



Dawn Wells



## Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association

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Esparza Family

**HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD at** <http://www.strawberryfestival.org>

### 61st ANNUAL GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL NAMES DAWN WELLS CELEBRITY GRAND MARSHAL AND THE ESPARZA FAMILY AS PARADE THEME GRAND MARSHALS

*-- Fifteen Additional Celebrities to be Honored in Festival Parade on May 25 --*



Reid Ewing  
*Modern Family*

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. – May 6, 2019 – The 61st annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival celebrity parade will be held on Saturday, May 25 at 10 a.m., as the highlight of the four-day festival which is held Memorial Day Weekend, Friday, May 24 through Monday, May 27. This year’s theme is **“Celebrating Family,”** and in support of the theme, the festival board held an online contest and from those nominated by the community chose to honor the Esparza Family for their outstanding community service. In addition, Dawn Wells, best known for her role of Mary Ann in the iconic sitcom Gilligan’s Island, has been named **Celebrity Grand Marshal**.



Julian Edwards  
*Birdbox*

Fifteen additional celebrities will also be honored in the parade: **Reid Ewing** (Modern Family); **Julian Edwards** (Birdbox); **Kennedy Slocum** (The Kids are Alright); **Valente Rodriguez** (Instant Family; George Lopez); **Michelle La** (Searching); **Kristin Carey** (Scandal; Too Old to Die Young); Dennis W. Hall (Green Book); **Albert Tsai** (Trophy Wife); **Christian Isaiah** (Instant Family); **Kimia Behpoornia** (Abby’s); **Madison Curry** (Bless this Mess; Us); **Julianna Gamiz** (Instant Family); **Stella Edwards** (Nobodies); **Will Buie** (Bunk’d); and **Ochoa Boyz band**. Parade favorites, **Wiley the Wolf** from Great Wolf Lodge, and **Angry Bird Red** from Angry Birds 2 the movie return to charm the children.



Kennedy Slocum  
*The Kids Are Alright*

**The Esparza family** was chosen by the Festival board because they have a big heart for giving back to the community. Martha Esparza volunteers her free time with H.O.P.E., a Garden-Grove based non-profit organization that helps families in need receive food and basic necessities, and at times, Martha delivers food to shut-ins. She also dedicates her time to the H.O.P.E.’s "Helping Women Succeed" program which prepares women for the workplace. The Esparzas continually volunteer together as a family. Martha, her husband Martin and their youngest daughter Evelyn engage H.O.P.E. parents to participate in community events and classes to promote parent involvement. They also make regular visits to help the elderly and devote numerous volunteer hours at school events. Martha connects families with crime prevention resources after her regular employment with Garden Grove Unified School District and takes time to encourage children to follow their dreams. When her mother speaks at volunteering events, 18-year old Evelyn, a senior at Santiago High School, will interpret to Spanish-speaking parents attending, and help with childcare. The Esparzas also have two grown children, Liliana and Martin Jr. who live outside the community, but while they were growing up in Garden Grove they regularly volunteered along with their parents. Martha says that there is nothing of greater value than spreading kindness by connecting with people at a human level.



Michelle La  
*Searching*



Kristin Carey  
*Scandal*

There is much more to **Dawn Wells** than Mary Ann of *Gilligan's Island*, the longest running sitcom still showing worldwide in over 30 languages. She's an actress, producer, author, spokesperson, journalist, motivational speaker, teacher, and co-founder of the Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald, Tennessee. Her fame began as Miss Nevada in the 1958 Miss America Pageant. From there, she found success in Hollywood starring in over 150 TV shows, 7 motion pictures and over 60 theatrical productions. As a producer, she brought two Movies of the Week to CBS: *Surviving Gilligan's Island* and *Return to the Bat Cave* with Adam West, and wrote a book called "What Would Mary Ann Do?" for the 50th Anniversary of *Gilligan's Island*. Dawn has recently been involved with two web series, *Still On That Freakin' Island* and *Life Interrupted* for which she won the International Independent Film's Best Supporting Actress award. She has offered to have a special one-day autograph signing event in her own booth Saturday after the parade.



Dennis W. Hall  
*Green Book*

**Reid Ewing** started as an actor at 10 doing theater in Florida. By fourteen, he was auditioning for major films and at 17 he moved to Los Angeles doing a few TV shows for Disney. He booked *Modern Family* and has been a recurring character for ten years. He has also guest-starred in films such as *Fright Night* and several indie projects. Based on his own struggles, he became a mental health advocate and received a national award for his work. As a part of the LGBTQ community he has been open and honest about himself and his journey.



Albert Tsai  
*Trophy Wife*

Seven-year-old **Julian Edwards** stars with Academy Award winning actress, Sandra Bullock, in the Netflix hit film, *Bird Box*. His mom says Sandra Bullock taught him a lot about the peculiar nature of acting, helping differentiate it from reality. His first acting job was a Christmas commercial for TLC where he made gingerbread houses and was so excited when they told him he could eat them. Julian is passionate about giving back and regularly volunteers at Children's Hospital LA.



Kimia Behpoornia  
*Abby's*

**Kennedy Slocum** is a series regular playing Wendi on the popular show *The Kids Are Alright*. Born to two professional musician parents, Kennedy began piano at age four and was singing in church at age three. Years of dance and voice lessons followed. She has performed extensively in community and regional theater, and at Disneyland, winning Soloist of the Year at the Music in the Parks competition.



Madison Curry  
*Bless this Mess; Us*

**Michelle La** abandoned her career as a biochemist and began to pursue acting with roles in CBS's *Mom* and Netflix's *Gilmore Girls* revival. *Searching*, which made its world premiere at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival, is La's first feature film role, where she plays missing daughter Margot Kim.

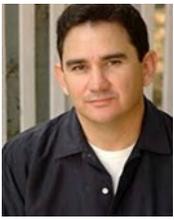
**Christian Isaiah** can currently be seen as a series regular on Showtime's iconic award-winning show *Shameless*. He portrays Liam, the youngest member of the Gallagher family. This summer he will appear as the young Chadwick Boseman in *21 Bridges*. He also recently played Tupac Shakur in USA's series *Unsolved* and has had recurring roles on FX's *Married*, TV Land's *Teachers*, Fandango's *Reel Kids* and as a movie critic and on *Jimmy Kimmel Live*.



Julianna Gamiz  
*Instant Family*

**Kristin Carey** is best known for her recurring role as Brooke Foster on the ABC Show *SCANDAL* and has guest starred on *Blackish*, *Bull*, *Speechless*, *Dr. Ken*, *Newsroom*, *CSI CYBER* and *Blunt Talk*. She is also in the Amazon Series *Too Old To Die Young* with acclaimed director Nicolas Winding Refn opposite Miles Teller. Kristin has appeared in over 60 national commercials and numerous TV shows, films and stage productions. She has won numerous awards for her role as Sheila Flinn in the film *A Price for Silence*. Riding with Kristin in the parade will be her husband and fellow actor **Dennis W. Hall** who played Mags in the Oscar-award-winning film *Green Book*.

**Albert Tsai** is best known for his roles on *Dr. Ken*, *Trophy Wife*, and Disney's *Coop and Cami Ask the World*. He started his career at age 9 and has won rave reviews and multiple awards for his role as Bert on ABC's comedy series *Trophy Wife*. Albert was named one of Entertainment Weekly's 12 Best Child Actors of 2015. He made his TV debut on CBS' hit series *How I Met Your Mother* in 2013. Since then, he has starred on four network comedy series and made guest appearances on *Fresh Off The Boat*, *Crazy Ex-*



Valente Rodriguez  
*The George Lopez Show; Instant Family*

*Girlfriend* and *Hot In Cleveland*. Albert is bilingual and speaks Chinese Mandarin fluently.

**Kimia Behpoornia** is currently a series regular on the NBC sitcom *Abby's* and is recurring on *Atypical* and *Station 19*. She has also appeared on *Modern Family*, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*, *Solve* and *The Late, Late Show* with James Corden. Feature films include *Unicorn Store* and *Pop Rox*, a multi-award finalist at the 2017 NBC Universal Shorts Film Competition. Kimia also performs improv and sketch comedy. She is a member of the Mainstage ensemble at Comedysportz Los Angeles (current world champion), and she writes and performs sketch comedy for children with The Story Pirates. Her sketch group, All Male Panel, created viral video content for Fullscreen and has material in development with Comedy Central.



Christian Isaiah  
*Shameless*

**Madison Curry** was born and raised in Los Angeles where she first fell in love with acting by entertaining at family gatherings. She was enrolled at Amazing Grace Conservatory Performing Arts Theater in Los Angeles to polish her acting skills. Her big break came when she was cast in the hit film *Us*, playing the role of Young Adeline Wilson/Young Red and starring with Academy Award Winner Lupita Nyong'o and *Black Panthers'* Winston Duke. Shortly before the release of *Us* she was cast as a series regular in the new FOX/ABC show *Bless This Mess* starring Lake Bell and Dax Sheppard.



Stella Edwards  
*Nobodies*

**Julianna Gamiz** starred in the major Paramount film *Instant Family* where she played the adorable, scene-stealing Lita alongside an all-star cast including Mark Wahlberg, Rose Byrne and Octavia Spencer. On TV, at the age of two, she had a starring role in the Hulu series *East Los High* for three seasons as Isela Camayo. Reprising this role, she also recently starred in the *East Los High: The Movie*, the show's extended finale. Julianna also shot a two-season recurring role on *Jane The Virgin*, as the young version of Jane who is played by Gina Rodriguez.

**Valente Rodriguez** has appeared in the films *Blood in... Blood out...*, *Mi Familia*, *Roosters*, *Erin Brockovich*, *The Ugly Truth*, *It's Complicated*, *McFarland USA*, and most recently *Instant Family*. On TV, he has had series regular roles on *The George Lopez Show* as Ernie (120 episodes) and the Fran Drescher show *Happily Divorced*, as well as in *Golden Girls*, *Mad About You*, *X-Files*, and *ER*. He has performed on in theater throughout US, and has produced and directed films.



Will Buie, Jr.  
*Bunk'd*

**Will Buie Jr.** plays Finn in Disney Channel's comedy series "BUNK'D." Next, twelve-year-old Buie will be seen in a lead role opposite Patrick Wilson in Netflix's upcoming *In The Tall Grass*, a film based on a short story by Stephen King and Joe Hill. It is slated to release worldwide this fall. Prior to landing the role of Finn, Buie was featured in a guest-starring role on *Modern Family* and had a recurring role as Brad, Jr./Ella on *Daytime Divas*.



Ochoa Boyz

**Stella Edwards** is best known for her role for two seasons as Lois on the TV LAND series *Nobodies*. and is recognized for her guest starring roles on *Magnum P.I.* and *The Good Place*. She lends her voice to multiple characters on Disney's *Mickey and The Roadster Racers*, among other cartoons. Her role in the forthcoming *Lucy in The Sky* is her first feature film. Here she plays Jon Hamm's daughter opposite Natalie Portman. Stella and her younger brother, actor Julian Edwards, are firm believers in kindness and giving back to their community. They donate regularly to Cedars Sinai Hospital and Children's Hospital LA.



Maaikie Pronda  
*Miss Garden Grove*

Consisting of three brothers, the **Ochoa Boyz** became a music group in 2012. They have been touring across America, performing at hundreds of concerts and private events. Not only do they write and co-produce their own music and music videos, but they are all working actors on TV and in movies. Ryan Ochoa was featured in Nickelodeon's *iCarly* and Disney XD's *Pair of Kings*. Raymond Ochoa voices Arlo in Disney/Pixar's movie, *The Good Dinosaur*, and Robert Ochoa, is in the latest season of *Shameless* on HBO. Their music can be heard in several of their movies as well. They will perform in the festival's amphitheater on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>.



Kassidy Aslay  
Miss Garden Grove  
Outstanding Teen

**Miss Garden Grove 2019 Maaikée Pronda** is a 22-year old process development engineer at a global medical device company headquartered in Southern California. She graduated from the Henry Samueli School of Engineering at UC Irvine in 2017 with a Bachelor’s degree in biomedical engineering. She was the president of the Engineering Student Council - the official liaison between the school administration students and the community. Maaikée lead the club in planning events that impacted thousands of students on campus and beyond. She was also recognized as the Biomedical Engineering Student of the Year in her graduating class, honored with the Outstanding Engineering Student Award by the Orange County Engineering Council, and graduated with the Chancellor’s Award of Distinction. **Miss Garden Grove’s Outstanding Teen 2019 Cassidy Aslay** is currently a junior at the Orange County School of the Arts in the Integrated Arts conservatory. She has been competitively dancing for 14 years and singing for 10 years. Her platform is called *No Limits: Performing Arts Program for Children with Special Needs*. In addition to mentoring and reading to these children, Cassidy also teaches them dance.



Great Wolf  
Lodge’s Wiley the  
Wolf

### ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The festival will be held Memorial Day Weekend Friday, May 25 through Monday, May 28, 2019. 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.



Angry Bird

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 200,000. 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. Film and TV celebrities will be honored in the parade and will sign autographs afterwards. All four festival days will include 34 carnival rides, 4 contests, over 180 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, GGTPC, Garden Grove Hospital, Walmart, Steelcase, Clear Channel Outdoor, Embassy Suites, Hilton Garden Inn, Hampton Inn, Parenting OC, El Panamericano, Korea Times, Nguoi Viet Daily News, OC News and its community newspapers, OC Weekly, Irvine Weekly, Farandula USA, Miniondas and Garden Grove Channel 3. Radio stations sponsoring are KABC, KLOS, Radiocentro 93.9 KXOS-FM, Air1, KOST, 104.3MYfm, JACK FM, K-EARTH 101, 94.7 The Wave, Amp Radio, KWVE, KDAY-FM, and KWIZ.

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