



## Welcome Float Builders

*Here are some helpful hints and information that we hope will make your float building experience a fun and productive adventure.*

1. Have fun in all you do! Laughter is the best tool or product you can ever use! So have a ball!
2. "The Plan": Gather everyone's brains together and talk out ideas. Listen to each other, sometimes a single word can end up being a whole idea! So have fun and throw out idea after idea. When you've come up with the idea, sketch it out and make a list of needed things.

### **Here is a list of things to help you get started:**

1. Flatbed, farm wagon, something to build your float on
2. Cardboard for shapes, structures, signs, etc.
3. Wood, nails, saw, hammer, staple gun etc.
4. Chicken wire for Paper Mache, skirting, props etc.
5. Spray foam can be used for sculptures, adding pieces together
6. Paint sticks for glue spreading
7. Rubber gloves & Old Clothes
8. De-solv-it spray, this works great for getting glue off of your skin
9. Paper towels, baby wipes, garbage bags, broom & dust pan.
10. Spray paint- Wal-Mart carries a very good and cheap spray paint. Remember, popped popcorn is 3-D in shape, so you have to spray in different directions to get full coverage. 3 light coats is better than 1 heavy coat because too much at once will soak the popcorn and cause it to shrink.
11. **GLITTER IS FUN!!** When the sun hits it on parade day it will guarantee 'ohhs & ahhs' from the crowd.
12. Different glues work better on certain corn products. Here are a few examples:  
**\*Tite Bond Panel Adhesive OR Beats Nails are great for popped & cracked corn**  
**\*Elmer's glue works best with corn meal, cornflakes etc.**  
***Von Tobel's carries Tite-Bond while Menards carries a different brand, but works just as well. Beats Nails by DAP is available at Home Depot. Neither of these glues wash out, so be sure to wear OLD CLOTHING!***  
**Please get your glue early, as they run out quickly around festival time.**

**CORN PRODUCTS:** The best part of the float!! Use your imagination!! It's unbelievable how many ways there are to use corn.

- Popped corn, kernels, cracked corn, corn meal, cornflakes, Kix cereal, microwave popcorn boxes, corn husks, corn silk, corn leaves, corn cob, corn roots etc.
- Cornhusks can be curled with a curling iron to make curly hairpieces or to give it a bend wherever you need it. Corn meal is ideal for faces or small flat areas. Corn roots upside down can look like a tree. Corn silk is good for hair. Just let your imagination flow!!!

**Popcorn Products:** You will be able to get your popped corn from the festival office ***once your application has been approved by the parade committee.*** You must call and reserve your popcorn. You will receive 3 bags at a time and the office will let you know when it will be available. When you get your popcorn home, open up the bags and allow the popcorn to get stale. It holds up better when it's stale. You may also request 1-#50 bag of unpopped kernels per organization. Additional bags are available to purchase for \$25 per bag.

**Float Height:** No taller than 12 ft. This allows for wires on parade route, and to get it out of the bus barn.

**Skirting:** This is a very important feature of the float!!! Skirting is what gives the illusion of floating down the street. There are many ideas for these. Some have used cardboard covered in corn products, chicken wire with corn leaves weaved in and out...these are just a few ideas. For the very bottom of the skirting, most use a fringe. CAUTION: It's good to leave 12-18" space from ground up to bottom of skirt for road and bumps; fringe goes here to FLOAT the street.

## **Bus Barn**

The Valparaiso School Bus Barn on Evans & Washington St. will be available from Tues.-Sat. the week of Popcorn Festival. You can call and reserve a space for your float ***after your application has been accepted.*** This is a wonderful opportunity to put finishing touches on your float and meet with other float builders. The public loves coming down during the week of festival to watch the progress of the floats. The times at the Bus Barn are from 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Tues., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. The doors open at 6 a.m. Saturday morning of the Parade. Please call early to reserve your spot...they fill up very quickly!!

If you're in need of a tractor or gator to pull your float, you can contact local farmers.

We know this is a lot of information at once, but believe us, that on Parade Day, your hearts will be full of joy and excitement when you see the smiles and hear the applause as you're walking in this year's Popcorn Parade!!

Good luck!!