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Bikes, Blues & BBQ expects record crowd for 2011 rally

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New attractions and venues added

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (June 20, 2011) — Bike, Blues & BBQ (BBB), the largest nonprofit, family-friendly motorcycle rally in the country, will return to Fayetteville Sept. 28-Oct. 1. For the 2011 event, organizers have added an Arenacross exhibition/competition in neighboring Springdale and a Kid Zone area with games for children at another of BBB's key locations, Baum Stadium.

Since its inception in 2000, BBB has grown to one of the five largest motorcycle rallies in the country, rivaling those in Sturgis, S.D.; Daytona, Fla.; and Laconia, N.H. However, unlike these other rallies, BBB maintains a reputation as being suitable for all members of the average family, with activities that appeal to all ages. BBB, a 501(c)(3) is also the nation's most philanthropic rally, dishing out more than \$600,000 to dozens of local charities during its 12 years in existence.

The rally, centered around Fayetteville's Dickson Street entertainment district, attracts more than 400,000

participants and spectators and brings \$35 million to \$50 million to the state each year, according to a 2005 study conducted by the University of Arkansas' Center for Business and Economic Research. A new study is to be conducted this year.

"We're expecting the numbers to show that the rally has grown an average of 10 percent per year since the last study, putting us on track to maintain our position as not only one of the largest motorcycle rallies in the nation, but also as the fastest-growing," said Ben Handford, BBB president and chief executive officer.

Many motorcycle enthusiasts will have already roared into the area well before the rally's start on Wednesday, Sept. 28, 2011, and over the next four days, the bikers will peruse hundreds of vendors along and adjacent to Dickson Street, the University of Arkansas' Baum Stadium and the Washington County Fairgrounds. Designated beer gardens and live music will be abundant in all locations.

BBB includes family-friendly contest events that depend on public input to determine the winners. The Stokes Air Battle of the Bikes, sponsored by Cycle Connection Harley-Davidson in Joplin, will take place Saturday, Oct. 1 in the parking lot of the Walton Arts Center. Spectators vote on a Grand Prize Winner of Best in Show, along with winners three deep in categories including American class, American factory custom, metric cruiser, metric sport, trike/conversion, bagger, sportster, unique bike, chopper and radical custom. Last year's winners came from as far as Texas, Tennessee and Indiana.

Later that Saturday, hundreds of motorcycles, choppers and custom vehicles will gather in Fayetteville for the popular RSC Parade of Power. Thousands of onlookers will gather along the city's main thoroughfares to take in the parade and pick their own favorite set of wheels.

Aside from the sites and the rumble of vibrating pipes, BBB will host the Arkansas State BBQ Championship at the Washington County Fairgrounds. The competition is sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbeque Society (KCBS). This year, as many as 70 teams are expected to compete for \$20,000 in cash prizes and trophies for the best prepared ribs pork, chicken and brisket, as well as a People's Choice Award picked by the public. Last year's contest was the first in which winners were picked from a panel made of only certified KCBS judges. This year, the barbecue competition will be one of only 25 Kingsford-brand charcoal competitions held nationwide to determine a separate \$20,000 winner.

For the 2011 rally, BBB will stretch north to Springdale, where the first-ever "Bikes, Blues and BBQ Arenacross/Big Air Extravaganza" will take place at Parsons Arena Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. The Arenacross event will feature "Cowboy" Kenny Bartram, one of the country's leading professional freestyle motocrosser and rally car drivers, as well as dozens of professional motocross riders vying for \$10,000 in purse money. Amateurs ages 4 and up will compete for trophies and products from sponsors.

Also this year, BBB has partnered with Cross Church of Northwest Arkansas to provide entertainment for families with children attending BBB events. A Kids Zone with face painting, balloon animals and other activities will be set up at Baum Stadium during the motorcycle show and at Parsons Arena during the Arenacross. Cross Church will also have a booth at the Walton Arts Center where motorcycle riders can learn more about the F.A.I.T.H. Riders motorcycle ministry.

About Bikes, Blues and BBQ

Bikes, Blues & BBQ is the largest nonprofit, family-friendly motorcycle rally in the country for people seeking to enjoy the best motorcycle riding, blues music and barbecue while at the same time helping those in need. During rally week, the fall festival draws an estimated 400,000 people with an economic impact of \$35-\$50 million for Northwest Arkansas and the rest of the state. The 2011 rally is Sept. 28-Oct. 1.

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