

The Best and the Brightest

Written by Francisco Alvarado, BT Contributor
July 2019

Behind the scenes with the fireworks people who light up Bayfront Park



series of flares shoot above Biscayne Bay, bursting into a kaleidoscope of twirling red, white, and blue sparks. The giant cascade of colors hovers above Bayfront Park, illuminating the steamy summer night sky for thousands of Miamians and tourists on the ground below, as well as hundreds of others on recreational boats bobbing on the water near the Port of Miami. For the next half hour, a portfolio of fireworks with names like “Six-Angle Chrysanthemum Gold Glitter” and “16-Side Peony With Glitter Pistol” will awe spectators at the City of Miami’s annual Fourth of July celebration.

For Gary Avins, the 65-year-old fireworks wizard who conjures up the annual show, it takes months of preparation to make sure the extravaganza that caps America’s Birthday Bash at Bayfront Park goes off without a hitch.

“Every year, I try to design and incorporate something new,” Avins tells *Biscayne Times*. “At the same time, this is a very complicated business with a lot of regulations and permits that requires careful planning.”

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