

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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66th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Announces Actor Emilio Rivera as Celebrity Grand Marshal

GARDEN GROVE, CA — The Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association proudly announces acclaimed actor and U.S. Army veteran **Emilio Rivera** as the **2026 Grand Marshal of the 66th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Parade**, taking place Memorial Day Weekend.

Rivera, known for his powerful performances and long-standing advocacy for veterans and community causes, will lead this year's parade as part of the Festival's 2026 theme, "**Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary.**"

In addition to Rivera's role as Grand Marshal, the Festival is honored to recognize three distinguished veterans as **Theme Grand Marshals**:

Hal Yoak – U.S. Army veteran and longtime community leader

David Brambila – U.S. Marine Corps veteran and dedicated public servant

Donald Marshall – U.S. Navy veteran and respected advocate for local veterans

Festival President Steve Sanders shared:

"This year's celebration holds special meaning as we honor America's 250th and pay tribute to the veterans who have shaped our nation and our community. Emilio Rivera, along with Hal Yoak, David Brambila, and Donald Marshall, represents the very best of service and heart. We are proud to recognize them as part of this year's festivities."

Event Highlights

The 66th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival promises an exciting lineup of events, including:

- Opening Ceremony with FREE Strawberry Shortcake
- Grand Parade featuring celebrities, local organizations, high school bands, community leaders, and more
- FREE concerts and entertainment at the Garden Amp Amphitheater and Strawberry Stage
- Carnival rides, games, and family-friendly entertainment
- Saturday Celebrity Breakfast
- Celebrity Autograph Signings
- Family fun contests including the Berry Beautiful Baby Contest, Tiny Tots King & Queen Contest, Redhead Roundup, Fashion Frenzy, and Jamtastic Art
- Featured strawberry food items, with many new additions this year

As always, admission to the festival is FREE, and proceeds support local nonprofit organizations serving children, seniors, and the arts in Garden Grove.

Join Us for This Unforgettable Event

Mark your calendars and bring your family and friends to experience the 66th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival, May 23–26, 2026, at the Village Green, located at Euclid Street and Main Street in Garden Grove, CA.

66TH ANNUAL GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Established in 1958
Tax ID # 95-2504195

May 22-25, 2026

66 YEARS
OF SUPPORTING OUR
COMMUNITY THROUGH
GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS
AND MORE

Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary

About the Garden Grove Strawberry Festival

The Garden Grove Strawberry Festival is an annual free community event produced by a dedicated group of volunteers. Since its founding in 1958, the festival has raised over \$7 million for local charities. The festival's mission is to give back to the Garden Grove community by supporting nonprofit organizations focused on children, seniors, youth, and the arts.

About Emilio Rivera

Emilio Rivera is an acclaimed actor, producer, and philanthropist whose three-decade career includes standout roles in *Sons of Anarchy*, *Mayans M.C.*, *Con Air*, *Traffic*, *Venom*, and *Flamin' Hot*. Born in San Antonio and raised in Los Angeles, he enlisted in the U.S. Army at 18 before pursuing acting full-time. Rivera went on to appear in major films such as *Collateral*, *A Man Apart*, *Bullet*, and *Don't Worry*, and is widely recognized for his iconic portrayal of Marcus Álvarez. His television work also includes *On My Block*, *Hand of God*, *Z Nation*, *The Upshaws*, *Landman*, and *Law & Order: Organized Crime*, as well as the Emmy-nominated short *RZR*. His journey, resilience, and leadership make him an inspiring representative for this year's America's 250th celebration.

About Harold "Hal" Yoak

Harold "Hal" Yoak is a 100-year-old World War II Navy veteran and beloved Garden Grove resident. He served in Operation Magic Carpet, helping bring American servicemen home after the war. After his service, he spent 41 years teaching biology at Pacifica High School, inspiring generations of students. In retirement, Hal became known for handcrafting wooden toys in his home workshop, a cherished local tradition that now draws national attention. His resilience, creativity, and lifelong commitment to community embody the American spirit.

About David Brambila

David is a United States Marine Corps veteran, business leader, and community advocate whose life reflects service, discipline, and dedication. After building a successful 24-year retail business, he went on to support veterans and families as a real estate broker, marketing firm owner, and now as State Commander of the California American Legion, representing veterans statewide with distinction.

About Donald Marshall

Donald is a Navy veteran whose 41-year aviation career spanned civilian, military, and intelligence service. A pilot of more than 40 aircraft — including the SR-71 — he served both the CIA and U.S. Navy, trained for NASA's Space Shuttle program, and later continued his work as a test pilot, consultant, and aviation documentary producer. His lifelong commitment to innovation and service reflects the excellence we are proud to celebrate.

For inquiries and more information, Contact:

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Join us as we celebrate 66 years of tradition and America's 250th anniversary at the Garden Grove Strawberry Festival!

To learn more and for updates on this year's Festival, please visit www.strawberryfestival.org