

Bridge to Wonderland Parade nets new talent



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For chiropractor Dr. Broghan Reilly, this year's circus theme for the 23rd annual Chippewa Falls Bridge to Wonderland Parade is an excuse to resume a college stint — juggling.

Reilly will sport a "Frosty the Spine Man" suit, a four-year tradition for the Reilly Chiropractic float. He is upping the ante this year by adding juggling, perhaps to secure a first place prize.

"We always are frosty, but we always try and alter it to what the theme is," Reilly said.

Reilly will be dancing on a trailer, next to a white Christmas tree, while his chiropractic assistants, likely dressed as elves, will hand out candy.

"I'll probably give both of them hula hoops," he joked.

"I could probably do the ones around my wrist, but that'll be about it," chiropractic assistant Amanda Jochum replied.

As a novice juggler, Reilly said he expects to lose a few of the tennis balls donated to him by the Eau Claire Tennis Center.

"We might have to run back through and clean up tennis balls," he said.

Reilly began juggling in 2005, so he just had to get back in practice.

"One of my buddies from college actually knew how to juggle and we spent a whole day trying to learn," he said.

Despite the heavy competition for best float, Reilly said he and his team are not focused on winning.

"Our main focus is to try and do something entertaining and have a good time as an office out and about," he said.

He expects his act to be difficult on a moving trailer, but he's not worried about embarrassment.

"I'm not too nervous ... even if I'm blushing, they won't be able to see it under my outfit," he

joked.

At 57 floats, this event is expected to be the largest ever, according to Teri Ouimette, executive director of Chippewa Falls Main Street.

Among the newcomers to the parade is the Chippewa Falls Middle School Stunt Team.

“We heard about it and we wanted to do it,” said Kayla Gerczak, 11. “It’s something really fun for people to watch.”

The stunt team borrowed “flaming” hoops (hula hoops with streamers) from their high school cohorts to satisfy the circus theme. They will also be holding stuffed animals and wearing antlers and Santa hats.

“It’s cool that we get to be part of the community,” 11-year-old Katelyn Steinmetz said.

Reilly couldn’t agree more.

“(We’re) trying to find different ways to be part of the community and give back if we can,” he said.