

Today's News

> [News](#) > [Today's News](#)

[Print this Page](#)

[←-back to story](#)

Oktemberfest Parade avoids rain and pleases the crowd

By KEN BLACK, TIMES-REPUBLICAN

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It was a threat that never materialized.

The annual Marshalltown Oktemberfest Parade dodged the rain and went off without a hitch Saturday in Marshalltown. Though the forecast had called for a chance of storms and overcast skies spit a few raindrops out near the beginning, the weather only improved throughout the performance.

Denny Grabenbauer, who emceed the parade, said that has been the case nearly every year for the parade.

It was the second year, he said, when things went wrong with the weather. He remembers it because it was the first year he called the parade - and he has been doing it every year since.

"I remember it was raining and I was inside the old Younkers store calling the parade with a bullhorn," he said. "I don't even know if very many people actually heard me."

At the very least, Grabenbauer said there have been a lot of improvements made over the years, starting with a better sound system the very next year.

This year's parade featured nearly 100 entries, which is down slightly from previous years but still the parade went on for approximately two hours.

"It's always one of the biggest and best parades in Central Iowa and we're just proud to be part of it all these years," Grabenbauer said.

This year's grand marshal was George Funk, former athletic director and basketball coach for Marshalltown High School. That fit with the theme of the parade: It's All Fun and Games.

"Once the parade theme was chosen, we decided to select George Funk as our grand marshal," said Shannon Naughton, 2009 Oktemberfest president.

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T-R PHOTO BY KEN BLACK
 Marshalltown brass instruments belt out a tune as the Oktemberfest Parade kicks off in the city Saturday. The leadoff band was welcomed with claps and cheers.