



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two New Stars Join the Wild Christmas Lineup ***Podcast Hosts, Giant H-E-B Balloons, and Holiday Magic Await***

McAllen is getting ready to celebrate the season in a BIG way as the McAllen Holiday Parade returns Saturday, December 5. Presented by H-E-B and powered by Bert Ogden Auto Group, this year's *Wild Christmas* celebration will bring larger-than-life attractions, celebrity guests and festive surprises to the Rio Grande Valley.

"For 14 years, H-E-B has believed in the vision of the McAllen Holiday Parade and helped us build a tradition that brings families together and makes our community proud. We're grateful for H-E-B's continued partnership and for the sponsors, volunteers and community members who make this celebration possible. We look forward to welcoming families from across the Rio Grande Valley to experience the magic of Wild Christmas," said City Manager Isaac J. Tawil.

Joining this year's parade are Johnjay Van Es and Payton Whitmore, co-hosts of the nationally syndicated *Johnjay & Rich Show*, a popular morning radio program featuring pop culture, celebrity interviews, entertainment and humor. The show reaches listeners across the country through radio and podcast platforms. Johnjay will join parade hosts Michael Irvin and Julián Gil, while the Grand Marshal team, Alarcon-Morrish-Ochoa Golf Design Group, will feature Rafael Alarcon, Carter Morrish and Lorena Ochoa.

H-E-B will return with its *Serving Texas with Pride* float, marching teams, giant helium balloons and a special appearance by H-E-Buddy. His giant character balloon will also return, spinning to the crowd's enthusiastic "¡Vuelta!" cheers along the parade route.

H-E-B and the City also launched the South Pole of Texas giveaway, giving one lucky family the chance to win four tickets to the McAllen Holiday Parade, four tickets to Wild Bright at the South Pole Illuminated Festival and four H-E-B shirts. Visit the McAllen Holiday Parade's social media accounts for contest details and entry instructions.

The City also announced Maysea as the latest winner of the Santa's Good List social media contest. Her family will receive parade tickets and a special gift for their pet. Residents can nominate their own pets by sharing a photo and a few words about why they deserve a place on Santa's Good List through the parade's social media pages.

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Pet owners have until October 31 to enter their animals in the search for the *Wild Christmas* Animal Grand Marshal. The City is also seeking volunteers to help guide parade balloons and carry banners. Residents can sign up through the volunteer page at mcallenholidayparade.com.

Tickets are on sale now for stadium seating, the South Padre Island Vuelta Zone and reserved route seating. Visit mcallenholidayparade.com for tickets, contest information and volunteer opportunities.

The McAllen Holiday Parade is presented by H-E-B and powered by Bert Ogden Auto Group, and proudly sponsored by McAllen International Airport, South Padre Island CVB, Reliant and Lone Star National Bank. Additional sponsors include Budweiser-L&F Distributors, McAllen International Bridge System, McAllen Public Utility, Metro McAllen, McAllen Public Works, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Lone Star Ambulance, Matt's Building Materials, PepsiCo, J. Gonzalez Injury Attorneys, South Texas ISD, South Texas College, McDonald's, Driscoll Children's Hospital, Chick-fil-A Rio Grande Valley, American Electric Power Foundation, McAllen Shines, IBC Bank, Lacks Furniture, Visit McAllen, Hermes, Peña Eye Institute, McAllen ISD, Linebarger Attorneys at Law, PNC Bank, O'Reilly Auto Parts, McAllen Economic Development Corporation, Rhodes Enterprises & Esperanza Homes, Pollux Castor Creative, Explore McAllen, Palenque Group, Halff Associates, B2Z Engineering, Carollo Engineers, Whataburger and SpawGlass.

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About the City of McAllen

Founded in 1904 and incorporated in 1911, the City of McAllen has grown from a small agricultural community into one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing cities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Known as the “City of Palms,” McAllen serves as a hub for international trade, retail, tourism, and culture in the Rio Grande Valley. Today, the city employs more than 2,600 dedicated public servants across 41 departments, delivering essential services to a community of more than 150,000 residents. McAllen city leaders remain committed to transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, and enhancing quality of life through innovation, infrastructure, and community engagement. For more information, visit www.mcallen.net and follow us on social media @cityofmcallen