

CYOC and the Giant Flag at the National Independence Day Parade

By: Peishi Yu



(Photo By Dechun Feng)

This year is America's 247th birthday, and the July 4th parade is nothing but extraordinary. This annual event takes place on Constitution Avenue, one of Washington DC's most vibrant and bustling streets.



(Photo By Yingjun Zhou)

Spectators flock to see the #1 most viewed 4th of July parade at our nation's capital. As the capital of the United States, the Independence Day celebration in Washington DC is naturally extremely grand! Red, white, and blue flags flutter across the cerulean sky. The sun is shining brightly. The crowd cheers, laughs, and supports the people in the parade, whilst wearing patriotic colors.



(Photo By Renting Xu)

This parade has it all, from formal symphony performances to famed bands, speeches from high-ranking government officials to volunteers from all sectors of the community. The Parade started at the National Archives, the place where the Declaration of Independence is held. The Parade truly shows the diversity and the freedom of the USA. The CYOC organization held the largest flag in the entire parade. Over 50 children and adults marched in a synchronized way. They also patriotically and lively shouted "1 2 3! USA!", and the crowd vividly responded.



(Photo By The National Independence Day Parade <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnC9UKmnits>) "2023 National Independence Day Parade." YouTube, YouTube, 4July2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnC9UKmnits>. Accessed 5 July 2023.

To enhance the performance, CYOC had two retired Navy veterans, Jeremy Lee and Allen Wu, guide them in multiple trainings. The children attentively listened and trained very hard.



(Photo By Xiaofei (Sophia) Li)

We welcome children to join CYOC to help make a difference in our community.



(Photo By Dechung Feng)

CYOC Participates in July 4 Parade

Written by Jeffery Ji

On July 4, 2023, CYOC (Capital Youth Outreach Club) participated in the National Independence Day Parade in the District of Columbia to recognize the birthday of our wonderful nation, the USA. In CYOC's display, fifty people ranging from ages seven to over fifty-five volunteered to hold a larger-than-life American flag. They marched one mile at Constitution Avenue from 7th to 17th Street in front of hundreds of thousands of spectators both at the venue and online. The display was directed by Ping Lu and led by George Xie.

The flag display was in slot 26 of the parade, and the volunteers marched alongside some of the best displays, marching bands, and live performers that the Capital Area had to offer. The flag that the volunteers hoisted garnered a lot of attention, including from the broadcasters of the event. This is what the broadcasters had to say about CYOC:

Carrying the flag is the Capital Youth Outreach Club, a volunteer organization led and managed by senior young students consisting of more than three hundred active members from the regions of Maryland, Virginia, and Washington DC. Since its first establishment in 2018, CYOC has successfully organized several fundraising activities to support hospitals in their battle against the pandemic, provide aid to Ukrainian musicians impacted by war, and help refugees upon their arrival in our country. CYOC also offers a diverse range of volunteer activities with a focus on education, sports, arts, and various community service projects. The organization warmly welcomes young individuals from all backgrounds to join our mission of serving the community, recognizing the strength that lies in our community, and our collective efforts. Happy Birthday America!

Happy birthday America indeed! In addition to our giant American flag, the event also included marchers from the US military, marching bands from various high schools from across the nation, and actors playing some of the nation's founding fathers. All in all, the event was very happy and energetic, and was a great way to have fun and enjoy the nation's heritage at the same time.

CYOC would like to thank the event organizers, The National Park Service, NIPD, and Diversified Events, for giving us the opportunity to celebrate America's birthday by participating in the march, and we hope to be there to celebrate again next year!

You can watch a recording of the parade on the event organizer's YouTube channel, or by clicking on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnC9UKmnits>

July 4th 2023 Parade Experience

Writer: Ruichen Feng (6th grader) Photographer: Dechun Feng

Participating in the July 4th parade was quite an experience. Upon arriving at the gathering point, we received our flags and our shirts. Let me just say, the shirts were about 4 sizes too big. Nevertheless, we began to carry the flag to Constitution Avenue where the parade was being prepared. After we waited again for an hour, we began to hear drums and the parade started. We stood there yet again for a bit to watch the other people in the parade perform. It was really cool seeing

all the bands and dancers who came from all over the country, even Hawaii, to perform at the parade. When it was our turn, I felt proud when people started cheering for us. Or maybe it was the people behind us. I don't know, but either way I was proud. After the parade finished, we all sat down for a while to cool down and get hydrated. After the parade concluded, we took a much-needed break to cool down and rehydrate. The very hot weather prompted the fire department to set up a giant water

fan that sprayed mist over a large area, so that was pretty cool. After a few sips of energy drinks and a picture of everyone who participated, me and my dad left for the Metro station.

Despite the fatigue caused by the sweltering heat and lengthy walk, I believe the experience was worth it. Participating in the July 4th parade left me with lasting memories and a sense of pride in celebrating this important occasion.

CYOC Independence Day Parade

By: Jaylyne Yang

My name is Jaylyne Yang, and I'm a high school student who participated in the parade at Washington DC with the organization CYOC. First off, I had a very fun time participating in the march with other CYOC members. The staff were very caring and prepared, as they made sure we were hydrated and provided water, food, and a good spirit. It was also very organized and lively, and this experience was very fun because of the hard work that the parents put in. Many thanks to the adults and parents that kept everything organized, sprayed water on everyone to cool us down, and carried food, water, and other materials.

As for the march, I think we were able to expose the organization to many people who attended the parade and we were able to show who we are. We worked hard to make the

march successful and rehearsed many times. Even with a wide range of ages that participated in the march, it was something that everyone could enjoy. Next, the student leaders of the club were very enthusiastic and had great leadership, which was the reason that everyone could follow the directions well and stay organized. It was also a great social experience as you get to meet and talk to many other members of the club. During the parade, I was able to enjoy the amazing performances of many other groups and organizations. Everyone spaced each other around the huge American flag and held onto it as we marched down the road. We smiled and waved flags at the people on the sides. The streets were packed with people and we got a great view of the monuments and buildings in Washington DC. I also got in a lot of exercise and although it was tiring, it was really

exciting and worth it.

I think next year we can do even better by maybe adding a speaker or microphone to those who are giving directions or need to shout commands during the march so that people can hear them better. Additionally, it would be amazing if more people could sign up and bring their families to help out as it is a great bonding experience as well.

There were also cameras filming us and after it was over, I saw myself on the TV which was also really exciting. I definitely learned a lot from this experience and am looking forward to participating in more activities within this organization.