

P-rade Marshals' Marching Orders

(Thanks to Bob Rodgers '56 and Charles Plohn, Jr. '66)

Thanks for your willingness to serve as a Marshal in the one-and-only Princeton University P-rade. Your role is important in the success and enjoyment of this historic Reunions celebration – unique to Princeton across three centuries. Here are some of the ways each of you will be able to help, along with other specific responsibilities that may be assigned.

The **official Marshal dress code** is a navy blue blazer, white pants or skirt, a white shirt, a Princeton University or class tie or scarf, black shoes, the “da Vinci” hat from the Alumni Association and a special Marshal button. Borrowed da Vinci hats can be picked up at our mandatory Saturday morning meeting and must be returned at the end of the P-rade. (See the attached illustration by Henry Martin '48.)

In a wonderful booklet entitled “Going Back: The Uniqueness of Reunions and P-rades at Princeton University” written by William Selden '34 and illustrated by Henry Martin '48, P-rades have been described as “...unforgettable events: animated, boisterous, congenial, friendly, joyous, noisy and spirited. One alumnus described Reunions and P-rades as ‘bedlam and brotherhood,’ and another, ‘Some things in life justify themselves emotionally, without necessity for analytic reasoning.’” This is the exact historical spirit we would like to maintain in this year’s event. As Marshals, we just want that wonderful enthusiasm to be displayed alongside the P-rade route, not on it, as other classes are trying to march by.

During the P-rade we want to “clear the tracks” for the marchers, baby strollers, bands, golf carts and floats and we want to close any gaps between the marchers. But we also want people to enjoy themselves. Our primary objective as Marshals is to provide structure within the greater mission of joy and celebration for P-raders and spectators. Therefore, our general approach should be cheerful, requesting and explanatory as to the safety, order, pace and enjoyment of the P-rade. However, when necessary, do not hesitate to be firm and direct.

The only gap that is authorized in the P-rade is the one between the members of the Old Guard riding in golf carts and the first member of the Old Guard walking, since that gap results in one of the emotional highlights of the P-rade for the classes and spectators along the route.

Before the start of the P-rade

- (1) Although the P-rade officially kicks-off at 2:00 p.m., please be at your assigned area at about 1:30 p.m. to start interacting with the staging classes and spectators.
- (2) Area Captains should determine where they want their assigned Marshals stationed and which major classes they should march with.
- (3) Locate class leaders in advance and ask for their assistance in the staging and then marching of the class. Coach them as to the following.
- (4) Make sure the class banner is on hand (it is the responsibility of the class) and they have designated the classmates to carry it. [For the 50th Reunion class and older, banners will be delivered by student carriers to the class staging area on the route between 1:30 and 1:45 p.m. For the 49th Reunion class and younger, the class must pick up its banner on Witherspoon Green (near Blair Arch) between 8:00 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.] Make sure the banner and carriers as well as the class leaders are stationed at the top or

upstream of the class along the route [closest to Nassau Street], so that it enters the P-rade immediately after the previous class passes. The class then falls in behind the banner as it passes.

(5) For those major classes with bands, please make sure that the class leadership knows when it wants the band(s) to enter the P-rade.

Once the P-rade starts (2:00 p.m.) and thereafter

(6) Clear the route of waiting classes, spectators and photographers, safely behind the ropes, marked lines or barriers, in good time before the arrival of the vanguard of the P-rade, and then continuously until you join the P-rade with your assigned classes. Don't be stationary. Within your assigned area, walk up and down the route interacting with the staging classes and spectators. The arrival of the Point Marshal and the sound of the Princeton band will alert everyone that the P-rade is immediately upon them.

(7) If there are any gaps among the marchers in the P-rade, Marshals along the route should politely encourage the straggling marchers to close the gaps and keep a steady pace.

When your assigned classes enter the P-rade

(8) Have the class leaders, banner and band ready to lead. Pre-assigned Marshals will let down the guard ropes just before the class is about to enter the P-rade.

(9) Marshals stationed in front of the major classes along the route will fall in and march alongside their assigned classes when they join the P-rade and stay with them throughout the route. While marching, Marshals should help keep the class together in formation, especially stragglers, and encourage the class to keep a reasonable pace and keep moving throughout the route. ["sweep" from behind] Class cheerleaders may stop to lead cheers (and then catch up), while the class continues to move.

(10) On Poe Field, the class is to move immediately behind the preceding class to the front of the Reviewing Stand, stop briefly for one locomotive to salute President Tilghman, and then move on immediately in formation to the Dispersing Area. Large major classes, such as the 25th, will likely have more than one group stop in front of the Reviewing Stand, but in each instance it is the same drill.

(11) Marshals along with the class with its banner still raised continue beyond the Reviewing Stand and the bleachers within a marked lane towards a parked truck. Dispersing Area Marshals and Alumni Association and Event Staff personnel will be there to direct and assist you. Carts and floats exit to the right before the truck and marchers to the left towards Scully and Icahn. Bands follow the directions of the Marshals stationed in the Dispersing Area. Banners are deposited in the truck. Marshals should remain at the end to assure an orderly conclusion for your assigned classes, including clearance at the end of the route for the following classes.

(12) At this point you are (a) free to become a spectator or Marshal emeritus for this year, or (b) for the several of you who have double assignments, please report to your next assigned position. Prior to the P-rade we are always looking for volunteers, who after their initial assignment are willing to assist with the younger classes on Elm Drive, on Poe Field between Bloomberg Arch and the end of the bleachers, and in the Dispersing Area.