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(For Immediate Release)

Rhythm & Booms Announces 2002 Donations to Children's Charities

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Madison, Wisconsin – Madison Fireworks Fund, Inc., the non-profit private foundation which operates the annual "Rhythm & Booms" Independence Day celebration and fireworks display at Warner Park, today announced donations from Rhythm & Booms 2002 to 15 children's educational, reading enrichment, and developmental charities in the Madison area.

After event expenses are paid, the proceeds from the sale of food, refreshments, souvenirs, and the collection of donations from the estimated crowd of 300,000 who attend Rhythm & Booms are donated to support children's charities. Since Rhythm & Booms was established in 1993, the Fireworks Fund has made well over \$320,000 in such contributions. The 2002 total donations are \$26,515.

Terry Kelly, President of Madison Fireworks Fund, commented on this year's grants:

"These gifts to children's charities are made possible in large part through the generosity of our sponsors, Alliant Energy, American Family Insurance, M&I Bank, RSM McGladrey LLC, WKOW-TV27, WOLX Oldies 94.9FM, Charter Communications, and the City of Madison, who collectively provide major underlying funding for Rhythm & Booms. Over 900 volunteers then devote thousands of hours of donated community service to help organize and operate the event. Their generous community spirit, and the public's continued support of Rhythm & Booms, has made the daytime events at Rhythm & Booms – the proceeds of which go today to charity – overwhelmingly successful. We thank them, and salute them!"

The Madison Fireworks Fund emphasizes its funding towards three major focuses: Help and Education for Children through support of Community Projects, Support of Facilities which enhance Children's Education, Recreating, and Learning, and Support for Children's Literacy and Children's Reading Enrichment.

Ten awards are directed in the Help and Education for Children category. Four Lakes Council Boy Scouts of America received \$3,500 for their "ScoutReach" program which serves economically disadvantaged young people. The Boy Scouts provided a significant number of volunteers to help collect donations at Rhythm & Booms this year, and will continue to be a part of the event in future years. Child Development, Inc. received \$1,500 for preschool "scholarships". The Aldo Leopold Nature Center, Inc. received \$1,500 to increase Leopold awareness in the community. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program received \$1,500 to provide books and supplies to support its BABES (Beginning Alcohol/Addiction Basic Education Studies) primary prevention program in which senior volunteers interact with children through puppets, songs, books, craft activities and stories to promote developmental and positive living skills in young Head Start children. The Madison Jewish Community Council received funding for Camp Shalom Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000. James Madison Memorial High School received \$2,000 to purchase instruments for school orchestra and band programs. The Epilepsy Foundation received \$1,500 for summer camp scholarships for children with epilepsy, the Nehemiah Corporation received \$800 for the "YES Works" program, which provides programs for adult role models for parentless children, summer employment training, and minority self-help programs, the YMCA of Dane County received \$1,000 to support youth center programs, and Widows & Children's Fund of New York City received a special one-time grant at the suggestion of NYFD Chief Nick Visconti, who presented the special Tribute to our State's emergency workers at Rhythm & Booms: Celebrate America.

In support of Facilities for Children, \$1,000 was donated to the East Madison Community Center to support the Educational Environment Center addition, the Warner Park Community & Recreation Center received \$2,200 for continued annual support of the Center and its programs, and YSP Foundation received \$1,000 to support the acquisition and renovation of a permanent building for the Young Shakespeare Players, an organization of actors aged 7-18 who perform Shakespeare in the original language year-round.

In support of Children's Literacy and Children's Reading Enrichment, the Madison Area Literacy Council received \$1,500 to be directed towards literacy training for youths aged 18-21 years, and the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth received \$1,000 to fund programs and services that support, motivate, and challenge academically talented students in Wisconsin through Talent Search Award ceremonies, Education Recognition programs, Young Students' Summer Programs, Accelerated Learning Programs, and Exploration Workshops.

Rhythm & Booms 2003 will be held again at Warner Park on Saturday, June 28, 2003.