

MERRICK FESTIVAL

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HOLTZ CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PRESENTS THE 2008 CAROLING COMPETITION

Coral Gables, Florida - Merrick Festival announces the 2008 Caroling Competition for the City of Coral Gables. The event is a long standing holiday tradition for the City, with six nights of free concerts on the steps of the beautiful 550 Biltmore Way Building. It's how Coral Gables kicks off the holiday season, with the joyful sound of children singing in front of the tree. This year, for the first time, the Competition is being presented by Holtz Children's Hospital.

"We are excited to have Holtz Children's Hospital join our family of sponsors," said Sally Baumgartner, Executive Director of the event. Our partnership gives the Caroling Competition another way to involve the choirs in the community and provides additional outreach possibilities for the schools to perform at the hospital during the holiday season. It's all about children helping children. And in this case, making the holidays special."

Holtz Children's Hospital at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center is one of the largest children's hospitals in the Southeast United States . Through its experienced medical and support staff, including some of the top pediatricians in the nation, the 254-bed facility provides research and treatment for a wide range of pediatric medical specialties, with a goal of providing all the support and services parents and families need to raise healthy and happy children.

The Competition begins this year on Wednesday, December 3 at 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. and continues nightly until Sunday afternoon, December 7 with performances starting at 3:00 p.m. Six schools perform each evening. The free outdoor concerts are held on the steps of the 550 Building in downtown Coral Gables. Seating is limited. This year the Competition welcomes 30 Miami Dade public, private and parochial schools. They are competing for 21 cash prizes, more than \$20,000 contributed by more than 30 local foundations, municipal organizations, corporations and local businesses, and with the support of the City of Coral Gables and Miami Dade Cultural Affairs.

The Competition is one of the largest events on this year's Junior Orange Bowl calendar. The Junior Orange Bowl Festival, celebrates 60 years as the world's largest youth festival with 22 individual events and their signature youth Parade. The Competition has been an Official Junior Orange Bowl event since 1991.

The winners of the 2008 Competition return for a short program to accept their awards on Tuesday, December 9, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Jack Horkheimer, noted "Star Gazer" personality is Master of Ceremonies for the presentations.

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Media Contact:
Sally Baumgartner - 305-491-4180

Florida Christian School

