

WEKIVA TERRACE

JULY 2026, VOLUME 123



Red Hot and Boom is Orlando's biggest community firework show outside of the **theme parks**, held each year on July 3rd at Crane's Roost Park in **Altamonte Springs**. The 2026 Red Hot & Boom — the 29th edition of the event — takes place on Thursday, July 3, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM, with fireworks launching at approximately 9:30 PM.



WHAT REALLY HAPPENED ON JULY 4, 1776...

Background and Context

The American colonies had been in conflict with Britain since April 1775, following disputes over taxation and representation. In June 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduced a resolution in the Continental Congress declaring that the colonies "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States" and severing political ties with Britain. This resolution set the stage for drafting a formal Declaration of Independence.

Drafting the Declaration

A Committee of Five—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston—was appointed to draft the document. Thomas Jefferson was tasked with writing the initial draft, which was reviewed and revised by the committee and the members of the Continental Congress. Minor edits were made, but the core principles, including the assertion that "all men are created equal," remained intact.

The Vote and Approval

The vote for independence occurred on **July 2, 1776**, with twelve colonies voting in favor and New York abstaining. The final text of the Declaration, however, was **approved on July 4, 1776**, which is why this date is celebrated as Independence Day. The handwritten copy was signed August 1776, and the date July 4 was printed on the Dunlap Broadside—the first printed copies were circulated to the public.

Significance

Approving the Declaration allowed the colonies to formally assert independence and seek international support, particularly from France, in the ongoing war against Britain. While the American Revolution had already begun, July 4 became the symbolic date representing the birth of the United States. Early celebrations were sporadic, but by the 19th century, Independence Day became a widely observed national holiday, officially recognized by Congress in 1870.

Common Misconceptions

- The Declaration was **not written on July 4**; Jefferson drafted it in June.
- The vote for independence occurred on **July 2**, not July 4.
- The document was **not signed on July 4**; most delegates signed it in August 1776.
- July 4, 1776, remains the date remembered and celebrated because it marks the **formal approval of the Declaration of Independence**, symbolizing the colonies' commitment to freedom and self-governance.

PARKING AND GETTING THERE

With 150,000+ attendees, this is Central Florida's largest Independence Day celebration. A little planning goes a long way:

Arrive by 5:00 PM to secure a good spot on the lawn

Best parking is at the nearby Altamonte Mall — just a short walk to Crane's

Roost Park

Bring a blanket or lawn chairs for the most comfortable viewing

Fireworks begin at dusk, approximately 9:30 PM

Admission is free; food and beverages are available for purchase on-site



ABOUT RED HOT & BOOM

Red Hot & Boom is hosted each year by the City of Altamonte Springs. It's one-part music festival, one-part firework extravaganza — and completely free to attend. More than 150,000 people pack Crane's Roost Park each year to watch over 14,000 fireworks choreographed to music. The 25-minute pyrotechnic finale is one of the most impressive displays in Central Florida.

2026 MUSICAL ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS

The 2026 headliner is Chris Lane, a national country artist with over 2.2 billion streams and multiple #1 hits, presented by Dan Newlin. Supporting acts include Wish Radio, a high-energy nostalgic party band blending classic and contemporary hits, and Blue Stone Circle, one of Orlando's premier bands with 15+ years of experience across pop, Top 40, country, R&B, and disco.

VIP experience (21+): The Oasis Beer Garden offers premium seating with reception bites and an exclusive fireworks viewing area for \$45 per person. A complimentary Kids Zone features inflatable attractions and a bungee trampoline at no cost.

APOPKA LIGHTS UP FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

Get ready to celebrate Independence Day weekend with festive events, family-friendly activities, and dazzling fireworks across Orange County. Whether you're looking for a hometown parade, live entertainment, kid-friendly fun, or the perfect spot to watch the night sky light up, this guide highlights local celebrations and helpful tips to make your Fourth of July weekend easy, memorable, and full of red, white, and blue spirit.

The City of Apopka will host its annual July Fourth Celebration on Saturday, July 4, 2026, from 6–9 PM at the Apopka Amphitheater. This free, family-friendly event features food, kids' activities, live music, and a fireworks finale.

Private Stock Band will headline the evening with high-energy performances, powerful vocals, and a wide mix of music including Top 40, Motown, Classic Rock, Latin, and Country. Their tributes to Billy Joel and Stevie Nicks lead into a Whitney Houston-style patriotic finale before the fireworks begin.

Free parking is available throughout the Northwest Recreation Complex. Guests may bring chairs and blankets for lawn seating or use the amphitheater's free covered seating.

Celebrate Independence Day with your family in Apopka. For event details or vendor and sponsor opportunities, visit www.Apopka.gov/JulyFourth.

WINTER GARDEN CELEBRATES THE FOURTH OF JULY WITH A FULL DAY OF SMALL-TOWN FUN

Morning Festivities: All American Kids Parade & Pancake Breakfast

Kick off the holiday with the 21st Annual All American Kids Parade. Children ages 12 and under can enjoy a free pancake breakfast from 8:00–10:00 AM at the Winter Garden Masonic Lodge No. 165 (230 W. Bay St.), available while supplies last. Families will also find kid-friendly activities and complimentary patriotic decorations for bikes, scooters, wagons, strollers, or even walking shoes.

The parade begins at 10:00 AM at Winter Garden City Hall (300 W. Plant St.), with line-up at 9:45 AM. The route loops around West Plant Street and lasts about 30 minutes. Spectators are encouraged to bring chairs to secure a good viewing spot and cheer on the participants.

Afternoon & Evening: Party in the Park and Fireworks

As the day continues, head to Newton Park (31 W. Garden Ave.) for Party in the Park starting at 6:00 PM. Enjoy live music from Relic, family games, arts and crafts, and vendor booths.

The highlight of the evening is the fireworks show over Lake Apopka at 9:15 PM. Guests are welcome to bring chairs, blankets, and picnic supplies. Please note that personal fireworks, alcohol, and grilling are not allowed. Parking is available on North Dillard Street, including at Dillard Elementary School.

Additional Tips

Road Closures: West Plant Street from Dillard Street to Park Avenue, along with nearby side streets, will be closed from 2:00 AM until around noon for the parade.

Family-Friendly Extras: The Winter Garden Heritage Foundation provides decorations for kids participating in the parade, and arts and crafts stations will be available during the evening festivities.

Extended Celebrations: The fun continues the next day at the Winter Garden Farmers Market Independence Day Celebration, featuring \$1 hot dogs, kids' crafts, and more.

Winter Garden's Fourth of July events blend hometown charm with patriotic excitement, making it a perfect holiday destination for families, locals, and visitors alike.

COMPLICATIONS OF HEAT STROKE

Heatstroke can result in a number of complications, depending on how long the body temperature is high. Severe complications include:

- **Vital organ damage.** Without a quick response to lower body temperature, heatstroke can cause your brain or other vital organs to swell, possibly resulting in permanent damage.
- **Death.** Without prompt and adequate treatment, heatstroke can be fatal.

Be cautious if you're at increased risk. If you take medications or have a condition that increases your risk of heat-related problems, avoid the heat and act quickly if you notice symptoms of overheating. If you participate in a strenuous sporting event or activity in hot weather, make sure there are medical services available in case of a heat emergency.

