



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2007

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Many Events Surround KC's Big St. Patrick's Day Parade

The 34th annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is just around the corner, promising another colorful flood of emerald green moving north along the Grand Boulevard parade route to celebrate the Feast of St. Patrick's, March 17. While the parade is the main focus of attention, a number of fun and community-service related activities are being supported by the Kansas City St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee in the days leading up to the biggest, single free event in the metropolitan area.

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 15th Street. Parade watchers are encouraged to consider viewing the event along Pershing or the southern portion of Grand where crowds are less congested and unobstructed views easier to find.

This year's theme is "Celebrating St. Patrick in Kansas City," recognizing the patron saint of Ireland as an important historical figure in a way that emphasizes the unique style and personality of Kansas City. More than 3000 marchers and 175 entries will take part in the parade.

The Parade Grand Marshal will be the well known Danny O'Neill, owner of The Roasterie. Serving as Honorary Grand Marshal is the Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland, D.D., bishop emeritus of the Catholic Diocese Kansas City – St. Joseph. 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.

New For 2007

The St. Patrick's Day Parade has successfully evolved over the years into one of the largest in the nation, thanks to organizers who have continually strived to make it better.

Giant Irish-themed balloons that appeared for the first time last year have become huge crowd favorites. The balloons are back again and in greater numbers, promising even more memorable impressions on young and old alike!

Barricades, which were first incorporated to provide a more family-friendly experience in 2005, will line the entire route. This year, the barricades will be positioned farther into the street in order to relieve crowding that has sometimes occurred at certain points along the route. The barricades remain the largest single expense for the parade committee. As such, it is continuing the "Adopt A Barricade" campaign. Those who "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 a memorial to a departed loved one. Go to the parade website, www.kcirishparade.com to support this effort.

Continuing in '07 is the requirement for all vendors to have in their possession both a Kansas City permit and a St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee permit in order to sell any merchandise or food along the parade route. This will further enhance the parade experience for all who attend. The deadline for permit applications has been extended. Visit the parade website for details and forms.

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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.

Events Leading Up To The Parade

St. Patrick's Day Kickoff Luncheon: This traditional event will take place Friday, March 9, at the Muehlebach Hotel, 200 West 12th Street. The luncheon will begin at 11 a.m. with a silent auction and social hour, followed by a noon meal and live entertainment. Proceeds from the auction support the significant expense of producing the parade.

Westport St. Patrick's Day Run: Runners and walkers are encouraged to jump start the St. Patrick's Day holiday on March 10 by participating in the 29th annual version of this event, benefiting Redemptorist Catholic church. Go to www.sportkc.org/events/St.PatsRun2006.htm or the parade website for details.

Green Friday: New for 2007 is this good-time, TGIF-style fundraiser benefiting the parade and the Old St. Patrick's Cathedral renovation project. The fun begins Friday, March 16, at Lew's Grill and Bar, 7539 Wornall Rd. in Waldo. The beer garden opens at 3 p.m., followed by the Irish band, The Kelihans, at 4 p.m. and The Zeros at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at Lew's or through its website, www.lewsgrillandbar.com. Tickets are \$5, or \$7 the day of the event.

"Go for the Green" Food Drive: The parade committee is marking its 21st year as a sponsor to this humanitarian effort benefiting Harvesters, the Community Food Network. The parade committee and Harvesters are teaming up this year with Hen House Market grocery stores and area schools to raise thousands of pounds of food that help supply Kansas City's food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. The food drive runs from March 1 through the 17. Look for the "Go for the Green" food drive Barrels at any of the participating Hen House Market grocery stores!

Brogeen's Brigade: Right before the parade, KC's favorite leprechaun, Brogeen Malarkey, and his merry band will continue their tradition of visiting young patients at Children's Mercy Hospital. The kids are the beneficiaries of this heart warming effort by parade volunteers and participants who visit the children after the parade, spreading St. Patrick's Day cheer with clowns, mascots, Irish dancers and gifts that provide fond and loving memories for the little ones. New volunteers are welcome!

The Old St. Patrick's Cathedral: Located in downtown Kansas City. This historic, late 1870's church that has lain dormant for almost 50 years is now undergoing a long and costly renovation, thanks to individual donations and volunteer "sweat equity." The parade committee is lending a hand by donating proceeds from its Green Friday event and the sale of parade merchandise. Go to http://oldstpatrick.org/nav_page.html for more information on the church's fascinating history and to learn how you can support the renovation.

All information regarding the Parade and related activities, including forms, procedures for participation and points of contact, is available on the Parade website, www.kcirisishparade.com. You may also contact the Parade Co-Chairs by calling (816) 931-7373 or via info@kcirisishparade.com.

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Parade Committee Leadership:

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