

For Immediate Release

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**2007 NORTH TEXAS IRISH FESTIVAL
Celebrates its 25th Festival- March 2, 3, and 4 at Fair Park**

Headliners include

the Makem Brothers, Cathie Ryan and the Glengarry Bhoys

Event Kicks Off Friday Night - with Full Festival Activities

DALLAS -"Green Turns Silver" as the annual North Texas Irish Festival (NTIF), one of the largest Celtic cultural events in the nation, will open its 2007 event beginning Friday night. The 25th year of the NTIF features many of the top Irish musicians and dancers in the world and a number of cultural presentations will focus on highlights of the many years of the NTIF and the Irish culture in this county. Again, in 2007 the NTIF will open its festival on Friday night, March 2, at 6 PM with full festival activities, including performances by national and regional musicians.

The festivities will continue throughout the weekend, including Saturday, March 3 through Sunday, March 4, and feature some of the very finest in Irish and other Celtic entertainment including world famous bands, award-winning dancers, enchanting storytellers at the popular Urchin Street area and educational workshops. As in the past, the festival will also offer a variety of delicious Irish and international food and drink, cultural crafts, and ethnic vendors.

The North Texas Irish Festival has been a Dallas tradition since 1983, which makes this year's 25th event very special. The three-day NTIF is now recognized as the largest single cultural event held in Fair Park and, with an attendance of over 41,000 people, is second only to that of the State Fair of Texas. Since its inception, the Festival has always centered on the music, dance and culture of Ireland. Our four large stages showcase international musicians from the US, Canada and Europe, plus a great selection of very popular local and regional entertainers. The festival caters to almost every taste, from the high energy Celtic rock bands such as the **Glengarry Bhoys**, to the very traditional Irish tunes of **Téada**; from the incredible vocals of **Cathie Ryan** and the beautiful sounds of one the most proficient harpists in the world, **Maire Ni Chathasaigh**, in addition to the sing-along pub ballads of the Makem Brothers

Equally well represented are the colorful traditional and modern Irish dancers with their hand-embroidered dresses and fast foot tapping rhythms. Some of the finest dancers in the country are located in the Metroplex in our local schools and they delight our audiences with continuous performances on our dance stage. In addition there will be dance workshops throughout the weekend and everyone is encouraged to get into the spirit of Ireland at the Saturday night Ceili, or Irish dance party.

Performers

Internationally known as a showcase for the best in Celtic entertainment, this year's festival will feature a rich blend of traditional and modern Celtic bands as well as solo artists from Europe, Canada and the US. The NTIF will kickoff its 25th celebration with the best of Irish music from our popular regional bands and full festival activities. Friday night headliners will include several popular, local and regional artists. Highlighting the weekend are **The Makem Brothers**, with their powerhouse Irish vocal presentation and singer-songwriter **Brian McNeill**, displaying his high-energy skills on the fiddle, bouzouki and guitar.

Regular NTIF top names like celebrated solo artist **Ed Miller** and local bands **Brothers 3**, the **Trinity River Whalers** and the **Irish Rogues** will return for 2006. Several popular local and regional entertainers including; BEHAN, Beyond the Pale, Michael Harrison, Threadneedle Street, Jigsaw, and Jiggernaut will also be performing on the eight stages throughout the weekend. Performances by area dance groups will include the well-known Emerald School of Dance, the Shandon School of Irish Dance, the McTeggart Irish Dancers, and many more.

Cultural

In addition to the musical and dance performances, the festival brings a wide variety of exhibitors, workshops, plays and demonstrations. The popular "**Scottish Village**" will return again this year where local Scottish clans will feature demonstrations and explanations as to the strong connection between the Irish and Scots in their music, ancestry and culture. "**Urchin Street**" will again offer a special place where the younger Celts can find entertainment, education, play and fun, including music, dance, storytelling, theater, magic and mystery. Many special activities and giveaways will be part of expanded Urchin Street programs this year.

Hours, Admission and Location

Festival hours are Friday evening, March 2 from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., Saturday, March 3 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 4 from 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Adult ticket prices are \$10 for Friday night, \$15 for Saturday or Sunday, or \$30 for a 3-day weekend pass. Children 11 and under are admitted free. Members of the SCMA, Students (with ID) and Senior Citizens receive a \$2 discount. **Discount one-day tickets will be available until March 4 at all Metroplex Tom Thumb stores.** The event will take place in Fair Park's Centennial and Automobile Buildings as well as covered areas, between the Hall of State and the park's main gate on Parry Avenue. Parking is available in and around Fair Park and DART, the official transportation provider of the NTIF, is available from many locations throughout the Metroplex. The public can call **972-943-4624** or visit www.ntif.org for more information or to volunteer to work at the festival.

About the Southwest Celtic Music Association

The Southwest Celtic Music Association (SCMA) is the producing organization for the North Texas Irish Festival (NTIF). Over 600 volunteers will help in organization, promotion and execution of this year's festival. The first such festival was held on March 5, 1983 at the legendary Nick Farrelly's Lounge on Oak Lawn and was billed as the First Texas Céili. This event was so popular that it has continued every year since on the first weekend in March as the North Texas Irish Festival. Shortly after the first festival, the all-volunteer Southwest Celtic Music Association was formed to promote the study, performance and preservation of traditional Celtic music, dance and culture. In 1984, the event was moved to Fair Park and its name changed to the North Texas Irish Festival. The Southwest Celtic Music Association is a 501(c) 3 corporation headquartered in Dallas, Texas and serves a five-state regional area. The organization maintains a web site at www.scmatrix.org.

Sponsors

The North Texas Irish Festival is produced and sponsored by the Southwest Celtic Music Association. Generous additional sponsorship is provided by Guinness, Coors Light, George Killian's Irish Red, Harp, Smithwick's, Coca Cola, Tom Thumb, Medical City Heart, AT&T, The North Texas Tollway Authority, Bluegreen Resorts, the Radisson Hotel @ Mockingbird Station, Sullivan-Perkins and DART. Media support is provided by CBS Radio stations; KLUV, KLLI, KRLD, KVIL, KJJK and KOAI, NBC 5, Quick, and DCTV, (Dallas Community Television).

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