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MEDIA RELEASE

Christmas in the Park to be a triple celebration

Mark your calendars now because on 11 December 2010, HBS Bank Napier Christmas in the Park is going to be a celebration of epic proportions.

Not only is 2010 a year to feature key artists, but it is also the 10th anniversary since the free Christmas concert was launched in Napier and event organiser and manager David Trim is delighted to have HBS Bank on board as the principal sponsor.

"It's a big one this year and I'm excited about the change in format. It's hoped that an earlier start from previous years will cater more for the younger families in attendance. 10pm finishes made it a big night out for them and you would often see some families leaving from around 9.30pm onwards because the younger kids were just too tired.

"Because one of the key values of Christmas in the Park is about happy families and family entertainment, we're bringing the whole event forward with gates opening at 4.30pm and entertainment starting at 5pm. It's been tricky with the timing of the carol singing and fireworks at the end of the night, but we know we can work around it because it usually gets dark around 9pm."

Mr Trim said following the success of Yulia's performance at the 2008 event, and the variety of New Zealand talent with Hawke's Bay connections as last year's theme, this year's entertainment was looking equally as captivating.

"She really did attract great attention in the first year that Christmas in the Park stepped up from its former amateur format. The attendance jumped from around 5000 in 2007 to 18,000 in 2008.

"As the biggest, free Christmas event in the bay, Christmas in the Park attracted more than 20,000 people last year and I'm expecting we'll be hitting the 25,000 mark this year. But it's not about making the event bigger and bigger each year because that comes at a cost and we really want to maintain free entry."

HBS Bank Christmas in the Park event organiser and manager David Trim said it meant a tremendous amount to have HBS Bank on board as naming sponsor this year – not just financially.

"It means continuity for an established regional event and it also shows that local businesses like HBS Bank really do care about the values of Christmas, family and community spirit. A partnership like HBS Bank has with Christmas in the Park means, from a benefits point of view, that it is symbiotic for everyone involved.

"I think it is important that sponsors share the same values as the event they are partnering with and I know HBS Bank has fantastic commitment to community support and that's a perfect fit for our free community event," Mr Trim said.

HBS Bank Christmas in the Park will be held at Napier's Anderson Park on Saturday 11 December, starting at 5pm. Gates open 4.30pm.

For further information contact:

David Trim, Manager Napier Christmas in the Park

Tel: 06 835 7193; Email: davidtrim@businesslifestyles.co.nz

Blair Cross, General Manager HBS Bank

Tel: 06 8727299; Cell: 021 246 2726; Email: blair@hbsnz.com

www.hbsbank.co.nz