



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2009 H-E-B Holiday Parade **Celebrates 60 Years in Houston**

HOUSTON – The H-E-B Holiday Parade is celebrating a huge milestone this year – 60 years of entertaining thousands of parade-goers on Thanksgiving morning – making it one of the city’s longest-running holiday traditions. The 2009 H-E-B Holiday Parade, “Sixty Years of Dreams Come True,” will continue the annual tradition as it winds through Downtown Houston at 9 a.m. on Thursday, November 26.

Nearly 400,000 spectators will line the streets of downtown to watch the parade make its way through 20 city blocks, showcasing all-new floats, gigantic balloons, as well as thrilling performances by marching bands, cheerleaders, dance groups and more. The parade route will begin at Hamilton and Texas Avenue and continue through the streets of downtown, ending at Rusk and Crawford.

Houston’s Thanksgiving Day Parade began in 1949, when Santa arrived at Union Station and rode his sleigh to the downtown Foley’s. That led to a 44-year tradition – the Foley’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. In later years, Bank United and Washington Mutual each claimed the title sponsorship. In 2006, H-E-B was named the title sponsor, and the parade is now known as the H-E-B Holiday Parade.

In honor of the 60th anniversary, the Parade will showcase newly-designed floats including a **Tom Turkey** float featuring a performance by professional recording artist and actress **Naturi Naughton**, star from the new motion picture film “Fame.” A **Happy Anniversary** float celebrating 60 years of the H-E-B Holiday Parade with an enormous

birthday cake, balloons and a giant clown, along with costumed characters representing the past sixty years. Joining the float line up in 2009 is a float performance by the cast of **Theatre Under the Stars' "The Sound of Music."** In addition, a **Child's Dream** float will feature colorful children's toys and icons, leading up to the much-anticipated arrival of Santa and his elves as they ring in the holiday season on board the **Santa Claus and His Reindeer** float. KHOU's **Deborah** Duncan will perform alongside Santa and the crew from the North Pole. Galveston's **Moody Gardens** float will feature a holiday performance by the cast of the musical "The Gift of Christmas – LIVE."

Other parade entries include the world famous Budweiser Clydesdales, McDonald's Ronald McDonald Shoe Car, the Salvation Army Giant Kettle and Harbor Lights Choir, the Borden Train and Elsie the Cow, Pancho Claus and the low-riders, Miri Piri Gatka Dall float and martial arts performers and the mobile disco Dancing Queen party bus, among many other community groups.

Performing along the parade route: 250 Varsity Spirit All American cheerleaders from across the country," Bellville High School Brahmadoras, Cypress Springs Panteras Houston Rocket Power Dancers, Willowridge Mighty Eagle Marching Band and Wings Drill Team, Stephen F. Austin High School Sonic Boom Marching Band, d, Raul Yzaguirre School for Success "Heart Beat of Soul" Band, Gulf Coast Sound Drum & Bugle Corps, Madison High School Marching Band and the Trinity Valley Community College Cardettes & Cardinal Regiment.

Dancing in the skies will be gigantic, helium-filled balloons, including: a 60th anniversary Cake, Miss Piggy, Pink Panther, a Giant Sun, the Frog Prince and a Newspaper Retriever Puppy.

Early bird pricing for Grandstand Seats in the TV Zone is \$18 through Nov. 15. After this date, Grandstand seats will be \$22. Reserved Turkey seats are \$11 through the Nov.15 and then \$14 after Nov. 15 General admission is free. A limited number of reserved seats are available at www.hebparade.com. For more information about the parade, including the parade route, reserved seating and featured entertainment, call (713) 654-8808 or visit www.hebparade.com.

Sponsors for the 60th Annual H-E-B Holiday Parade include: H-E-B Grocery Company, The Arrow Classic Rock, 93.7 FM, Atrich Financial Services, Borden Milk Products,

Budweiser/Silver Eagle Distributors, Dancestaff.com, Dancing Queen, Hilton Americas Houston Hotel, Houston Astros, Houston Chronicle, Keystone Concrete Placement, KHOU-TV, Channel 11, KMJQ 102.1 FM, KTRH 740 AM, McDonald's, Miri Piri Gatka Dall, Moody Gardens "The Gift of Christmas," Praise 92.1 FM, Radio Disney 1590 AM, Rockefeller Hall, Salvation Army, Sunny 99.1 FM, Taco Cabana Catering, Theatre Under the Stars "The Sound of Music", and Wells Fargo.

The H-E-B Holiday Parade is produced by the Houston Festival Foundation, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Proceeds from reserved seating ticket sales benefit the Festival education programs reaching more than 1,471 public schools each year and the Houston Chronicle Readers are Leaders literacy program. The parade is televised live on KHOU-TV/Channel 11 (CBS), as well as in several major cities throughout Texas and beyond.

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