

4th of July 2017 Celebrates an Avenue of Heroes

By Pam Stevens

For many in Mira Mesa, the 4th of July begins with families coming together for an all you can eat pancake breakfast, hosted again this year by the Black Mountain Masonic Lodge, held at the Mira Mesa Senior Center from 7am to 11am. Others may already be setting up their shade structures, lawn chairs, picnic tables, ice chests, and portable grills at their favorite spot in Mira Mesa Community Park, preparing to stay to watch the 9pm fireworks display at night. Families making a day of it can also plan to buy lunch, dinner, or snacks from a food truck or vendor at Family Fun Day in the park. Kids Zone at Family Fun Day offers free carnival-style games for children and family-friendly entertainment.

Mira Mesans involved with one of the many entries in the 2017 Mira Mesa 4th of July Parade need to eat their pancakes early, then start their day reporting to the parade line-up area behind the Seafood City shopping center on the south side of Mira Mesa Boulevard at Greenford. For those whose main interest in the morning is watching the parade, their top priority may be walking to a good spot along Mira Mesa Boulevard (between Greenford and Camino Ruiz, north side) or Camino Ruiz (between Mira Mesa Boulevard and New Salem, east side), either from home or from a parking spot that's nearby but off the parade route. However you celebrate it, there's a lot to do in Mira Mesa on the 4th of July!

This year's Mira Mesa 4th of July Parade celebrates an "Avenue of Heroes." Parade entries include a variety of local schools, churches, non-profit groups, and businesses, as well as Mira Mesa's elected officials at the City, County, and State levels. The Grand Marshals for the parade are Rear Admiral and Mrs. Christian Becker. Rear Admiral Becker is the commanding officer of SPAWAR (Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command). Cub Scout Pack 1209 will keep up its 30-year tradition of carrying the banner at the start of the parade. The Mira Mesa Girl Scouts are again assembling a multi-ages group for the parade, featuring girls from kindergarten age Daisies on up. The Filipino-American Retirees of Southern California are creating a decorated float for the parade.

The Mira Mesa High School Sapphire Sound Color Guard, the school's award-winning flag team, will perform routines during the parade to recorded music played from a decorated vehicle. Mira Mesans will miss the presence in this year's parade of the MMHS Sapphire Sound Band, who due to current construction on campus lack space for marching rehearsals and are not performing. The full MMHS Sapphire Sound Band and Color Guard can be seen and heard in action November 4, 2017, in Mira Mesa High School's 25th Annual Band Tournament. For live music in this year's Mira Mesa 4th of July parade, watch for the 10-member marching band from the Black Mountain Lodge #845, Free and Accepted Masons.

The 4th of July parade is scheduled to step off at 11:30am on Tuesday, July 4, 2017, from Mira Mesa Boulevard at Greenford, continues west on Mira Mesa Boulevard, turns north on Camino Ruiz and officially ends at New Salem Drive. This year there will be two locations along the parade route where commentators with PA systems will describe the entries as they go by: one near the Mira Mesa Senior Center, next to the parade judges' tent, and on Camino Ruiz near Carl's Jr. It only takes 20-30 minutes to travel the mile-long parade route, but the parade takes 45 minutes to an hour to pass any one location.

Family Fun Day in Mira Mesa Community Park will include a Kids Zone and Vendors' Area located in the fenced ball fields area. *Food trucks, such as Aunty Lynne's, which offers Filipino, Hawaiian, and Asian*

fusion cuisine, will be located in the parking lot by the Mira Mesa Senior Center. The Vendors' area will be open 11am to 9pm, with food and other items for sale as well as community group and business information booths. Visit the Scripps Mesa Fireworks booth to buy a t-shirt and help support the 4th of July fireworks display. The fireworks will be synchronized to music on KyXy 96.5 FM, and the radio station will have a tent at Fun Day. Kids Zone will offer free carnival-style games for children and all-ages entertainment on the Kids Zone stage, with stage shows set at 1:30pm, 5pm, and 7:30pm. Old-fashioned children's games such as gunny sack and 3-kegged races will take place as part of the 7:30pm show.

July 4th festivities are also scheduled to include a carnival with a variety of rides, located in the northwest corner of Mira Mesa Community Park near the playground.

The Mira Mesa 4th of July Celebration is presented by the Mira Mesa Town Council, the community's volunteer civic group which holds monthly "town hall" meetings and sponsors programs and events to make Mira Mesa a better place to live. Major sponsors of this year's celebration include the Mira Mesa Recreation Council and BlueStar Learning. Students in the Mira Mesa High School Air Force Junior ROTC offer key volunteer power. The Family Fun Day Kids Zone is again being presented by volunteers from Generations Life Center. Scripps Mesa Fireworks is the non-profit volunteer group which raises funds for the annual fireworks display.

The climax of Mira Mesa's 4th of July celebration is the fireworks, set off at 9pm from the fields at Mira Mesa High School, synchronized to music on KyXy FM 96.5. Good fireworks viewing locations include anywhere in Mira Mesa Community Park, other neighborhood parks such as Mesa Verde Park (next to Mason Elementary School), Mira Mesa's first park and the site of the first community 4th of July festivities in the 1970s, and various shopping center parking lots, as well as near the dam at Miramar Lake in Scripps Ranch and other locations throughout both communities.

Happy 4th of July!

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