



Contact: Manny Mendoza  
(214) 559-8580  
[manny.mendoza@tsrh.org](mailto:manny.mendoza@tsrh.org)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **Revitalized “Iris Bowl” Celebrates 75 Years of Service to Dallas**

(DALLAS – May 13, 2013) – The Iris Bowl, a little known gem of the Dallas park system, is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Located at Reverchon Park in Oak Lawn, the underappreciated garden and stone amphitheater has a long and colorful history.

The Works Progress Administration, a New Deal agency spawned by the Depression, completed the Iris Bowl in 1937 as part of a two-year, \$20,000 renovation of Reverchon Park, which first opened in 1915. The Iris Bowl was dedicated on April 19, 1938, during the city’s first public-garden pilgrimage, organized by the Dallas Woman’s Club and attended by members of the Iris Society of Dallas.

For years, the Iris Bowl hosted Greek pageants, dance performances and other celebrations. Later, the park and garden fell into disrepair before revitalization efforts began in the late '90s.

Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, located adjacent to the park on Maple Avenue, initiated the Reverchon Park Revitalization Project in 1998 to begin to reclaim it from the neglect and resulting crime that had plagued it for decades. An annual “Reverchon Roundup” cleanup has been held ever since.

The Friends of Reverchon Park formed in 2005, and the group successfully lobbied for \$3.5 million in bond funds to help pay for renovations. In 2010, the Iris Bowl was replanted under the leadership of Steve Houser, a Certified Texas Master Gardener and Certified Texas Master Naturalist, and the stonework was later repaired.

Today, the revitalized park hosts a variety of community activities and is a peaceful and welcome respite from the busy Oak Lawn business district. “It is an honor and privilege to restore the historic park and its unique Iris Bowl for future generations to enjoy,” Houser says.

Houser gave a presentation on the Iris Bowl to the American Iris Society national convention last month at the Crowne Plaza Hotel & Resort in Addison. The convention returns to Addison in 2014.

The 36-acre Reverchon Park opened in 1915 as Dallas’ “central park” and was named for Julien Reverchon, a botanist who collected thousands of plants before his death in 1905. The park was later expanded to 46 acres.

For more information, visit the Friends of Reverchon Park website at <http://www.reverchonparkfriends.com> or contact Manny Mendoza at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children at 214-559-8580 or [manny.mendoza@tsrh.org](mailto:manny.mendoza@tsrh.org). Steve Houser is available for interviews.

**About Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children (TSRHC):**

TSRHC is one of the nation's leading pediatric centers for the treatment of orthopaedic conditions, certain related neurological disorders and learning disorders, such as dyslexia. Admission is open to Texas children from birth up to 18 years of age. Patients receive treatment regardless of the family's ability to pay. For more information, to volunteer or to make a donation, please call (214) 559-5000 or (800) 421-1121 or visit [www.tsrhc.org](http://www.tsrhc.org).

###