



Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association

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THREE CHILDREN'S CHARITIES TO BE HONORED IN THE GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL PARADE

Project Cuddle rescues unwanted babies;
Kids With A Cause is a group of young stars doing worldwide community service;
Freedom Writers works to reduce the high school drop-out rate

GARDEN GROVE, CA (May 17, 2007) – The theme of this year's Memorial Day weekend Garden Grove Strawberry Festival is "Celebrating Accomplished Kids." In that spirit, the festival will honor three Southern California-based charitable organizations that are dedicated to improving children's lives: Project Cuddle, Kids with a Cause, and The Freedom Writers Foundation. All will be featured in the festival's parade on Saturday, May 26. The parade starts at 9 a.m. at Ninth and Chapman in Garden Grove.

PROJECT CUDDLE

Debbe Magnusen, founder of Project Cuddle, will represent her organization in the festival parade. In 1996, Magnusen launched an effort to end baby abandonment by establishing a toll-free, 24-hour crisis hotline that pregnant women can call for help raising their babies or to arrange for their newborn baby to be adopted. Project Cuddle has since saved more than 570 babies. She has been featured on *60 Minutes* and on May 9, 2007, Oprah Winfrey applauded Magnusen's work on her show.

KIDS WITH A CAUSE

Linda Finnegan, founder of Kids With a Cause, a long-time supporter of the festival, is the Theme Grand Marshall of this year's parade. Kids With a Cause members are young professional entertainers who are dedicated to helping children who suffer from poverty, lack of education and health-related issues.

For the last several years, over 50 members have volunteered their time to help thousands of mentally and physically disabled children enjoy rides during the Strawberry Festival's Special Kids Day. This year, the following entertainers from Finnegan's group will ride in the festival's May 26th parade:

Jordan Garrett from *Death Sentence*; Logan J from *The New Adventures of Old Christine*; AJ Holyfield from *Hannah Montana*; Chris Holyfield from *Drake & Josh*; Taylor Lipman from *The Morgue*; Keith Maples from the band *Daze of Haze*; Shauneq Recke, from *Brown Sugar Band*; Seth Adkins from *First Do No Harm*; Jamey Geston from *Stick It*; Madlyn, Sawyer and Sullivan Sweeten from *Everybody Loves Raymond*; Alexandra Rieger from *Akeelah and the Bee*; Sabrina Lentini from *After School*; Savannah Stehlin from *ER*; Kali Majors from *Baby Blues* and Austin Majors from *NYPD Blues*; and Seth Adkins from *Titanic* and *Bad News Bears*. Many of these performers and other celebrities will sign autographs following the parade.

FREEDOM WRITERS

The Freedom Writers Foundation is dedicated to reducing high school dropout rates by training teachers in the Freedom Writers Method, an educational philosophy that promotes diversity and tolerance. The organization also has a scholarship program to help pay for students' college tuition. The Freedom Writers story was told in the 2006 Paramount movie *Freedom Writers*. Kristin Herrera, who played Gloria in the movie, will ride in the festival parade. Joining her will be three of the original Freedom Writers who attended Long Beach's Wilson High School in the mid-1990s. They are Calvin Vanderhoff, who is working on his bachelor's degree in nursing at Cal State San Diego; Robyn Marotta, who graduated from Cal State Long Beach and now works for the Freedom Writers Foundation's teacher training program; and Sonia Peneda, a Cal State Long Beach graduate who now serves as the Foundation's Director of Communications.

The four-day Garden Grove Strawberry festival is the second largest city festival in the Western United States. It runs from Friday, May 25 through Monday, May 28. The hours are Friday 1-10 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. and Monday 10 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. Admission is free. The festival will be held at the Village Green between Main Street and Euclid Avenue in downtown Garden Grove.

The Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association is a non-profit organization which has raised more than \$4.5 million for local charities since its inception in 1958. For additional information, please call (714) 638-0981 or visit the website at www.strawberryfestival.org.

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