Olympia Harbor Days FAQ’s

DIAL 911 for all EMERGENCIES on Land or Sea

Then report information to the Harbor House at Percival Landing.

**TOPIC: TUGBOATS AND TUGBOAT RACES**

**Q:** *Can I ride on a tugboat?*

**A:** Tugboats are not licensed or insured to carry or transport people and the liability risk is high. There is always a licensed and insured touring and host boat for 1-hour harbor tours Tugboat Race viewing out in the deep channel. Advanced tickets can be purchased online using the links on the schedule page. Tickets may be purchased at the festival until sold out.

**Q:** *Where are the tugboat races and how can I watch them*?

**A:** The tugboat races are in the deep harbor out near Butler Cove and are only able to be viewed by boat. Personal boats can be launched at Swantown Marina for a fee. There is always a licensed and insured touring and host boat for 1-hour harbor tours Tugboat Race viewing out in the deep channel. Advanced tickets can be purchased online using the links on the schedule or excursions page. Tickets may be purchased dockside by the vessels at the festival until sold out.

**Q:** *How long are the tugboat races and are all tugs racing?*

**A:** There are 2 or 3 classes of tugboat races which take about 3 hours from dock departure at Noon to dock return about 3PM, depending on weather conditions. Not all tugs race and some may remain at the docks for touring.

**Q:** *Can I bring my boat?*

**A:** Yes, however private/public moorage is not available at the Port of Olympia dock at the Port Plaza or the Percival Landing Docks, as these are reserved for FESTIVAL BOATS ONLY. If you more your boat at these docks you are subject to ticketing and towing.

**TOPIC: PARKING AND ROAD CLOSURES**

**Q:** *Where can I park?*

**A:** Street parking after 5 PM and on weekends is free in downtown Olympia. FREE parking is available at Market Street and Marine Drive and has been donated by the Port of Olympia. There are many parking lots but watch signage as most are prepay lots. Private lots are marked as No Event Parking. Intercity Transit has normal bus service that serves downtown during Olympia Harbor Days. For information about Intercity and their routes available to serve downtown please visit their website.

**Q:** *Will there be road closures?*

**A:** The only road closed during Olympia Harbor Days is Columbia Street between Olympia and Thurston Avenues.

**TOPIC: FESTIVAL HISTORY AND TRIVIA**

**Q:** *How did Olympia Harbor Days get started?*

**A:** Olympia Harbor Days was started by Olympia South Sound Chapter of the State Capital Museum Association, now the South Sound Marine Heritage Association (SSMHA), in 1974, bringing back the vintage tugs to the south sound for the holiday weekend. They moored their vessels at a small barge, bringing awareness of Olympia’s and south Puget Sound’s rich maritime history to the community. In 1978 Harbor Fair was added which brought an arts and crafts element to the land side of the harbor. In 1983 the festivals combined and the logo, which highlights a different tugboat every year, was created by Olympia residents Chuck and Karla Fowler. SSMHA managed the festival for almost four decades, until 2012 when the Olympia Kiwanis took over, however they still play a role in the tugboat show and races. Local maritime historian and SSMHA President, Les Eldridge will be at the festival as well.

**Q:** *Who is this year’s logo boat?*

**A:** This year’s logo boat is the Cedar King. Read about her on the Tugboat page on our website.

**TOPIC: GENERAL**

**Q:** *Where is the festival located?*

**A:** The festival runs along the Olympia Harbor waterfront South from the Port of Olympia (704 Columbia Street) at Market Street to Percival Landing at 4th Avenue (222 Columbia Street).

**Q:** *Is there an information center for questions, maps and lost and found?*

**A:** Yes! The Olympia Kiwanis are on hand at the Harbor House at Percival Landing by the playground to answer all your questions and maintain a lost and found box.

**Q:** *Is there food for sale at the festival?*

**A:** Yes! Food is available both at Percival Landing and the Port Plaza.

**Q:** *Where are the restrooms located*?  
**A:** Built in public restrooms are located in the Harbor House and South End of Percival Landing. Portable restrooms and washstands are located at the Port Plaza, Olympia Avenue and The Olympia Center Parking Lot.

**Q:** *How can I participate in the festival if I am a vendor?*

**A:** Vendors of all types – food, arts & crafts, commercial and non-profits are welcome to participate as space allows. New vendors can start to register January 1 through our website. Vendor booth rates vary depending on what you sell.

**Q:** *Is the festival accessible to people with physically challenges and needs?*  
**A:** The festival is 100% out of doors located at Percival Landing, a City of Olympia park, boardwalk, and public space, and at the Port Plaza, Port of Olympia plaza and public space, with adherence to all local, state and federal laws for access for all people. The vessels at the festival vary with accessibility and most are privately owned retired work boats that can be difficult to access for touring.

**Q:** *Is there a beer garden?*

**A:** Yes – the Squaxin Island Tribe are hosting a beer garden at the Port Plaza. It will also sell wine and sangria.

**Q:** *What is the Give-Away Contest?*

**A:** Radio Station Mixx96 usually runs a contest with free entry, only at the festival. Participants can choose to enter a drawing for free prizes that change annually. Winners will be announced on the radio following the festival.

**Q:** *Where is the free speech area?*

**A:** A designated Free Speech area is located at Columbia Street and Corky Avenue near Anthony’s Restaurant.

**Q:** *Can I volunteer?*

**A:** Volunteers are always welcome, needed and must sign a waiver. Please email [info@HarborDays.com](mailto:info@HarborDays.com) if you are interested.

**Q:** *Who is the South Sound Maritime Heritage Association and how can I join.*

**A:** The South Sound Maritime Heritage Association is a non-profit group of volunteers dedicated to preserving the maritime heritage of Olympia and the South Sound Region. You can find out more at [www.MaritmeOly.org](http://www.MaritmeOly.org).

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Revised 2023