



City of McKinney Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Eighth-annual Krewe of Barkus Parade in McKinney

Families and dogs dress up for parade, contest in Historic Downtown

McKINNEY, Texas (Feb 5, 2010) – The annual free family favorite Krewe of Barkus returns for the eighth year to Historic Downtown McKinney. McKinney Main Street is partnering up with the Art Institute of McKinney to host the “Fairy Tales and Love Stories” dog parade and costume contest on Sunday, Feb. 14.

The event, located at Mitchell Park just west of the downtown square, features vendors on hand starting at 12:30 p.m. to showcase their products and services. The parade begins promptly at 2 p.m. followed by the costume contest. Participants should arrive no later than 12:30 p.m. to check in for the contest and parade. All prizes will be awarded at the main stage in the park.

Last year, more than 200 dogs participated in the parade and more than 4,000 spectators enjoyed the sights and sounds of the event which was created by the Art Institute of McKinney.

“Krewe of Barkus is a true family favorite in Historic Downtown McKinney,” said Main Street Program Director Ty Lake. “This year, with Krewe of Barkus falling February 14, event goers will celebrate a new meaning of Valentine’s Day as they spend this special Sunday with their canines companions. This is a great opportunity for creative fun in a family environment.”

Patterned after the Mystic Krewe of Barkus in New Orleans, which was established to help abused and abandoned canines, the Krewe of Barkus in McKinney will feature a parade, vendor booths and interactive activities.

“It’s going to be hearts and hounds this year as we celebrate Krewe of Barkus on Valentines Day,” said Blynda Christian, director of the Art Institute of McKinney and parade coordinator. “I continue to be amazed with the creativity we see in the costumes.”

Barkus fun isn’t limited to the dogs and their owners. Children may enter decorated floats and take part in the parade. The parade route begins at Mitchell Park at the corner

of Church St. and Louisiana St., proceeding east on Louisiana, then north on Tennessee St. and finally east on Virginia ending back at Mitchell Park.

The event is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required for costume contestants. Individuals planning to participate in the parade should register now, as space is limited to 250 entries. Cost for participants is \$5 per dog to enter the costume contest. To register, contact the Art Institute of McKinney at 972-529-6872 or info@artinstituteofmckinney.com. Please include the dog's name, color and breed, and the owner's name, address, phone number and email address.

For more information about the festival, call 972.547.2661 or visit www.downtownmckinney.com.

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About McKinney

McKinney, Texas, is unique by nature. As one of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S., McKinney has a current population of 126,500. Incorporated in 1848, the city is located 30 miles north of Dallas and is the county seat of Collin County. McKinney offers rolling hills, lush trees, a historic downtown square and unique neighborhoods and developments, and it was recently ranked as one of the Top 10 Best Places to Move by Forbes Magazine. Visit the city's Web site at www.mckinneytexas.org.

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