

SpongeBob SquarePants Balloon Gets Holiday Makeover For 87th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®

NEW YORK, Oct. 24, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Making his way from Bikini Bottom to New York City, the high-flying SpongeBob SquarePants balloon will debut a new look for the 87th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® on Thursday, Nov. 28. Donning a holiday-themed ensemble for this year's celebration, millions of fans will watch as SpongeBob takes to the sky for his ninth consecutive procession down the streets of Manhattan.

(Photo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20131024/NY04041>)

The SpongeBob balloon design was re-imagined by Nickelodeon and the Macy's Parade organizers to give it a fresh, more vivid look. The balloon structure was also fine-tuned as organizers accomplished an engineering feat, incorporating 800 tie lines in the single chamber sphere that intricately pull together SpongeBob's trademark square shape.

"It's not very often that the term 'square' and 'balloon' are used together, but for nearly a decade the SpongeBob SquarePants balloon has been one of the many highlights of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade," said Amy Kule, Executive Producer of the holiday spectacle. "With his animated persona and super-sized Santa hat, this second iteration of this irascible character will float down the Parade route to the continued delight of the millions of fans lining the streets of New York and the many millions more watching on television across the country. This Thanksgiving, SpongeBob once again takes his rightful position squarely in the sky."

"Nickelodeon has a long history of successful collaborations with Macy's and we are very excited to unveil this new SpongeBob balloon at the Parade this year," said Pam Kaufman, Chief Marketing Officer and President of Consumer Products, Nickelodeon. "Watching the Parade is a time-honored, Thanksgiving Day tradition and we hope this balloon brings a sense of SpongeBob's eternal optimism to the millions of families watching at home and the millions more experiencing the Parade in New York City."

In 2004, the first-ever SpongeBob SquarePants Balloon made its inaugural appearance in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade to the delight of kids and adults alike. Based on the most-watched animated kids' show on TV, this year's newest SpongeBob balloon will stand at 44-feet tall, 41-feet long and 34-feet wide as it struts down New York's most famous parade route.

Since its launch in July 1999, *SpongeBob SquarePants* has emerged as a pop culture phenomenon. The series has been the most-watched animated program with kids 2-11 for more than 12 consecutive years, and over the past several years, it has averaged more than 100,000,000 total viewers every quarter across all Nickelodeon networks. As the most widely distributed property in Viacom history, SpongeBob is seen in over 170 countries and translated in more than 35 languages. The character-driven cartoon chronicles the nautical and sometimes nonsensical adventures of SpongeBob, an incurable optimist and earnest sea sponge, and his undersea friends.

With more than 50 million viewers across the country and more than 3.5 million spectators that line up along the streets of New York City each year, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is a national icon that has grown into a world-famous holiday event. For more than 85 years, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has marked the official start of the holiday season. Growing in size and scale, the Parade proudly marches down a more than 2-mile route in New York City with more than 8,000 participants in tow including Macy's employees, their families, celebrities, athletes, clowns and dance groups spreading holiday cheer. The Parade also features America's best marching bands, fabulous floats and Macy's signature giant helium character balloons. For more information on the Macy's Parade please visit www.macys.com/parade or call the Parade hotline at 212.494.4495.

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade airs nationwide on NBC-TV on Thursday, November 28, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. until noon, in all time zones.

Nickelodeon, now in its 34th year, is the number-one entertainment brand for kids. It has built a diverse, global business by putting kids first in everything it does. The company includes television programming and production in the United States and around the world, plus consumer products, online, recreation, books, and feature films. Nickelodeon's U.S. television network is seen in almost 100 million households and has been the number-one-rated basic cable network for 18 consecutive years. For more information or artwork, visit www.nickpress.com. Nickelodeon and all related titles, characters and logos are trademarks of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIAB).

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