



SONOMA COMMUNITY CENTER

www.sonomacommunitycenter.org

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SONOMA COMMUNITY CENTER'S ANNUAL 4TH OF JULY PARADE AND CELEBRATION IN THE SONOMA PLAZA HONORS LOCAL HEROES

Sonoma Community Center announced today the details of its annual 4th of July Parade and Celebration in the Sonoma Plaza. The parade is set to begin at 10:00am, with a variety of food and game booths, manned by local non-profits, plus live music in the Plaza from 9:00am to 5:00pm. "We think ours is the most beloved July 4th celebration in the county," said Sonoma Community Center Executive Director Kathy Swett, who also noted that the theme for this year's parade is "Our Local Heroes." Parade participants are encouraged to create entries and floats that honor Sonomans, past and present, who have inspired, lead, or moved them in some way.

The Grand Marshals for this year's parade will be several local veterans who fought in the liberation of France during the Second World War, and will pay tribute to all local World War II veterans, a group whose ranks are quickly thinning. The Travis Air Force Base Color Guard will make a special trip to Sonoma to lead this year's parade, and during the first ten minutes of the parade, the 301 Airlift Squadron will fly a C-17 directly over the Sonoma Plaza. The plane will be piloted by Lieutenant Colonel Adam Willis, Major Troy Ogle, and Major Caleb Provencio and Major Phil Dillingham.

In addition to the Grand Marshalls, the American Legion Post 489 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1943 will honor General Hap Arnold by flying Replicas of his two 5-star flags above City Hall during the parade. General Hap Arnold, considered by many to be the "father of the Air Force," commanded the US Army Air Force during WWII and was the only person to have held two 5-star ranks as both General of the Army and General of the Air Force. Sonoma's Arnold Drive and Arnold Field are named after Hap Arnold, who lived in Sonoma Valley immediately after WWII until his death in 1950.

Sonoma Community Center's Special Projects Manager Margaret Hatcher has created two 15' tall street puppets to lead the parade on behalf of the community center. The puppets represent the spirits of the 4th of July and the vast number of local heroes found in the Sonoma Valley. Over a dozen volunteers have been enlisted to "walk" the puppets through the parade route. After the parade, nearly 30 local non-profits will sell food and carnival games until 5:00pm. Live music in the Plaza begins at 1pm with Bautista Band, and continues at 3pm with The Joe Chaplain Band. Beer, provided by xxxx and Larson Family Vineyards wine will be for sale, with proceeds benefiting Sonoma Community Center.

To download a parade application, visit the Sonoma Community Center website at www.sonomacommunitycenter.org, call the front desk at (707) 938-4626 x 1, or stop by the office at 276 East Napa Street. The deadline for applications is July 1. Entries are accepted on the day of the parade, but late-comers' floats are not announced at the reviewing stand.

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