



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**The official home of the North Carolina Fourth of July Celebration
INVITES THE PUBLIC TO SHARE IN THIS YEAR'S VIRTUAL FESTIVITIES
July 2-July 4, 2020**

SOUTHPORT-OAK ISLAND AREA, NC – The history of Southport's Fourth of July Festival celebration was first recorded in a newspaper in 1795. Through the years and the dedicated efforts of many civic groups and citizens, the Festival has evolved to encompass a wide variety of American celebration traditions. Each year festival highlights include a Naturalization Ceremony, Reading of the Declaration of Independence, Veterans Recognition Ceremony, Flag Retirement Ceremony, and Flag Raising Ceremony.

Each year, city residents and business owners adorn their yards and shop windows with patriotic decorations, and for a time, the sounds of the Festival fill the air. While the public cannot be together in the same ways as years gone by, there is still a way to honor some of the long-standing traditions and celebrate together –Virtually.

This year marks the 225th year of the Festival. It is also a milestone year for the Women's Suffrage movement, which 100-years ago led to women's right to vote. The 2020 festival committee has worked to create a series of Facebook events, contests, learning experiences, and fun to enjoy July 2 – July 4. The schedule includes, a Suffrage Challenge, Flag Raising Ceremony, Reading of the Declaration of Independence, and a special Naturalization Presentation – Take the Citizenship test & Recite the Oath. , On July 4, we will enjoy parades of the past. Celebrating the 100 years of Women's Right to Vote, the Southport Historical Society will debut an exclusive video. The night of the 4th of July will end with "Fireworks Stories from the Past," and a "Share" of a Fireworks Show.

July 4th is a day when we usual gather for the parade and many festival activities throughout the day. In the spirit of this national holiday we are asking that the public join in a Communitywide Pledge of Allegiance at 11:03 on July 4, 2020. Where ever you are, you can join other voices marking this special day.

4th of July apparel is highly sought after each year. In lieu of a traditional annual design of festival t-shirts, this year's commemorative design will be available in eight area merchant shops. We encourage you to support local businesses by purchasing one of the 4th of July t-shirts.

We invite you to join us July 2-July 4, 2020 and celebrate our 225th year. This year's Virtual Festival kicks off Thursday, July 2, with an online showing of Window & Home Dressing Challenge submissions. The deadline for photo submissions is June 26.

View the entire VIRTUAL Festival schedule and contests at <http://www.nc4thofjuly.com> and the public is invited to Like the official 4th Of July Facebook page to watch and participate: <https://www.facebook.com/nc4thofjulyfestival/>.