corporate citizen; to support the community; to gain quantifiable exposure; to launch a new product; to support a branding initiative; etc. But, the best reason of all is to help create lifetime memories for the millions of people watching the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade throughout the nation.

So, be a sponsor, a benefactor, a supporter and a patron of this wonderful Chicago-based tradition. And through the course of your support, receive unparalleled event exposure that includes television, radio, print and internet. You can call any of our staff members to find out more about becoming a partner today.



Photo: Phyllis Walters

In 2009, we need your help in creating lifetime memories for the millions of viewers!

Special thanks to the Chicago Public Library, Special Collections and Preservation Division for reproduction rights for these historic photos. (In order: CLAC 2-1, CLAC 5-7-19, CLAC 1-28-2)



1507 E. 53rd Street #102
Chicago, IL 60615

312.235.2217
www.chicagofestivals.org



THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE



BY ANNIE WHITCRAFT

Creating a parade for a national audience is not as easy as you think. It takes generous sponsors, hard-working volunteers and fantastic parade participants. When you combine all of these elements - you get the magic of the McDonald's® Thanksgiving Parade! While the formula only has three main components - it has taken 76 years to refine the formula to bring the result that you see every Thanksgiving morning. Now, we are going to take you into the science behind the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade.

The first element in any successful parade is its people - staff, volunteers and everyone else that makes the parade function. Even though the Chicago Festival Association does the behind the scenes work, there is no way that they could do everything on parade day. That is where all our wonderful volunteers come in. "We have over 40 volunteers that help us on a year-round basis, working hard to coordinate over 1,200 fantastic volunteers (known as Team Turkey) that put on the parade each Thanksgiving," states Event Manager Dan Mulka.

NOBODY HAS MORE FUN THAN THE LASALLE COUNTY TOURISM COALITION POO CREW! PHOTO BY PHYLLIS WALTERS



GS

GENEREROUS SPONSORS

Next, we include the support from our generous sponsors. Without sponsors, the parade simply could not exist. From financial support to gift bag donations, sponsors are responsible for bringing great entertainment to the people of Chicagoland. "Many of the exciting things that we are able to do each year are directly in part to our great sponsors," says Executive Director Phil Purevich. "Sponsors bring free family entertainment to over 425,000 excited watchers on State Street (along with millions watching at home on WGN)."

CASE NEW HOLLAND WILL BE PRESENTING 12 GIANT INFLATABLE BALLOONS IN THE 2009 PARADE.



FP

FANTASTIC PARTICIPANTS

By now, you can probably guess what our last ingredient is: the participants. The units you see marching down State Street are the "icing on the cake." After a rigorous search process, only the best and most entertaining units are chosen for the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade. "Our goal is to provide a diverse, exciting parade for everyone watching," says Associate Executive Director Peter Smith. "If those watching say 'wow' as a group goes by, we have done our job with regard to selecting units."

PERENNIAL FAVORITES OF PARADE VIEWERS, THE ACROBATIC JESSE WHITE TUMBLERS WILL BE MAKING ANOTHER APPEARANCE IN 2009



Once all of the individual pieces are assembled, we combine them to create a memorable event for everyone involved. The formula, however, is ever changing and we are always looking for new and exciting ways to make the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade even better. So, keep tuning in every year to WGN 9 Chicago and WGN America and make some lifelong memories with us!



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH

The Barefoot Hawaiians

There have been many wonderful groups that have participated in the McDonald's® Thanksgiving Parade over the years. Recently, Turkey Talk sat down with long time parade participants The Barefoot Hawaiians from Des Plaines, IL. Turkey Talk spoke with Gwen Kennedy, director of the Barefoot Hawaiians.

Turkey Talk: Thanks for taking the time to speak with us, Gwen. Tell me a little about your group.

Barefoot Hawaiians: We were established in 1983. Providing Hawaiian entertainment to Chicago and beyond, the company has had the opportunity to perform at over 600 shows per year. Our group presents Hula Dancers, Fire Dancers and Polynesian Musicians representing Hawaii here on the mainland. We are happy to be the chosen entertainment every weekend at The Tiki Terrace Restaurant in Des Plaines.



Photo: Lawrence Ware

The lovely Barefoot Hawaiian Hula Dancers make their way down State Street in 2008.

TT: How long has your group been involved with the parade, and, how did you first get involved with the event?

BH: We have been a part of the parade for 10 years now. We were first asked to participate by committee members who saw our performance and thought it would be a unique addition to the lineup.



The younger Barefoot Hawaiians wave to the camera at the 2008 parade.

TT: What do you like best about the parade?

BH: We love the crowd response to our group, especially when they see our fire dancers! And, we also enjoy bringing paradise to a very cold November day in Chicago!

TT: Are you all really barefoot during the parade? Is there any special training that your group does to deal with the elements parade morning?

BH: The only members of our group who are brave enough to “go barefoot” are our courageous fire dancers! I think that is what people look for. The rest of us simply don our shoes and hula down the street! No special training is required, just shake the hips and wear multiple layers.

TT: Tell us how you put together those fabulous routines we see parade morning.

BH: Preparing for the parades, we choose Hawaiian songs that have a holiday theme. In our small studios, all the dancers work in unison to present the hula to Chicago. The fire dancers simply prepare by purchasing

enough fuel. Their performance is choreographed on the spot - when and where the winds don't blow as fiercely.

TT: How do you handle the possibility of cold weather?

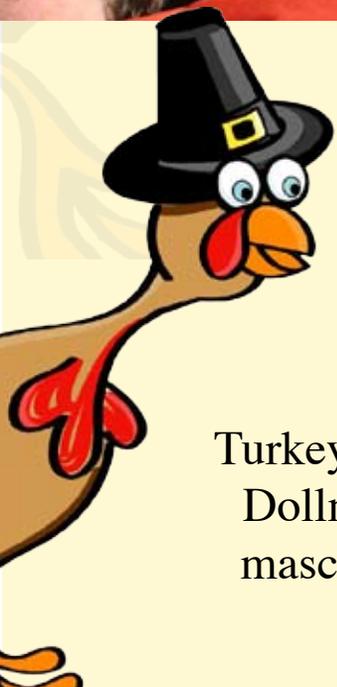
BH: By now, we have learned to expect the coldest day ever! 4 years ago, when it was very cold, we loaded up on the heat packs. Our real orchid leis from Hawaii, so nicely draped around our scarves, froze solid! But alas - our fire dancers still took off their shirts!

TT: Thank you Gwen, as well as in The Barefoot Hawaiians for being such long time participants. You can tell that each of you truly enjoy bringing smiles and lasting holiday memories to millions on Thanksgiving morning.

Have a group that wants to help us make lasting holiday memories? Be sure to apply to participate in the McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade. Visit www.chicagofestivals.org and select participate. Act fast! The application deadline is Friday, May 29.



Teddy Turkey waves to the crowd at Chicago's St. Patrick's Day Parade in downtown Chicago.



CREATING AN ICON

Turkey Talk recently sat down with founder of *Custom Mascot's* Karen Dollmont, who brought life to our very own Teddy Turkey. How do mascots turn from a simple drawing into a character larger than life?

Turkey Talk: How did you get into mascot creation?

Karen Dollmont: I was a graduate of Graphic Design and prop making and was asked to create a mascot for a local ball club. I soon discovered there were a lot of bad mascots out there and set out to make a performer friendly mascot that was still true to each clients needs.

TT: How long have you been making mascots and what are some of the characters that you have brought to life?

KD: Over 15 years. Some of the really fun ones were Torchie for the International Olympic committee in Switzerland, Jasper the Bear for Jasper Alberta, Captain Crime Stopper for Crime Stoppers, and Rocky for Western Illinois University. I've made many more that have turned out amazing!



Everything starts with a simple sketch.



The head starts to take shape.

TT: Are there certain design aspects that make a mascot more kid-friendly?

KD: The first thing is the face. If you have a scary face kids will just run.. The eyes make the mascot. In general, the taller the mascot the less kid friendly he is. The darker the mascot the less kid friendly. Teddy works because he has a big hat, bright eyes and the friendly personality comes out as well.

TD: What are some interesting features of the Teddy costume?

KD: Teddy has several details worked into the costume. First his tail is removable and air brushed. We did this so he could be stored, shipped and cleaned easy. The big round body makes him have a waddle when he walks. The different textures of fabric are nice as well, including Polar fleece on his beak and the velvet on his waddle). Short and long fur are combined to create the look of feathers. Then we pulled the leggings and feet out of the same fabric and color as the beak to make the mascot look unified.

TT: Tell me about the physical components of putting Teddy together.

KD: Teddy has a closed cell foam head, with 4 quick release buckles to attach the head to the body. He is designed to fit someone 5' 8 - 6'3 the body, gloves and leggings are machine washable at home. No added expense for cleaning! The foam used on the head does not retain odors or bacteria. The feet are foam sculpted with a durable rubber tread.

TT: Thank you Karen for sitting down with us today, and thank you for the great work in creating Teddy Turkey! If you are interested in having a mascot created for your organization, visit Karen at CustomMascot.com!

