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Baton Rouge to make first appearance in the 2023 Rose Parade this January

Capital City rider and walker showcase advances in medical district

BATON ROUGE, La. – Baton Rouge will join forces with the Louisiana Office of Tourism and four Louisiana destinations to present a dynamic float in the 134th Rose Parade in Pasadena, CA on January 2, 2023. This will be the first time in history that Baton Rouge has participated in the parade.

“We are excited to bring a little of Baton Rouge to Pasadena in January and celebrate the great strides being made in the Capital City,” said Jill Kidder, President and CEO of Visit Baton Rouge. “This will be a great opportunity for Louisiana to be represented on a national stage in 2023 and we couldn’t be prouder to be a part of this moment in history.”

The 2023 Rose Parade theme of “Turning the Corner” celebrates the hope and potential that each new year brings. Baton Rouge is using the opportunity to celebrate the incredible advancements our health and research facilities are making in the Capital City.

Rose Hudson, a passionate cancer advocate and community leader, will represent Baton Rouge on Louisiana’s float. Hudson is the Immediate Past Chairman of the Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Foundation Board and President/CEO of the Louisiana Lottery Corporation. Among her many titles, Hudson is also a queen.

In 2020, Hudson was crowned Queen of the Karnival Krewe de Louisiane Mardi Gras Ball, becoming the first African American woman to wear the crown in one of the city’s biggest and most prominent Mardi Gras krewes.

Karnival Krewe differs from many other krewes in that its purpose is to raise money for cancer research, cancer education and indigent cancer patient care through its membership and ball.

Hudson has broken a number of glass ceilings throughout her career and championed efforts for both medical research and diversity. Her participation as a float rider highlights the true meaning of the Rose Parade’s “Turning the Corner” theme and celebrates the potential in Baton Rouge.

“The Baton Rouge area has so much to offer our state and our country culturally, musically, academically and economically,” said Hudson. “I am truly honored to represent and celebrate our city’s contributions by riding in the historic Tournament of Roses Parade.”

Louisiana’s float will be a steamboat design and Hudson will be joined by four other Louisiana festival queens. The float will be decorated with flowers and natural elements, keeping with the tradition that’s been around since 1890. The float will embark on a 5.5 mile journey through Pasadena on January 2 starting at 8 a.m. pacific time.

Keeping with the “Turning the Corner” theme, Dr. John Kirwan, Executive Director of the Pennington Biomedical Research Center will walk in the parade on behalf of Baton Rouge.

Kirwan leads the Integrated Physiology and Molecular Medicine Laboratory at the research center. His professional expertise includes over 30 years of research, teaching and service in the obesity and diabetes fields.

“I am proud to represent Baton Rouge and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in the upcoming Tournament of Roses Parade,” Dr. Kirwan said. “The research discoveries from Pennington Biomedical are truly helping to ‘turn the corner’ on improved health and wellness throughout the lifespan for individuals across our community, our state, our nation and the globe.”

To keep the parade spirit alive and further celebrate its participation in the Rose Parade, Visit Baton Rouge is hosting a giveaway offering winners the chance to experience two Mardi Gras parades on February 10-11, 2023. The winners will receive behind-the-scenes passes to the Krewe of Artemis parade, two passes to the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center’s parade parties, a hotel stay and a gift card for meals, transportation and attractions.

Rose Parade goers will have the opportunity to win by scanning a QR code that will be on display during Floatfest — the two-mile showcase of parade floats following their appearance along the parade route. Entry for the sweepstakes opens on Monday, January 2, 2023, at 12:01 a.m. and closes on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. Full details and the entry form will be found on our website during these days and times.

For more information about the 2023 Rose Parade, visit tournamentofroses.com.

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