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Carolinas' Thanksgiving Day Parade Moves Start Time To 10:00 AM

CHARLOTTE, NC – May 27, 2008 – The Carolinas' Carrousel Board of Directors has voted to move back the start time of the annual Thanksgiving Day Parade to 10:00 AM in order to attract more volunteer participation and to boost parade attendance by allowing people to schedule around family gatherings.

“This is the 61st anniversary of the uptown tradition, which began as a way to kick off the holiday season and draw shoppers to center city,” says Linda H. Vespa, executive director of Carolinas' Carrousel, Inc., the nonprofit organization that mounts the annual holiday event. “With so much more to see and do now uptown, we thought an earlier start time would give people the opportunity to explore, eat, and ride the light rail with friends and family after the parade, and still have time for their family gatherings.”

Tim Newman, CEO of the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, says, “We think the earlier start time will make the parade more convenient for tourists and visitors, and we hope it brings out even more than the 100,000-plus people we usually have at the parade.”

“I believe that the earlier start time provides an excellent opportunity to attract more residents to Uptown for this annual celebration,” says Robert Krumbine, Senior VP, Charlotte Center City Partners. “This change will also help with gaining more participation from a variety of sources like arts groups and volunteers, as the new time will allow people to easily schedule the Parade around their family gatherings.”

The Carolinas' Thanksgiving Day Parade has evolved over more than six decades as a regional tradition and highlight of the Holiday Season. Founded in 1947 by four local businessmen to attract holiday shoppers to uptown Charlotte, the Thanksgiving week events have become so much more. The Parade and its ancillary events are produced by an independent, volunteer, non-profit, charitable organization, Carolinas' Carrousel, Inc.

Carolinas' Carrousel is committed to enhancing regional area's community life through quality family oriented entertainment. The Parade officially announces and celebrates the beginning of the Holiday Season. In addition, it promotes artistic excellence through awards to area high school students and marching bands. The Carolinas' Carrousel also exists to offer business, industry, and the local citizenry the opportunity of participating in showcasing the region and encouraging academic excellence in the future leaders of the area.