

Plans ahead of schedule with theme, grand marshal by Kevin Parks

<http://www.thisweeknews.com/content/stories/northland/news/2016/10/24/northland-july-4-parade-plans-ahead-of-schedule-with-theme-grand-marshal.html>

The theme and even the grand marshal for the Northland Independence Day Parade are already set.

Planning for the 55th edition of the major community event is well ahead of the pace set in previous years. Dave Cooper, president of the Northland Area Business Association and a member of the committee working on the July 4, 2017, parade, credits new chairwoman Anna L. Winders.

"She's extremely organized and pays a lot of attention to detail," Cooper said last week. "We haven't really ever started this early. She's really put a concerted effort into getting a theme early and possibly modifying some of the way we organized the lineup and the details to make it more efficient.

"She's really stepped to the plate and done a good job so far."

Ken Gilbert, past president of the Forest Park Civic Association and a veteran of the parade planning panel, agreed with Cooper's assessment.

"I think she brings a lot of excitement and a lot of passion, and I'm really excited about that," he said. "She also brings a lot of new ideas."

Winders, who has lived in the Karmel-Woodward Park neighborhood for the past 14 years, was secretary of last year's parade committee, with Scott Dowling serving as first-time chairman. Winders said she got involved in the parade because she has a degree in project management.

"It just kind of seemed natural," she added.

The theme for the 2017 morning parade, which falls on a Tuesday, is "What Do Dreams Know of Boundaries?" That's part of a quote attributed to aviator Amelia Earhart: "Everyone has oceans to fly, if they have the heart to do it. Is it reckless? Maybe. But what do dreams know of boundaries?"

A post on the parade's website ([northlandparade.org](http://northlandparade.org)) notes that 2017 will be the 80th anniversary of Amelia Earhart's final flight and that July 4 falls "just two days after the 80th anniversary of the last time she was seen."

In keeping with the female aviator aspect of the parade theme, the grand marshal will be Susan Reid of Newark, sister of the late Geraldine "Jerrie" Mock, the first woman to fly solo around the world.

"It's not a common theme for a parade, I think, but it's certainly something to take a chance on," Gilbert said. "I think it's a way to get people in tune a little bit with hidden history. She's certainly someone Columbus can be proud of."

Winders admitted that it's not always easy, with fall just now hinting at settling in, to get people focused on something that will happen in the height of summer.

"It can be difficult, but the parade committee has always started in the winter," she said. "Those who volunteer are really used to the idea that we begin very early."

"We absolutely will accept any and all volunteers at any time."

The most help, as always, is needed on July 3 to set things up along the parade route and then the day of the event, according to Winders. She said she can offer community service credits to area high school students who want to help out on those days.

"I think that everything's going well so far," Winders said. "We are actually ahead of schedule at this point for getting things completed."

The next meeting of the parade committee is set for 6:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 28, at in the Columbus Square Bowling Palace, 5707 Forest Hills Blvd.

Winders may be contacted by email at [chair@northlandparade.org](mailto:chair@northlandparade.org).

*[kparks@thisweeknews.com](mailto:kparks@thisweeknews.com)*

*@KevinParksTWI*