



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **34<sup>th</sup> Annual KC St. Patrick's Day Parade Set for March 17**

Kansas City's largest single-day event of the year is just four weeks away! On Saturday, March 17, the 34<sup>th</sup> annual St. Patrick's Day Parade will kickoff by Union Station in what has become a Kansas City cultural tradition and one in which all participants can, for at least a day, call themselves "Irish."

The parade participants step off at 11 a.m. from Pershing and Main Streets, proceed east on Pershing then north on Grand Boulevard, completing the one-mile parade route at 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The official Judging/VIP stand will be located at the northeast corner of Washington Park, on the west side of Grand.

"Celebrating St. Patrick in Kansas City" is the 2007 parade theme. It recognizes the patron saint of Ireland as an important historical figure in a way that emphasizes the unique style and personality of Kansas City. This year's parade will feature over 175 entries and more than 3,000 marchers. Past parades blessed with good weather and falling on a weekend have attracted as many as 200,000 spectators gathered to watch the elaborate floats, bands, drill teams, celebrities and other groups turn the parade route into a sea of emerald green. Parade participants represent a wide spectrum of greater Kansas City and beyond, from families, neighborhoods, businesses and trade unions to cultural and civic organizations, churches, clubs and schools; all from every age, ethnicity and walk of life.

### **What's New**

The St. Patrick's Day Parade has successfully evolved over the years into one of the largest in the nation. Organizers have continually strived to make it better. This year the parade will build on the significant improvements initiated the past two years in order to make the 2007 edition the most enjoyable ever for ALL who come to experience this unique Kansas City institution.

Companies and civic organizations will again have an opportunity to sponsor giant Irish-themed balloons, much like those featured in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The balloon entries will be specially featured during the KMBC-TV broadcast of the parade. Introduced last year, they became crowd favorites and received great attention in the media. Go to [www.kcirisishparade.com](http://www.kcirisishparade.com) and sponsor a balloon today!

The Parade Grand Marshall will be the well known Danny O'Neill, owner of The Roasterie. John McDonald, president and founder of Boulevard Brewery, has been named the Mike Murphy Honorary Irishman of the Year for the 2007 parade. This unique award was created in 2005 as a "tip 'o the hat" to the man who was instrumental in creating and supporting Kansas City's St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Safety and environmental friendliness are the continued focus of these changes. Those who've experienced the 2005 and 2006 parades should note that this year's edition will retain the shorter, more open route that will result in an event duration of two hours. The Parade Committee is

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sustaining its heavy investment in barricades that will be deployed along the entire route to ensure a safe experience for both participants and spectators. More than 500 trash boxes will also be deployed and retrieved by volunteers, resulting in a rapid and effective cleanup.

As with all large outdoor public events in Kansas City, the deployment of City and State police and other public safety personnel such as liquor control will continue to provide a visible and effective deterrent to those whose exuberant behavior may violate the law. In addition, all vendors will be required to obtain permits from Kansas City and the Parade Committee if they wish to do business along the parade route. This requirement will further ensure public safety and overall enjoyment on parade day.

“As we’ve strived to do for many years, the emphasis for ’07 will be on providing a safe, fun and family-friendly environment for all who come to enjoy the parade,” said Parade President and Co-Chair Bob Kearney. “Each change we’ve made is designed to enhance the parade experience for everyone, while retaining the traditional festive environment folks have associated with this event. And speaking of tradition, be sure to wear your green!”

To help fund the most significant change - the barricades - the Parade Committee is continuing the “Adopt A Barricade” campaign launched in 2005. Those who monetarily “adopt” a barricade for \$100 will have a message of their choice placed on a barricade, such as the name of their group or organization or, as many have requested, a memorial to a departed loved one.

### **Kickoff Luncheon**

Preceding the parade on Friday, March 9, will be the St. Patrick’s Day Kickoff Luncheon at the Muehlebach Hotel, 1213 Wyandotte St. The event will begin at 11 a.m. with a silent auction and social hour, followed by a noon lunch and live entertainment. Tickets to the luncheon are \$25 and should be purchased by March 1. Donations for the silent auction are due by March 1.

All information regarding the Kickoff Luncheon, Parade and related activities is available on the Parade website, [www.kcirisishparade.com](http://www.kcirisishparade.com). This includes deadlines, procedures for participation, forms and relevant points of contact. You may also contact the Parade Co-Chairs by calling (816) 931-7373 or through email at [info@kcirisishparade.com](mailto:info@kcirisishparade.com).

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### Parade Committee Leadership:

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