



## **Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association**

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<http://strawberryfestival.org/pressroom.htm>

### **THE 59th ANNUAL GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL CELEBRATES FOUR OUTSTANDING LOCAL SUPER VOLUNTEERS**

GARDEN GROVE, CA (May 16, 2017) -- The 59th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival 's 2017 theme is ***Honoring Our Local Volunteer Super Heroes***. The board has chosen four outstanding volunteers who have served their communities above and beyond the call. They will ride with their families in the Saturday, May 28th parade that starts at 10 a.m. at 9<sup>th</sup> and Chapman in Garden Grove. Honorees are Randy Barth, founder and CEO of THINK Together; Peter Carter, a founder of the CHOC Walk fundraiser; Gayle Knight, founder of H.O.P.E. (Helping Others Prepare for Eternity); and Jack Wallin, founding member of the Garden Grove Strawberry Festival, who has served continuously on the board for 59 years. The festival will be held Memorial Day Weekend Friday, May 26th through Monday, May 29th, 2017. Friday hours are 1:00 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Monday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is free.

#### **RANDY BARTH – THEME GRAND MARSHAL**



Randy Barth is the founder and CEO of THINK Together and the executive chairman of the Principal's Exchange. THINK Together is a nonprofit organization collaborating with communities, parents, and schools to help support to help create excellence and equity in education for all kids. They provide early learning programs for 0-5 year olds and expanded learning programs for students K-12. THINK Together serves more than 100,000 students across more than 400 locations and 40 school districts statewide in California. Principal's Exchange (PE) is a benefit corporation that for 16 years has provided customized solutions for schools and school districts to drive performance in student achievement. PE provides professional development and coaching for teachers and administrators and develops software tools that enable the use of data to help drive performance, and serves some of the top performing low-income schools and school districts in California. Along with former Los Angeles Times reporter Jennifer Delson, he is the co-author of the best- selling book *Think Together: How YOU can play a role in improving education in America*.

#### **PETER CARTER**



Peter, along with his wife Suki, helped to create, orchestrate, promote and champion the CHOC Walk with the goal to raise money for Children's Hospital of Orange County. He was a board member of Padrinos when he, along with two others, came up with the concept and vision for what is now known as the CHOC Walk in the Park. This event has grown over the years into a multi-million dollar fundraiser, held annually, for CHOC Hospital. Garden Grove has benefited immensely with having this state-of-the-art children's hospital in its own backyard. Additionally, Garden Grove is home to one of CHOC's health care clinics which serve the youth in the community. Peter has also been active in many other Garden Grove institutions, such as the Strawberry Festival, the Shakespeare Festival, Elks Club, Kiwanisland, and has served on the board of the Orange County Grand Jurors Association. His many awards

include Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year and the Orange County Chapter of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. He is also a multiple recipient of the CHOC Charley Award for Volunteerism.



### **GAYLE KNIGHT**

Gayle Knight is the founder of Helping Others Prepare for Eternity (H.O.P.E.) which was established in 1997 to turn despair into hope in the lives of abandoned or abused women and children from disadvantaged families. Today H.O.P.E. is a family support center service helping Orange County disadvantaged families. H.O.P.E. provides a vast array of support services with a focus on domestic violence prevention while providing basic needs and healthy life skills for families. The organization has three core programs: Basic Needs Program, Helping Women Succeed, and its M&m Youth Mentor Program. Prior to founding H.O.P.E., Gayle made it her personal mission to help at-risk women and children. In 1991, she began helping families in Buena Clinton, a Garden Grove neighborhood housing 4,000 families within a four city-block area. She had a mobile operation going from the trunk of her car, serving women with food, clothing and rental assistance, and organizing outings and activities for women and children.

### **JACK WALLIN**



In his late 80s, Jack Wallin has served continuously on the festival board for 59 years. He says he has remained on the board because he likes the people and because it is for a good cause: helping local charities. As the board member in charge of grounds and rides, Jack spends two solid weeks every year setting up the festival. He coordinates layout and ride setup with the carnival company, and works the grounds all four days of the huge Memorial Day weekend event. Jack says he plans to resign when he physically can no longer do his job. Donations to date have topped \$6.5 million. "I'm honored to have been part of an organization that has done so much good for the community," he says, "last year raising over \$150,000 for local charities, student scholarships and youth projects." The festival also treats over 2,000 special needs kids to a day of free rides and food. In addition, he works at Kiwanisland tending the grounds and handling reservations. He has served the Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove, the Soroptimist Club and others, and has been honored often for his outstanding community service, including Cypress College Americana Citizen of the Year from Garden Grove, Garden Grove Man of the Year, Garden Grove Kiwanian of the Year, and Garden Grove Elks Lodge Citizen of the Year.

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All four festival days include 35 carnival rides, 5 contests, over 200 food and sales booths, games, music and live entertainment in the amphitheater and Showmobile. Contests, held in the festival's 550-seat amphitheater, include the **Berry, Berry Beautiful Baby Contest, Redhead Roundup, Strawberry Idol Karaoke, and Tiny Tots King and Queen.**

Sponsorship comes from Great Wolf Lodge, Munchkins, Sam's Club, GGTPC, Great Destinations, Clear Channel Outdoor, Parenting OC, El Panamericano, Korea Times, Nguoi Viet Daily News, OC News and its community newspapers, OC Weekly, Farandula USA, Miniondas, and radio stations 103.4 MYfm, KOST, JACK FM, KDAY-FM, KWVE, KWIZ, KABC, KLOS, KDAY, KSWD the Sound LA, KLYY, KSSE, Radio Centro 94.7, The Wave and KEARTH 101.

For additional information, call (714) 638-0981 or visit [www.strawberryfestival.org](http://www.strawberryfestival.org). # # #