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Huge parade nearly ready

It will be biggest in the state

By BETH GORCZYCA
Times Staff Writer

One hundred draft horses will lead the big parade, 182 floats close behind.

Regardless of how big or small it is, it seems just about everyone loves a parade. Chillicothe on Saturday will host one of the largest parades ever to hit Ohio.

The bicentennial parade will kick off at 1:30 p.m. with 182 units separated into four time periods, more than 3,000 participants, about 200 horses and 11 bands.

"This is going to be the largest parade in Ohio," said David Medert, one of the parade's organizers.

From the famous Budweiser Clydesdales and the Hema hitching team to wagons and a full-size replica of a canal boat, Medert said the parade will be full of items relating to the history of Chillicothe, including floats representing scenes of Nathaniel Massie and Duncan McArthur laying out the city and the 1803 relocation of settlers at Green Tree Tavern.

"The parade is broken into four 30-year divisions that represent major events in the city and the world so people can compare it to what happened here," he said.

The canal boat, based on an authentic canal boat from 1845, is an example of this, Medert said. The completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal in 1833 signified growth not only for Chillicothe, but for the entire nation as it expanded westward.

"The canal is a phase in Ohio history that Chillicothe played a very important role in," said Gerald Ratcliffe, one of the parade organizers.

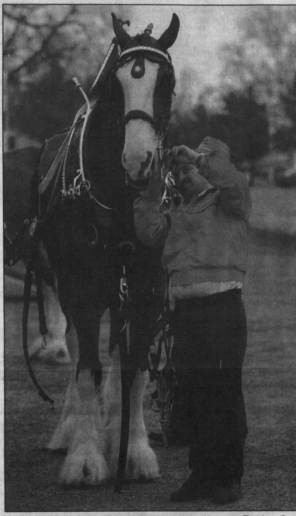
Bicentennial coordinator Karen Conroy said the boat is coming from the Toledo area today, but said she won't move what time it will hit Chillicothe.

"When you see talking about a 65-foot long canal boat that weighs 30 tons, it doesn't move too quickly," she said.

In addition to a variety of wagons and classic cars, some famous people from the past and present will show up in the parade. Grand marshal singer Nancy Wilson, Miss Ohio Ellen Pantaroli and the to-be-selected bicentennial queen will ride at the head of the parade with Mayor Joe Stalter, the bicentennial commission and the American Legion Post 62 Color Guard.

Throughout the parade, historical figures from both the city's and the nation's history will make special appearances.

"We'll have people impersonating Abraham Lincoln, Simon Kenton, Duncan McArthur, Nathaniel Massie and Joshua Sill,



The horses are here! The horses are here!

The Gazette staff
For many in Chillicothe, bicentennial festivities unofficially kicked off Thursday with the arrival of the Budweiser Clydesdales in Yodotange Park.

The eight-horse hitch will be part of the Bicentennial Parade Saturday, marking the second time in three years the hitch has come to Chillicothe.

"There are literally thousands of requests each year for a team of horses, but there are only three teams and they only make about 600 visits a year," said Janice Workman, administrative manager with Classic Brands of Chillicothe.

Ten horses were brought here from their home near St. Louis to be a part of the parade, but will be kept at a stable near Columbus.

The Budweiser Clydesdales have been a part of the Ashbuser-Brosch Brewery image since the end of prohibition, Workman said. The horses are bred for their strength — the red brewery wagons they pull weigh nearly four tons.

According to information from Budweiser, most of the Clydesdales are between three and four years of age when they start pulling the hitch. A full-grown horse weighs between 2,000 and 2,300 pounds and stands 18 hands high — their height about 6 feet at the shoulder.

Workman said the horses are being housed so far north because the company requires stables to follow strict guidelines and provide the proper feed. Each horse eats between 20 to 40 pounds of hay, up to 20 gallons of water and between 20 to 25 quarts of feed, a mixture of beet pulp, oats, bran, minerals, salt and molasses.

TV-2 will have live coverage of the parade beginning at 1:30 p.m. Saturday and will air tape delays of the bicentennial pageant and monument dedication next week, although dates and times are yet to be announced.

WWHO-53 will air highlights of the parade during its 10 p.m. news broadcast. WCML-4 may also broadcast highlights during its 11 p.m. news broadcast.

Frank Portocello, a handler with the Budweiser Clydesdales, prepares one of the massive horses to be hitched to the wagon for a show in Yodotange Park on Thursday.

Medert said.

But history won't be the only emphasis of the parade. Bands from around the county will march, including the Chillicothe, Adams, Hamilton, Fair Valley, Union and Buckeye Valley high school bands as well as a combined band from South and Mt. Logan middle schools. The Adams Band will also be performing.

But if food is the way to your heart and history and bands don't do enough, Chillicothe City Schools food service director Ann Trent said there will be five food booths set up at various locations throughout the parade route selling hot dogs, bratwurst, meat

pizzas, fresh fruit, popcorn, chips and drinks.

Trent said each booth will be manned by parents and staff members representing different groups within the district such as the PTO or the Cavalier Club. The money raised at the booths will be used to support the group and their efforts within individual schools.

Between the food, floats and fun, Ratcliffe said he expects the parade to be a big success.

"We're going to have a great parade," he said. "The only thing now is to hope for a beautiful day on Saturday. We're doing a lot of praying."



The Johnson/Gastons

Chillicothe City Schools food stand

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Sat, Mar 23, 2019