

Orange Show Festival returns on Thursday

By Joe Nelson
Staff Writer

SAN BERNARDINO — The 92nd annual National Orange Show Festival kicks off at 4 p.m. Thursday and continues through Monday, Memorial Day, featuring an array of activities, including a demolition derby, a lion exhibit and a rodeo.

Festival highlights this year include the "Walking with Lions" exhibit and a "Salute To Our Troops" day Saturday honoring the men and women of the military, festival spokeswoman Sharon Johnson said.

Men and women of the military can get a voucher from their base to attend the festival with their families for free on Saturday, said Greg Cozzo, coordinator of the "Salute To Our

Troops" day and the track announcer for the Orange Show Speedway.

"We really wanted to go back to making it an event," Cozzo said.

He said he was expecting to see 4,000 to 5,000 military personnel and their families at the festival Saturday and over the weekend.

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Schedule of events

The 92nd National Orange Show Festival kicks off Thursday and runs through Monday. Here is a partial list of activities and events:

■ 8 p.m. Thursday: Opening-day concert will have a country theme. Artist Becca will open for Thunder Road.

■ 4 p.m. Friday: Radio station X103.9 hosts an array of rock bands, including Inhale, Unstable, Idasas, Bouree and Anger is a Gift.

■ 6 p.m. Friday: Quarter-midget car racing, Orange Show Speedway.

■ 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Saturday: Spider-Man show, Orange Pavilion.

■ 2:30 p.m. Saturday: A festival parade begins at the speedway and winds through the fairgrounds.

■ 5 p.m. Saturday: Speedway gates will open for "Salute Our Troops" racing and demolition derby. Racing will start at 6:30 p.m. A fireworks display will cap off the event.

■ 1-9 p.m. Sunday: Race-car drivers will do drifting demonstrations at the speedway. A tandem-drifting competition will take place at 5 p.m.

■ Noon Monday: Rodeo, speedway.

More information: (909) 886-6788.



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— **GREG COZZO**, coordinator of the "Salute To Our Troops" day and the track announcer for the Orange Show Speedway

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"We've been able to secure a military flyover, and Twentynine Palms is bringing down a 7-ton transport and a howitzer (cannon) for display," he said.

During racing events that begin at 6:30 p.m. Saturday and include figure-eight racing and a demolition derby, Cozzo said announcers will be keeping an eye out for military men and women.

"Throughout the evening we're going to take our cordless (microphone) into the stands, and if we see any men or women in uniform, we're just going to ask them where their base is and where they're from," Cozzo said.

Then, of course, there's the traditional festival attractions: rides, food,

music and games.

A country theme is slated for the opening-day concert, presented by NixaCountry.com. Country artist Becca will take the stage at 8 p.m., followed by Thunder Road.

On Friday, the music venue shifts gears with X103.9 hosting a lineup of rock bands including Inhale; Unstable; Idasas; Bouree; and Anger is a Gift, a Rage Against the Machine cover band.

At 6 p.m. Friday, quarter midget-car racing begins on the stadium track.

Other events taking place over the weekend include a Spider-Man show, a parade that will wind its way from the speedway through the fairgrounds, drifting demonstrations on Sunday, and a rodeo on Monday.

Admission is \$8 for ages 13 and older, and \$5 for children ages 6 to 12.

Children 5 and under are admitted free. Members of the military pay \$5 all weekend, but must provide identification.

Carnival wristbands are \$15 and allow unlimited use of rides.

The first 2,000 guests through the gates on Saturday will receive free baseball caps courtesy of Leno's Rico Taco and KCAL-FM (96.7). On Sunday, floppy hats will be given to the first 2,000 guests courtesy of KOLA-FM (99.9), the NOS Events Center, the Orange Show Speedway and the NOS Sport Center.

Monday is "Free T-shirt Day." The first 2,000 people will receive a free T-shirt compliments of St. Bernardine Medical Center and Radio Lazer.

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