

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Olympic Star to be Honored in Suffolk

SUFFOLK, Va. (October 1, 2008) The City of Suffolk is excited to announce that Olympic Gold Medalist and Suffolk resident LaShawn Merritt will be honored on Saturday, October 4, 2008. LaShawn Merritt and his mother, Brenda Merritt Stukes, will participate in the Peanut Festival Parade in downtown Suffolk on Saturday morning.

The parade, which begins at 10 a.m., will travel from South Broad Street down West Washington Street to North Main Street and end on Finney Avenue. There are approximately 80 units scheduled to participate in the parade. The reviewing stand will be located in the 100 block of North Main Street. Cheryl Tann of WAVY TV will be the moderator of this year's parade.

Following the parade at noon, there will be a reception at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts where Mayor Linda T. Johnson and Suffolk City Council members will recognize the incredible achievements of LaShawn Merritt by presenting him with a Key to the City. Representatives of the area's youth will also have the opportunity to meet the Olympic Gold Medalist at this event.



**Suffolk Festivals,
Inc.**

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Contributing Story

PRESS RELEASE – SEPTEMBER 6, 2008

Back by Popular Demand - Bands, Clowns and Miniature Motorcycles will take over the streets of Downtown Suffolk on Saturday, October 4th thanks to McDonalds, Inc. and SunTrust Bank as they partner to bring the City's biggest party back to the community, The Suffolk Peanut Fest Parade.

Sponsors and the Suffolk Festival volunteers listened and felt your disappointment when the parade was cancelled last year. Linda Stevens, Festival Director, is excited that a long-time tradition that dates back to 1941 is once again coming alive in Downtown Suffolk. Though the dumping of peanuts and elephants herding down Main are no longer present as they were years ago, the anticipation and arrival of the Shriners-Khediye Temple who are renowned for their show-stopping acts and crazy antics, will once again entertain kids of all ages.

But they won't be the only clowns putting a smile on parade goers, a legend and everyone's friend; Ronald McDonald will preside and Honor the Suffolk Peanut Fest Parade as this year's Grand Marshal. Clad in red, white and yellow stripes and his infectious smile Ronald is known world-wide as the McDonald mascot. It has been said the Ronald McDonald is the second most recognized figure in the world- after Santa Claus.

For more information or to participate in the parade please contact the Suffolk Festival office at 757.539.6751 or visit us at www.suffolkfest.org.

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