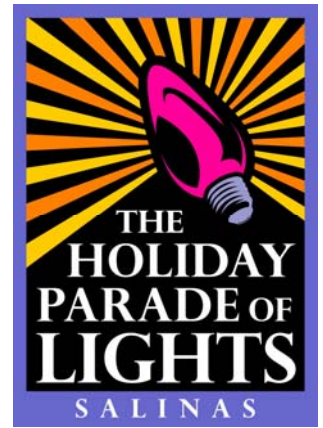


History of the Holiday Parade of Lights

A Family Tradition

The Holiday Parade of Lights, celebrating 'One City, Many Cultures,' has become a Salinas family tradition. The parade is a volunteer community effort and has been hosted by the Oldtown Salinas Association since 2006. Prior to 2006, the parade was organized by various community groups and volunteers.



This November will mark the Holiday Parade of Lights 10th Anniversary. With each passing year the parade has matured, while striving to maintain the objective of being a free, family oriented event.

Each year, families begin arriving hours before the parade begins, bringing their chairs and blankets and picking just the right spot. Salinas' families, from toddler to grandparent, line up along Main Street and truly represent the diverse cultures of our community. Santa and Mrs. Clause, giant helium balloons, festive floats, local dance groups and costume characters have become favorites of the young...and young at heart.

The Holiday Parade of Lights begins at Acacia and South Main Streets, advancing north on South Main Street and ending at The National Steinbeck Center. Attendance has been consistent for the past 4 years, with 35,000 people coming to Oldtown to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season.

Free Pre-Parade Activities

Kid's 12 and younger can showcase their artistic talents by participating in the Holiday Parade of Lights Coloring Contest. Coloring sheets can be downloaded from the parade website and are also delivered to a variety of schools and clubs. Kids are encouraged to be creative with crayons and markers, and boy are they. Over 800 entries were received in 2009 which made judging extremely difficult!

The Kid's Zone opens at 4PM on parade day and over the years has offered a variety of activities. In past years the Kid's Zone has been at the John Steinbeck Library and Maya Cinemas. Kids are entertained with story telling, face painting, costume character visits, and of course Santa and Mrs. Claus.

How it all Happens

The Holiday Parade of Lights is organized by a committee of dedicated individuals, all sharing a commitment to produce a quality parade. Each year over 140 volunteers are recruited for parade day to help with entry check in, handle our giant helium balloons, act as information runners, and keep the parade moving as parade marshals. It's the volunteers who make it happen.

The Salinas business community underwrites the parade through their generous sponsorship donations. Donations cover all city related permit and department fees, equipment rentals, necessary safety support, parade promotional materials and all other related costs.

**Please join us and help carry on the tradition.
Sunday, November 28, 2010**