



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Hot air balloon rides at Mint Hill Madness Festival to benefit homeless children

RE/MAX Executive Realty sponsors balloon rides to support local grassroots non-profit Birthday Blessings

(Charlotte, NC, September 21, 2009) - Adults and kids of all ages can soar for a good cause and experience the thrill of hot air ballooning during this year's Mint Hill Madness Festival. For a \$10 donation, festival-goers will have the opportunity to ride seven stories high in a tethered hot air balloon, operated by an experienced FAA pilot. Donations will benefit Birthday Blessings, a local nonprofit serving homeless children and families.

The Mint Hill Madness Festival runs all weekend, beginning Friday, September 25 through Sunday, September 27, at the Mint Hill Park, 8850 Fairview Rd. (Hwy 218). Balloon rides will be offered on Friday and Saturday evenings from 5-7 p.m. on the park's baseball field adjacent to the festival's main area.

Donna Boyce, a Mint Hill resident and RE/MAX realtor, organized the "Ballooning for Blessings" effort, along with town and festival management. "The day your child is born is such a monumental occasion. To not have the ability or resources to celebrate that day with my children each year would break my heart. Our RE/MAX hot air balloon is the perfect opportunity to help the children that Birthday Blessings serves, and help make others in our community aware as well," said Boyce.

RE/MAX Executive Realty has been offering hot air balloon rides for charities across the nation for more than 18 years. With more than 120 balloons, the company boasts one of the largest fleets of hot air balloons in the world.

"We are both thrilled and honored to be selected as the charity recipient of this exciting festival event," said Amy Cervantes, volunteer executive director. "Not only are Donna and RE/MAX providing a fun and unique way to raise much-needed funding for our organization, but this also allows us the opportunity to introduce more people to the mission and programs of Birthday Blessings."

Birthday Blessings was founded in 2005 by Mint Hill couple Amy and John Cervantes. The organization currently serves homeless facilities across Mecklenburg, Union and York counties, as well as homeless elementary students throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Birthday Blessings operates three programs: Shelter Parties (birthday celebrations at local housing facilities); Classroom Parties (birthday snack bags and treats provided anonymously for homeless elementary students); and Blessing Baskets (baby-care essentials and gifts to welcome the arrival of homeless babies.)

To date, Birthday Blessings has provided birthday parties for more than 800 local homeless children, celebrating with thousands of needy youth across the greater Charlotte area. More than 60 homeless babies have received Blessing Baskets since the program's launch in 2009. The organization continues to expand locally, and recently launched a national expansion program, with its first affiliate chapters getting under way in northeast Indiana and southwest Ohio. Several more chapters are planned for multiple cities across the country.

RE/MAX Executive Realty/Donna Boyce: <http://www.donnaboyce.com>

Mint Hill Madness Festival: <http://www.minthillchamberofcommerce.com/madness.html>

Birthday Blessings: <http://birthdayblessings.org>