

Resolution Number 245
ST. LOUIS CHRISTMAS CAROLS ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS, the founding of the **St. Louis Christmas Carols Association** began on Christmas Eve of 1911 when William Danforth and 8 friends revived the old world Christmas caroling tradition in their neighborhood of Kingsbury Place by singing Silent Night and It Came Upon a Midnight Clear from house to house and were welcomed “with overwhelming enthusiasm” and “showered with money”; and

WHEREAS, in addition to bringing Christmas cheer to St. Louis neighborhoods through song, these first carolers chose to share that joy, and their listeners’ donations, with children in need by contributing the monies collected to the Children’s Aid Society of St. Louis, thus beginning a tradition that, in 100 years, has contributed over \$2.75 million to children’s charities; and

WHEREAS, the **St. Louis Christmas Carols Association** was officially organized to continue the work of spreading the Christmas message in song and distributing monetary collections to children’s charities, led continuously by a member of the Danforth family - William Danforth (founder of Ralston-Purina) from 1926 until his death in 1955, as he waited for carolers at home on Christmas Eve; his son, Donald Danforth from 1956 to 1957, his grandson Dr. William H. Danforth (former Chancellor of Washington University) from 1958 to 2003; and his great grandson, Don Danforth III from 2004 to present. Executive Directors have included Faye Toma, 1941-1967, Doris McCormick, 1968-1969, Sandra Walter Griffiths, 1970-2006, and Joan Koontz 2007-present; and

WHEREAS, in the 2011 season, 56 Area Chairmen will coordinate the efforts of over 400 caroling groups and thousands of carolers throughout the metropolitan St. Louis area, with over 40 metro St. Louis area agencies serving children to benefit from the carolers’ collections; and the Kingsbury Place Singers (singing in four part harmony) celebrate their third season, performing throughout St. Louis in traditional Victorian garb; and

WHEREAS, in honor of its centennial, the **St. Louis Christmas Carols Association’s** 2011 celebration, in addition to the usual door-to-door caroling in neighborhoods, tree lighting ceremonies, parades and special events, includes: Christmas in July caroling at the Lambert St. Louis International Airport on July 24; release of a Christmas card with original art by St. Louisan Linda Solovic; the premiere of two original carols commissioned for the occasion: “*Carol of the Holy Child*”, composed by St. Louisan Stephen Mager (original text adapted from Robert Haven Schauffler) and “*Caroling in St. Louis*”, composed by St. Louisan Randy Mayfield; and a Centennial Celebration Dinner on Sunday, November 6 with caroling, performances by the Kingsbury Place Singers and The Lesters, a pictorial history and reminiscences including a 1955 radio interview with William Danforth..

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we pause in our deliberations to recognize the 100th Anniversary of **St. Louis Christmas Carols Association**. We further direct the Clerk of this Board of Aldermen to spread this Resolution across the Minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it might be presented to the honoree at the Centennial Dinner on Sunday, November 6, 2011.

Introduced on the 4th day of November, 2011 by:

Honorable Craig Schmid, Alderman 20th Ward

Adopted this the 4th day of November, 2011 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen