



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Contact: Les Atkins 252-532-0073

Balloons to Rise – Benefits to Soar at Carolina Crossroads Hot Air Balloon Festival
Special appearance planned by comedian Jeff Foxworthy

Roanoke Rapids, NC (May 5, 2008) – The Carolina Crossroads Outdoor Amphitheater proudly kicks off its 2008 Outdoor events series with the introduction of a family oriented Hot Air Balloon Festival, May 16-17, to benefit the Children's Miracle Network and its affiliated hospitals: University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina's Children's Hospital in Greenville and Duke Children's Hospital and Health Center in Durham. While Carolina Crossroads is broadening its offerings to the community in the way of entertainment, the highlight of each new venture remains the *giving behind the scenes*. "The generosity of this community and patrons of the complex is exemplified each time an event is held, and that giving spirit has enabled Carolina Crossroads Outdoor Amphitheater to make considerable donations to groups that make a difference in our world – groups like the Children's Miracle Network," said Elizabeth Branham, Entertainment Director.

With a fun-filled day for everyone planned, Carolina Crossroads Outdoor Amphitheater representatives say that at the heart of this and each event, the contributions they can make to organizations such as the CMN are the pinnacle. "We are proud to be able to give back through our efforts and patrons to children in need," Branham added.

"Log-A-Load for Kids and the Children's Miracle Network have helped so many children over the years, and this festival is just another way that we can help them further their mission," said George Ragsdale, 2004 Log-A-Load for Kids Volunteer of the Year and Carolina Crossroads Developer.

Symbolic of the Children's Miracle Network's endless possibilities, a multitude of balloons will soar through the greater eastern North Carolina and southside Virginia during the two day event. The sea of color that will fill the air demonstrates the diverse group of children served by the organization, while each balloon's rise echoes the ability of the organization to serve more children and explore new research.

Carolina Crossroads Outdoor Amphitheater and its communications sponsor EMBARQ is pleased to support the work of the CMN and is excited to be a contributing force in its service of children. A partner in the fundraising efforts, Log-A-Load for Kids, has raised \$29 million for CMN over the years and is now considered one of their premier sponsors. "It is a pleasure to work alongside Log-A-Load volunteers in making each day special for hospitalized and injured children," added Branham.

The Children's Miracle Network has grown exponentially since its birth in 1983. Today, there are 171 hospitals in the Children's Miracle Network in the U.S. and Canada. By the generosity of many individuals, groups, and corporations, the Children's Miracle Network has raised more than \$2.7 billion for hospitalized children—most of which is donated a dollar or two at a time by individuals, serving more than 17 million children at participating facilities.

The Hot Air Balloon Festival, filled with exhibitions from the flight professionals, will also include a special appearance from comedian Jeff Foxworthy and performances by country singers Danielle Peck, the Zac Brown Band, Kyle Wyle and several regional bands. More information is available at www.carolinacrossroads.com or by calling the amphitheater box office at 252-537-6252.

About Carolina Crossroads: Carolina Crossroads is located off Interstate 95 in Roanoke Rapids, NC (Exit 171). The entertainment, tourism, and retail destination located between Richmond, VA, and Raleigh, NC, will offer live performance theatres, shops, hotels, convention and conference facilities, recreation and amusements, and numerous dining options. The Roanoke Rapids Theatre, which opened in July 2007, anchors the Carolina Crossroads Music Theatre and Entertainment District and features a live musical variety show weekly and nationally known country, pop, beach, and gospel music acts. For more information, visit www.carolinacrossroads.com.

###