

The Carolinas' Thanksgiving Day Parade

presented by *Belk*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Lynn Henderson 704/641-4642

Lynne Priestley 704/517-6486

lynnepriestley@bellsouth.net

CAROLINAS THANKSGIVING PARADE CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Mike Minter former NFL Carolina Panther will serve as Grand Marshal

BELK WILL BE THE PRESENTING SPONSOR

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF METROLINA TO BENEFIT

(September 20, 2007) – Carolinas' Carrousel organization announced today the new name for the 60 year parade tradition: **The Carolinas' Thanksgiving Day Parade presented by Belk to benefit Second Harvest Foodbank of Metrolina. November 22, 2007 at 1pm** will be the parade start in downtown Charlotte and televised live on WBTV. **Mike Minter, former NFL Carolina Panther will serve as Grand Marshal** and Raggs, band leader of the Raggs Kids Club band will serve as Junior Grand Marshal. As a tribute in honor of the parade's founding fathers' George Ivey will serve as honorary Grand Marshal.

In 1947, the Carolinas' Carrousel Parade and Coronation was born. "This annual family tradition marks its 60th year in Charlotte and is ripe for growth," says Larry Farber, board chair, Carolinas Carrousel organization. "Charlotte is ready to build on a parade rich with entertainment and heritage."

The parade is one of the largest gatherings of Carolinians and boasts participation from both Carolinas' and reaches thousands of people in the 22-county region. This year, the Carolinas' Carrousel organization is expanding the scope and entertainment and is seeking participation from businesses and organizations to build on this lasting tradition. Charlotte Center City Partners and Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority will work closely with this year's event.

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Educational excellence will continue to be recognized by the Carolinas' Carrousel organization (the non-profit 501(C) (3) that orchestrates the parade and scholarship program). Area high school seniors and marching band students will be awarded scholarships by the Carrousel organization as part of the festivities. "We're thrilled to be part of this annual tradition in Charlotte. My family was instrumental in the conception of the parade and we want to make sure it continues as a legacy for future generations," says McKay Belk, president and chief merchandising officer of Belk, Inc. This year's scholarship fund will be renamed in honor of the late John M. Belk.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina will serve as a key partner in this year's event. Attendees will have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many in need throughout our region by making a donation to Second Harvest of Metrolina on Thanksgiving Day. **There will be staffed "donation-stations" at several locations in Center City to insure that parade attendees can easily drop off their food donations on their way to the parade.** "With over 300,000 people living in poverty in our 19 county region, including 165,000 children and seniors, the holidays are a perfect time to help those less fortunate, says Kay Carter, Executive Director, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina. "We're honored to partner with the parade and its festivities."

The 2007 Carolinas' Thanksgiving Parade will feature at its core the six decades of its history. Sections of the parade will be devoted to each decade with floats and special units showcasing a slice of Charlotte in those years. The parade is seeking neighborhood groups, businesses, local non-profits, and special units to join the parade; to create floats, to interpret one of the decades and bring fun entertainment to the parade. "There will be plenty of room for all – whether they are zany, traditional or impossible to define, the parade will entertain the crowd." remarks Clarke Allen, president of Charlotte Arrangements and producer of this year's parade. "We're seeking strolling entertainment including musicians, jugglers, unicyclists, kazoo bands, and more to participate and would welcome Charlotte's performing arts community to become involved."

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For more information on how an individual or group can become involved with the parade please visit the website www.carolinasthanksgivingparade.org or contact (704) 525-0250.

About Carolinas Carrousel

Carolinas' Carrousel is a non-profit organization that has orchestrated the holiday parade since 1947 and operates as a 501 (c) (3) with tax exempt charitable status. A volunteer board oversees and directs the Carolinas' Carrousel organization and is committed to enhancing the region through quality family oriented entertainment as well as honoring academic and artistic excellence through scholarships to area high school students and marching bands.

About Second Harvest Foodbank of Metrolina

As part of America's Second Harvest Network, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina – one of only six Food Banks in North Carolina – serves 19 counties in North and South Carolina. In 2006-2007 Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina distributed over 20 million pounds of food and essential grocery items to over 550 hunger feeding agencies as well as to food banks in 13 other counties. Agencies served include emergency pantries, soup kitchens, senior programs, shelters.

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