

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

FOURTH OF JULY EXECUTIVE BOARD



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Media Contact: Barbara McMurray
McMurray Marketing Communications
949-494-5388 office
949-233-9548 mobile
mcmurray@mac.com*

Big July 4th Parade and Weekend Festivities Readied in Huntington Beach

***Parade, with theme “United We Stand,” and 3 days of events
will offer more than ever, organizers say***

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif., June 13, 2008 – Professional skydivers and an exciting lineup of celebrity guests and special grand marshals will highlight the 104th Huntington Beach July 4th Parade and Pier Festival. This three-day slice of Americana will include the nation’s largest July 4th parade west of the Mississippi, a huge Friday night fireworks display on the beach, an early-morning 5K run followed by a pancake breakfast, and a Pier Festival extending through the weekend with free daily live entertainment, food, a 28-foot climbing wall, kids’ activities and a wide range of exhibitors at Pier Plaza.

This Orange County beach city of 200,000 plays host to nearly one million visitors throughout the three-day holiday weekend. The parade is viewed by at least 250,000 people along the parade route, and seen by hundreds of thousands more in

rebroadcast on public television stations nationwide. The Pier Festival, which continues on Saturday and Sunday, will draw a few hundred thousand more to the beach for music, food and family-oriented fun.

The two-mile parade route traverses Pacific Coast Highway onto Main Street, with the spectacle of floats, marching bands, veterans and military vehicles, miniature and full-size horses, Boy Scouts, clowns and, for the first time ever, a professional team of skydivers, the **Red Bull Air Force**, will land at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Main Street during the parade.

The traditional Home Decorating Contest will award prizes to homeowners along the Main Street parade route for Most Patriotic Spirit, Most Creative, and Best in Show.

GRAND MARSHALS AND CELEBRITY GUESTS

Several special grand marshals and celebrity guests will ride in the parade. The parade's official Grand Marshal will be announced soon.

Teen Grand Marshal Jennette McCurdy currently co-stars in the Nickelodeon sitcom *iCarly*. She has guest-starred in a number of other television series, including *Malcolm in the Middle*, *Zoey 101*, *Will & Grace*, *Strong Medicine*, and *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*.

Sports Grand Marshal Tito Ortiz, a.k.a. "The Bad Boy of Huntington Beach," is a Mexican-American champion of the sport of mixed martial arts, or MMA. A former Light-Heavyweight Ultimate Fighting Championship titleholder, Ortiz is one of the sport's biggest stars. Ortiz has headlined several Pay-Per -View championship events and appeared on the covers of *Black Belt Magazine*, *MMA Authority*, *Ultimate Grappling* and *Elite Fighter*. He has also appeared in many TV shows: most recently "The Celebrity Apprentice." He is highly recognized in the community for his work with charities and blood drives. A staunch supporter of the troops in Iraq, he has made multiple USO tours to visit members of the U.S. armed forces. Ortiz owns and runs a successful clothing company in Huntington Beach, Punishment Athletics! He recently released his autobiography, *This is Gonna Hurt: The Life of a Mixed Martial Arts Champion*, which details his tumultuous youth and his determination to overcome it through his chosen sport.

Huntington Beach natives and top winners of CBS's "The Amazing Race" **Rachel & TK** will ride in the parade as **Celebrity Guests**. After 10 cities, four continents, and almost 30,000 miles, the dating couple became the winners of the reality TV race in picturesque Anchorage, Alaska. Rachel owns a high-style flower shop in Huntington Beach, while TK, who was a collegiate athlete at UC Santa Barbara, currently makes his living as a substitute teacher.

Author and radio personality **Larry Elder** is a **Celebrity Guest** in the parade. He has hosted "The Larry Elder Show" on KABC 790AM since March 1994, making it the longest-running afternoon drive-time radio show in Los Angeles, and a show that was nationally syndicated in 2002. Known to his listeners as the "Sage From South Central," Elder discusses the day's most provocative issues, engaging political and cultural leaders in debates over race, government, personal responsibility and education. Elder writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column and has authored three provocative books: *The 10 Things You Can't Say in America*; *Showdown: Confronting Bias, Lies and the Special Interests That Divide America* and his most recent is *Stupid Black Men: How to Play the Race Card – and Lose*.

Celebrity Guest Lisa Tucker captured the attention of the nation when "American Idol" viewers fell in love with the beautiful young singer who went on to be a Top 10 finalist. The 18-year-old began her acting and singing career at 11 when she performed in a nine-month engagement of *The Lion King* at Hollywood's famed Pantages Theater. Afterward, Tucker was named one of *Variety's* "Top Ten Kids To Watch." While back in the studio writing and composing new material for an upcoming album, Tucker recently renewed her focus on acting, appearing as a guest star on Fox's "The O.C." and Nickelodeon's "Zoey 101," on which she plays a recurring role. Tucker has a role in the 2008 film *The Hustle*, a comedy starring Charlie Murphy.

Rounding out the **Celebrity Guest** slate are **Shally Zomorodi and Pete Weitzner**, reporters and co-anchors for KDOC-TV's "Daybreak OC," Orange County's first weekday morning newscast, which airs Monday-Friday from 6 to 8 a.m.

Community Grand Marshal Noble Waite is a World War II veteran and the oldest living former city councilman who still lives in Huntington Beach. Waite joined

the Air Force during World War II, and flew B-17s on 21 missions over Germany with the 8th Army Air Force. A pharmacist by profession, Waite has been active as a leader in the Huntington Beach Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Merchants Association, Lions Club, Boy Scouts, Huntington Beach High School District, and is currently active in the Huntington Beach Coordinating Council and the Huntington Beach Inter-Faith Council. An elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, he and his wife Beverly enjoy their blended family of six children, 17 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. His son-in-law, Dr. Don Elshire, who recently returned from a second Iraq tour as a Navy surgeon, will ride with him in the July 4th parade in full uniform.

PARADE HIGHLIGHTS

Mountain Fifes and Drums, a 60-member marching band of young musicians that carries on the tradition of ancient music and history by performing faithful renditions of the earliest military music in America. Some corps favorites include “Sisters,” “Katy Hill,” and the venerable fife favorite “Yankee Doodle.” Corps director Kevin Garland notes that although it is a crowd-pleaser, British military bands actually played “Yankee Doodle” mockingly to ridicule the colonists.

Other notable parade entries are the **Cyclone Coasters**, 30 balloon tire bicyclists with precision maneuvers, the **Wells Fargo Stagecoach**, and a marching band from **Colegio de Bachilleres** an ROTC-style school in Mexicali, Mexico. This is the tenth year this group of high school and college students has participated in the Huntington Beach parade. The corps is made up of a compliment of 13 drums and 13 bugles led by a drum major, and an all-female color guard under the direction of Profesor Jorge Berrera.

The Golden West Pops, a community band, will play before the fireworks show, from 7:30 to 8:50 p.m. The national anthem will be sung by representatives of the **Boys & Girls Club of Huntington Beach**.

PIER FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Southwest Region U.S. Navy Band **The Destroyers** will play rock and contemporary music to close out the Huntington Beach Pier Festival on Sunday, July 6 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Under the leadership of Musician Second Class Robert Collier,

The Destroyers play popular songs by artists as diverse as Maroon 5, Led Zeppelin, Muse, Red Hot Chili Peppers, OneRepublic, Gavin DeGraw and John Mayer. Band members include Musician Third Class Ashley Coleman, vocalist, Musician Second Class Jason Stark on lead and backup vocals, saxophone and sound engineering, Musician Second Class Aaron Linton on keyboards, Musician Third Class Zachry Gormley on drums, and bassist Musician Third Class Hunt Gibson.

Other bands playing at the Pier Festival throughout the weekend are '60s soul and Motown band **Stone Soul**, surf band **The Kahunas**, swinging blues band **Elnora & Sumpthin Cookin'**; seven-piece party rock, rhythm and soul band **Yard Sale**; female folk and acoustic vocalist **Whitton**; and rambunctious classic rockers **Forever Vinyl**. Other entertainment includes **Surf City Trivia** and a Fashion and Hair show. A complete schedule can be viewed at www.hb4thofjuly.org.

The weekend's events are sponsored by an organizing group led by local resident Patricia Stier and an all-volunteer board that operates under the aegis of the City of Huntington Beach. Funds generated through Pier Festival vendor fees, merchandise sales, sponsorships and seating for the parade and fireworks show go to help pay for parade expenses.

This year's sponsors include: **Hospitality Host Sponsor - Surf City Bank; Pier Plaza Entertainment Sponsor - Beach Boulevard of Cars; 5K Run & Pier Festival Sponsor - Farmers & Merchants Bank; Fireworks Presenting Sponsors – Time Warner & KOCE; Print Media Sponsor – *The Huntington Beach Independent*. The Parade Presenting Sponsor is NuVision Federal Credit Union.**

PARADE HISTORY

The tradition began on July 4, 1904, when Huntington Beach commemorated the arrival of the first electric passenger train linking the area with Long Beach and Los Angeles. The Board of Trade, a forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, sponsored this first event, bringing 50,000 people to town to join in the day's celebration.

Through the years, residents and visitors have witnessed some spectacular sights. How's this for a show-stopping stunt by a city official? In the late 1930s, the city's first lifeguard and fire chief, Dilbert "Bud" Higgins had a trick that no one has since imitated.

He would don a firesuit, cover his face with petroleum jelly, soak himself with alcohol, light a match and dive in a fiery ball from a 50-foot platform high above the pier into the water below.

Among the famous who have presided over the parade in years past are Hollywood movie stars Jayne Mansfield, Natalie Wood, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Dorothy Lamour, Mickey Rooney (and Mickey Mouse!) and a true American hero, astronaut Buzz Aldrin. The best legend goes that during his presidency, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's entourage was on its way through town, headed for San Diego, as the parade was going on. Quick-thinking parade organizers persuaded them take a slow pass along the parade route, to the delight of those gathered to watch.

The Parade marked its centennial in 2004 by bringing the fireworks back to the beach (from its former location at Huntington Beach High School), which drew 150,000 onlookers. This year's fireworks 23-minute spectacular, with a total of 1,300 rounds of fireworks – 500 of them during the finale in the last 40 seconds of the show -- is expected to attract twice that number.

Information for members of the media:

PARADE DAY PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTACTS

Huntington Beach 4th of July Executive Board: Barbara McMurray, mobile: 949-233-9548 (5:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)

City of Huntington Beach: Laurie Payne, (714) 337-1035

MEDIA CREDENTIALS / PARKING PASSES

To obtain a parking pass and/or press credential, e-mail your request with your mailing address to mcmurray@mac.com before June 30 and it will be sent to you.

MEDIA COVERAGE LOCATION:

Huntington Beach Pier Area, corner of Main Street & Pacific Coast Highway

ROUTE TO TELEVISION COVERAGE LOCATION

South on Beach Boulevard to Atlanta Avenue

Right on Atlanta to 1st Street

Left on 1st Street to Pacific Coast Highway

Right on Pacific Coast Highway to Main Street (Pier)

PRINT / NON-ELECTRONIC MEDIA

You can obtain a PARKING PASS to park free at the Civic Center Parking Lot on the corner of Yorktown and Main Street, 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach. FREE SHUTTLE WILL TAKE YOU TO MEDIA AREA AT PCH & MAIN STREET.

FIREWORKS SHOW COVERAGE

Fireworks Show begins at 9:00 p.m.

Print Media and Television will be allowed free parking in the Pier Plaza Parking Lot at 6th and PCH. You must show your Media Credentials to park.