



Randy Barth



Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association

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59TH ANNUAL GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL NAMES

**RANDY BARTH PARADE THEME GRAND MARSHAL
AND BURT WARD AS CELEBRITY GRAND MARSHAL**

-- Fourteen Additional Celebrities to be Honored --



Burt Ward

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. – May 1, 2017 – The 59th annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival parade will be held on Saturday, May 27, 2017. This year’s theme is **“Honoring Our Community Volunteer Superheroes,”** and in support of the theme, two superhero grand marshals will lead the parade. THINK Together founder and CEO Randy Barth as been named Theme Grand Marshal, and Burt Ward, who played Robin in the ABC-TV Batman series, is this year’s Celebrity Grand Marshal. Fourteen other celebrities will also be honored in the parade: Mekia Cox, Kate Flannery, Raphael Alejandro, Alicia Willis, Dalila Bela, Trinitee Stokes, Tom Choi, Grace Kaufman, Daniel DiMaggio, Ryan Ochoa, Beth Hall, Bruce Saloman, Brandon Russell, and California Miss Outstanding Teen Jenna Tower, a Garden Grove native. The four-day festival will be held Memorial Day Weekend Friday, May 26 through Monday, May 29, 2017.



Mekia Cox

Randy Barth is the THINK Together Founder and CEO and the executive chairman of the Principal's Exchange. THINK Together is a nonprofit organization collaborating with communities, parents, and schools to help support and create excellence and equity in education for all kids. They provide early learning programs for 0-5 year olds and expanded learning programs for K-12 students. THINK Together serves more than 100,000 students across more than 400 locations and 40 school districts statewide in California. Principal's Exchange is a benefit corporation (B-Corp) that for 16 years has provided customized solutions for schools and school districts to drive performance in student achievement.



Kate Flannery

Burt Ward was a true “Boy Wonder” as a teenager, strong in martial arts, wrestling, track, tennis and golf, combined with a sharp intellect. He was clocked as the world’s fastest reader by the American Medical Society and holds a black belt in karate. A special piece of movie trivia is that Bruce Lee’s first filmed fight scene of his career was fighting Burt Ward. (In fact, in 2015 Burt was inducted into the International Karate and Kickboxing Hall of Fame.) So it was a natural for him to be cast as Robin, The Boy Wonder in the Batman TV series for ABC-TV. Fame followed with hundreds of personal appearances, press and even the cover of Life magazine. As an adult, he received the Harvard “Man of the Year” award. In 1994, Burt and his wife, Tracy Posner Ward, rescued a Great Dane in distress, and learning that big breed dogs have a short life span, started the non-profit charity Gentle Giants Rescue and Adoptions, saving over 15,000 dogs in its 22 years of operation. The company also markets a dog food line that has greatly extended the life span of large breed dogs, which Ward will be selling and autographing at the festival for his charity.



Raphael Alejandro

Mekia Cox has a recurring role as Dr. Robyn Charles on the NBC hit drama *Chicago Med*. In 2009 she was one of the lead dancers on Michael Jackson's world tour *This Is It*. Not long after, she was cast as DJ Sasha, on CW’s hit series *90210*. She was also a series regular on NBC's *Undercovers* and on TNT’s *Mob City*. Most



Alicia Leigh Willis



Dalila Bela

recently, she starred in three prime time shows: TV Land's *Impastor* and ABC's *Secrets and Lies*. With a Bachelor of Music degree in musical theatre and two national Broadway tours (*Fame* and *Smoke Joe's Café*), she shares her passion for the stage in her own production company, Little Man Productions, producing *Broadway at the W*, a stage show that highlights the best performances in Broadway.

Kate Flannery is an actor, writer and singer best known for her nine seasons as Meredith the Drunk on NBC's *The Office*. She also recurs on ABC's *American Housewife*, Cartoon Network's *Steven Universe* and Comedy Central's *Another Period* and has guest starred on FOX's *New Girl* and *Brooklyn Nine Nine* as well as MTV's *Mary+Jane*. Kate is currently Jane Lynch's sidekick in her anti-cabaret act, *See Jane Sing* playing the Kennedy Center, Joe's Pub and 30 cities over the past two years. In addition, Kate's original cult comedy lounge act, *The Lampshades*, plays comedy festivals and Hollywood regularly.



Trinitee Stokes

Raphael Alejandro has an impressive resume which includes the leading role in *How to Be a Latin Lover* starring Salma Hayak, Rob Lowe, and Kristin Bell. He has another leading role in *Kindergarten Cop 2*, and has been a series regular on ABC's *Nerd Herd*. He's also been seen regularly on NBC's *Olympus*, as well as on *Once Upon a Time* which airs on ABC. He was nominated in the 2014 Young Artist Awards as the best performance in a TV series for his role in *Almost Human*. He is fluent in Spanish, French and Portuguese.

Alica Leigh Willis is a twice Emmy-nominated actress best known for her role of Corey Conway on the long running hit TV series, *7th Heaven* and as mob moll Courtney Mathews on ABC's *General Hospital*. She began her career working in commercials. At the age of nineteen, Alicia landed the role of Ali Fowler on *Another World*. Leaving daytime behind, she continued guest starring on television and in supporting film roles, landing the title role of Elizabeth Wakefield on *American Heiress*. After taking time off to raise a family, she has recently returned to the film world starring in *A Family Trust*.



Tom Choi

Veteran young actor **Dalila Bela** was born in Montreal, Canada. Her numerous credits include the film *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* plus TV roles in ABC's *Once Upon a Time*, as well as a lead role in *The Adventure Club*. Most recently, Dalila landed the role of Diana Berry in the Netflix original Series *Anne*. Her leading role in the PBS Network series *Odd Squad* inspired an invitation from the White House to be a guest at the annual 2015 Easter Egg Hunt, an incredible honor. At age seven she took home the Young Actors Award two years in a row; once for her accurate portrayal of a Russian speaking girl in *The Stranger*. In 2014, Dalila won best actress at the Diabolique Film Festival for her portrayal of a blind girl in the short *Dead Hearts*. She works with the Carecem Foundation to help low-income kids attend summer camp in Los Angeles. She is fluent in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.



Grace Kaufman

Trinitee Stokes is well known for her role as Judy Cooper on the Disney Channel original series, *K.C. Undercover*. Off camera, Trinitee is a gifted voiceover artist, lending her voice for Disney's Princess Tiana doll (not yet released). She also excels in singing-songwriting, dance, comedy, and fashion. Her *Designs by The Trinitee* fashion brand has had rousing success, with designs that rocked the runway of the 2013 Designer Kids Project. Musically, Trinitee recently released her new single, "Miss Me," (on iTunes and Amazon) and is preparing for performances at soon- to-be-announced locations.



Daniel DiMaggio

Tom Choi is well known for playing Ken Yukimura on the teen fan favorite *Teen Wolf* on MTV. Choi recently recurred on *NCIS: LA* and *Agent Carter* and guest-starred on *Hawaii Five-0*, *NCIS* and *Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn*. Choi is no stranger to Disney audiences. He recurred as the memorable Mr. Hashimoto on both *The Suite Life on Deck* and *A.N.T. Farm*. Born in Taegu, South Korea, Choi moved to the U.S when he was four years old. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in drama from The University of Washington, and has attended the LACC School of Cinema and Television, adding producing, directing and writing to his credits.



Ryan Ochoa

Grace Kaufman most recently can be seen in the new CBS comedy *Man With A Plan* playing Matt LeBlanc's daughter Kate Burns. Kaufman began her TV career in TNT's *The Closer* and continued to guest star in NBC's *Free Agents*, Disney's *JESSIE*, Nickelodeon's *Deadtime Stories*, the CBS series *Bad Teacher*,



Beth Hall

and most recently in TNT's *The Last Ship*. Films include the short film *Buttons In The Ground* for which she won Best Actress at the Hollyshorts Film Festival. Her extensive voice-over work includes that of Deema in *Bubble Guppies* and Melody Mouse in *Micky Mouse Clubhouse*. She's had numerous roles in live theater. Most recently, she starred in Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *Appropriate* at Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum.

Daniel DiMaggio is a series regular on ABC's *American Housewife* playing the middle child Oliver Otto. He has also appeared as young Kal-El in *Supergirl* and will travel to Boston to play young Mark Wahlberg in the movie *Daddy's Home Part 2*. Daniel has run the LA Marathon and has played travel baseball in the Cooperstown Dreams Tournament.



Bruce Saloman

Ryan Ochoa is best known for his series regular role as Lanny on Disney's *Pair of Kings*. He just wrapped the role of Eli in the feature film, *The Samuel Project*, due out in 2018. He's had recurring roles on *iCarly* and *Mr. Young*, and has guest-starred on *Zeke & Luther* and *Hit The Floor*. Lead or supporting roles include the films *A Christmas Carol*, *The Perfect Game*, *Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend*, and *Another Day in Paradise*. Two more, *Bodied* and *Adi Shankar's Gods & Secrets* will both be released this year. Next up, he'll appear with his brothers, Rick, Robert and Raymond in the feature film *Triumph*. Their band, **Ochoa Boyz**, will perform in the Festival's amphitheater Saturday, May 27 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.



Brandon Tyler Russell

Beth Hall is currently a series regular as the hilarious Wendy on the CBS comedy *Mom* opposite Emmy-winner Allison Janney. Previously, Beth was best known as Caroline, Roger Sterling's eccentric assistant on AMC's award-winning show *Mad Men*. Beth has also appeared on *Jane The Virgin* and *Parks and Recreation*.

Bruce Salomon is a talented young actor who, like his brother Raphael Alejandro and sister Dalila Bella, was born in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He has numerous TV credits including USA Network's *Psych*, CW Network's *Supernatural*, the Syfy Network series *Continuum*, Disney HD's *Some Assembly Required* and CW's Emily Owens M.D. series, for which he won a Young Artist Award. Film credits include *Jingle All the Way 2*, *Deck the Halls* and *Tomorrowland*. Bruce recently got a chance to work beside his sister in the PBS series *Odd Squad* playing Mr. O. Like his siblings he is fluent in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.



California Miss Outstanding Teen Jenna Tower

Brandon Tyler Russell has had lead or supporting roles in many films. He just wrapped his role of Sean Carpenter in *Halloween: The Night Evil Died* to be released this October. Brandon will soon be appearing in three feature films: *The Chattering* with the lead role of Will, and in *Hidden Valley: The Awakening* playing the lead role of Billy. He also just wrapped *Beverly Hills Christmas 2*, reprising his role as Jerry. It will air this holiday season on UPtv. Brandon is an avid supporter and volunteer of the Los Angeles Mission.



Missy Mendoza

And last, but certainly, not least, is Garden Grove native **Jenna Tower** who won the coveted title of California Miss Outstanding Teen. She's the first teen to bring this title home to Garden Grove. An 18 year old senior at Pacifica High School, Jenna was a member of the national championship dance team at Pacifica for two years, is a 3-time National Roller Skating Champion and is now part of a roller dance entertainment group called LA Roller Girls. Jenna signed to a Hollywood/New York talent agency with an opportunity to film commercials, music videos, and print. She was also featured in season 6 of *Dance Moms*. Jenna's platform is the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). She received the Ciorobea Community Service Award in 2015 and 2016 for her extensive volunteer work with the animal community.



Hannah Archer

Miss Garden Grove Missy Mendoza and **Miss Garden Grove Outstanding Teen Hannah Archer** will ride on a float with their courts. Children will be charmed by Knott's Berry Farm's **Snoopy**, Great Wolf Lodge's **Wiley the Wolf**, and an **Emoji** from the upcoming film.



Knott's Berry Farms
Snoopy



Great Wolf Lodge's Wiley the Wolf

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The festival will be held Memorial Day Weekend Friday, May 26 through Monday, May 29, 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. Special one-price ride-all-day wristbands will be offered for all festival days at \$30 per wristband on Friday and \$35 each on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Tickets for individual rides can also be purchased separately at \$1 per ticket.

The four-day event, which is the second largest city festival in the Western United States, will be held at the Village Green between Main Street and Euclid Avenue in downtown Garden Grove. Last year's attendance was over 300,000. Highlights include the Friday evening official giant strawberry cake cutting ceremony at 6:00 p.m. at the Showmobile (Acacia & Main streets) when free cake is served to over 2,000 people. Saturday morning begins with a 5K Run followed by an 8 a.m. **VIP celebrity breakfast** at the Garden Grove Community Center, with proceeds going to We Give Thanks. Next is a **parade** at 10 a.m. with floats, bands, equestrians and characters. Many film and TV celebrities will be honored in the parade and will sign autographs following. All four festival days will 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, Sweetworxx, 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. # # #