



ABC 7 CHICAGO

Aug. 3, 2026

**ABC 7 CHICAGO TO AIR THE 97TH ANNUAL BUD BILLIKEN PARADE,
SATURDAY, AUG. 8, AT 10 A.M. ON ABC7 AND ABC7CHICAGO.COM**

ABC7/WLS-TV Chicago announced today that it will broadcast the 97th annual Bud Billiken Parade, which kicks off the Back-to-School Festival. The two-hour special, featuring the country's largest African American parade, will air live on ABC 7 and abc7chicago.com on Saturday, Aug. 8, from 10 a.m. to noon and will also be available across ABC 7's streaming and digital platforms.

ABC 7 Eyewitness News team members Cheryl Burton, Hosea Sanders and Val Warner will host the event from the broadcast booth, while Terrell Brown and Karen Jordan cover the parade's action and excitement from the ground. ABC 7's Samantha Chatman and other staffers will ride atop the ABC 7 Chicago float, engaging with the crowd along the parade route.

This year's countdown to the Bud Billiken Parade celebrates 97 Years of parading in excellence and will showcase some of the best and brightest of Chicago talent. The back-to-school parade will feature heart-pumping performances from the local Jesse White Tumblers, South Shore Drill Team, Golden Knights Drill Team, Chi-Town Cheerleaders, Next Level Dance Team, MBM Dance Team and Little Ladies of Virtue, among others.

Chicago native, actor, model and entrepreneur LisaRaye McCoy will serve as this year's Billiken Parade Grand Marshal. McCoy is best known for her roles in "The Players Club" and "Single Ladies" and as the former first lady of the Turks and Caicos.

With over 1 million spectators, the Bud Billiken Parade holds the distinction of being the oldest and biggest African American parade in the nation. Every August, it is a day of celebration and family gatherings, marking the beginning of the new school year for Chicago families.

"We are proud to be a part of this 97-year tradition, which has brought joy, inspiration and summer fun to generations of Chicagoans," said John Idler, general manager, ABC7/WLS-TV Chicago. "Our long-standing partnership with Chicago Defender Charities also allows us to spotlight the importance of education and student empowerment, which is central to the organization's mission."

The parade will kick off at 10 a.m. on 39th Street and Martin Luther King Drive, with grand marshal Weaver leading the procession south onto King Drive, through Washington Park and concluding at Garfield Boulevard.

About ABC7/WLS-TV Chicago

ABC7/WLS-TV Chicago is the No. 1 local news source and most-watched television station in Chicago. With top-rated daily newscasts spanning decades and the largest social media presence in

the market with more than 3.5 million Facebook followers, ABC7 Eyewitness News provides breaking news, investigative reporting, weather, politics, traffic and sports in the multiplatform space to Chicago, the suburbs and northwest Indiana. Named Best News Operation by the Associated Press, ABC 7 Eyewitness News produces “Chicago Proud,” a series of features that spotlights everyday heroes in and around Chicago. The station also produces the highest-rated New Year’s Eve special in Chicago, the nationally syndicated holiday kickoff special, “The Magnificent Mile Lights Festival,” and the award-winning series “Our Chicago,” which showcases the city’s diversity and highlights contributions in the Black, Hispanic, Asian, LGBTQ+ communities, among others. Every Friday, Windy City Weekend entertains while giving Chicagoans everything they need to know about what’s happening in the city. ABC 7 is the only Chicago station producing and broadcasting parades representing Chicago’s rich cultural history. The station has a long and proud tradition of broadcasting political candidate debates to keep Chicago’s electorate informed and town halls where residents can share their concerns. ABC7’s outreach efforts include an annual partnership with local food banks, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars. ABC7 also partners with the Red Cross for the Great Chicago Blood Drive, one of the largest, one-day blood drives in the country.

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