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CONTACT: Judy Walker, Event Coordinator, 953-3909, judy@woweventsolutions.com
Tony Alvernaz, Board President, 543-3113, TAlvernaz@srcity.org

Rose Parade will Stand Alone in 2009

Santa Rosa, CA (February 23, 2009) - This year the Luther Burbank Rose Parade will stand alone without the accompanying Festival that has been part of the annual event for all of the last decade. Citing difficulty in raising funds and waning Sponsor support the Board of Directors of the 115 year old event voted to substantially reduce its operating budget by producing a parade only in 2009. The Parade will be themed "Through the Decades" and will begin at E Street and Sonoma Avenue and turn down 4th Street ending at Courthouse Square, on Saturday, May 16, 2009.

The Festival was added to the Parade in 1994 (the year of the 100th Anniversary of the Parade) as a way to present the parade awards which take between one and two hours to compile. Over the years the Festival has grown to include, non-profit booths, food concessions, kids activities, inflatables and entertainment. Eliminating the Festival will reduce the funding needed to produce the annual event by about 40%. The Festival was held in Juilliard Park for many years and last year was held in Old Courthouse Square and along 4th Street.

Board President Tony Alvernaz stated, "unfortunately in these times a parade and festival are a pretty low priority for most people. We think it continues to be a viable and important part of our community and we want to preserve it as long as possible, but it was absolutely necessary to make some major changes this year."

Alvernaz will be sending out letters to community leaders and businesses in the coming weeks to ask for donations to continue the event, he said he will be asking for donations of "\$500 to \$1000, from those who agree that the 115 year tradition of the parade should continue."

The "Through the Decades" theme will showcase the music and events that have shaped our lives during the past 12 decades since the Parade began in 1894.

Last year more than 3,500 people and animals participated in the parade, more than 10,000 watched along the route and attended the Festival. The 114th Annual Parade was produced with over 250 volunteers, and more than 100 sponsors helping fund the event.

For more information and to volunteer or sponsor contact the Rose Parade office at (707) 542-7673 or online at www.roseparadefestival.com.