

## **MEDIA FACT SHEET**

101<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
NEWPORT BEACH



December 16-20

**WHAT:** 101st Annual Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade with the theme, "The Joys of Christmas Toys."

- Oldest parade and most elaborate holiday celebration on water in the country featuring over 100 vessels and dating back to 1908.
- Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade is older than such holiday events as the tree lighting at Rockefeller Center and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.
- Decorated multi-million dollar yachts, kayaks, canoes and other small boats will light up the harbor as a dazzling array of holiday lights and music fill the air.

**WHEN:** Parade kicks off on **Wednesday, December 16 at 6:30PM** and runs nightly until **Sunday, December 20, 2009.**

**WHERE:** Newport Beach, CA, charting a 14 mile route throughout Newport Harbor.

\*Live commentary at Balboa Fun Zone with Captain Mike Whitehead

\*Route map available

**INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:** Gary Sherwin, President & CEO, Visit Newport Beach, Inc.; Richard Luehrs, President & CEO, Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce & Organizer, Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade

### **VISITOR/VIEWER INFORMATION**

#### **Where can guests view the parade?**

Viewing areas available for the public on public beaches located on Balboa Peninsula, the Fun Zone and Balboa Island. Additionally, several establishments along the waterfront offer prime viewing.

Fireworks Show: Sunday, December 20, 2009, the final night of the Parade, will feature a fireworks show at approximately 9:00 p.m. from the Balboa Pier. Ruby's Diner on the pier will close to accommodate the show.

#### **How did the Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade Begin?**

John Scarpa, an Italian gondolier, and Joseph Beek, the principal forces in the early development of Balboa Island, arrive in the Newport Harbor area in 1900. These two men establish the Tournament of Lights—an event that will continue for the century to come. In July 1908, the first lighted boat parade takes place. Scarpa, along with his fellow small boat operators, create a loosely organized affair consisting of nine vessels. The parade, illuminated by Japanese lanterns, is led by Scarpa's gondola followed by eight canoes. Thus, he is credited with creating the first lighted boat parade.

#### **Useful Links:**

<http://www.christmasboatparade.com>

<http://www.visitnewportbeach.com>

#### **Media Contacts:**

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