



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

Ben Handford, 479-527-9993, [bikesbluesandbbq@gmail.com](mailto:bikesbluesandbbq@gmail.com)

Joe Giles, 479-527-9993, [bikesbluesandbbq@gmail.com](mailto:bikesbluesandbbq@gmail.com)

**Bikes, Blues & BBQ**  
**Announces New Leadership Organization and Team**

**FAYETTEVILLE, Ark., February 8, 2011** – Bikes, Blues & BBQ (BBB) announced today the restructuring of the leadership team and new appointees to these leadership positions. Ben Handford will serve in the newly created position of President and CEO, and Joe Giles has been named the Executive Director.

“Over the last eleven years, Bikes, Blues & BBQ has evolved from a small gathering of motorcycle enthusiasts on Dickson Street to a "festival" encompassing the largest "family-friendly, charitable funding" rally in the United States. As a result of this growth, BBB was able to give over \$150,000 in cash, partnership and in-kind support to charities in 2010 alone,” said Kenneth Mourton, chairman of BBB.

“Recognizing the expansion and addition of venues will continue (Dickson Street, Baum Stadium and Washington County Fairgrounds), the significant economic impact the event has on Northwest Arkansas and the state, and the knowledge the funds generated by BBB are crucial to the many charitable organizations we support, the board of directors determined that the time is right to hire a new level of professional leadership,” said Mourton.

“As a result, Ben Handford has been named our first President and CEO. He will focus on working with our many state and local stakeholders, as well as working with current sponsors and developing new ones so the event can remain self-funding. Ben will also work with the Executive Director and the many volunteer coordinators to ensure that the event is a success for everyone involved,” stated Mourton.

Handford is a native Arkansan who brings to BBB a tremendous amount of experience in the areas of strategic event planning, operational logistics and group management. He has worked for the White House, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and two presidential campaigns. "Ben's experience makes him uniquely qualified to take BBB into the future," Mourton added.

Working with Handford on the day-to-day operations as the Executive Director of BBB will be Joe Giles. "Joe has been involved in every aspect of the rally over the last six years and brings not only tremendous organization and team development skills, but also a connection to the Northwest Arkansas community that will be invaluable in assisting Ben in building for the future," said Jeff Koenig, board member and head of the search committee. "His eclectic background as a radio announcer, school teacher, elementary school principal and professional musician, and his range of experiences make him a great choice for this role," added Koenig.

### **About Bikes, Blues & BBQ**

Bikes, Blues & BBQ is the largest non-profit (501(c)(3)), family-friendly motorcycle rally and festival in the country for people seeking to enjoy the best in motorcycle riding, blues music and barbeque, while helping those in need. The 2011 rally is scheduled for September 28 – October 1.

For more information visit [www.bikesbluesandbbq.org](http://www.bikesbluesandbbq.org).

###