

# MAY DAYS

THE  
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Post  
A READER'S MONTHLY

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## Salute to American Graffiti to Restage Famous Scene

Thirty-six years ago on a cool, early summer morning just a few hours before dawn in downtown Petaluma, George Lucas filmed a scene for the film *American Graffiti* that is remembered as the movie's most hilarious and talked-about moment: the destruction of Office Holstein's police car. On May 15, 2008, that famous scene will be re-created in the exact location where it was originally filmed. Even the Jerry's Cherries Used Car Lot where the cops were parked will be faithfully resurrected.

The re-creation will be the kick-off event for Salute 2008, May 15 through 17, presented by partner rodsandwheels.com and dedicated to Manuel Padilla, Jr. who portrayed Pharaohs' member Carlos. Padilla passed away suddenly on January 29 this year.

One of the highlights of the re-creation event will be the return of several members of the original *American Graffiti* production staff, including Academy Award-winning cinematographer Haskell Wexler. Wexler, the film's Visual Consultant, will be in Petaluma most of the week to film a documentary about himself and about the *American Graffiti* Salute. Also present to help setup and film the cop car destruction will be Assistant Director Ned Kopp, Director of Photography Ron Eveslage, and lighting specialist Bill Maley.

Assisted by Figone 's Truck & Auto Painting and numerous local businesses and volunteers, event producer Cruisin' The Boulevard, Inc. transformed a 1961 Ford Galaxie into a replica of the *American Graffiti* cop car - right down to the red lights and Super Chief siren. "Our local police are really excited about this", announced CTB president John Furrer. "They even gave us permission to place official Petaluma Police

markings on each door. The transformation came out so beautifully that we have decided to keep this car and use a second '61 Galaxy for the destruction scene."

The re-creation will take place at 4:30 AM in the empty lot owned by Richard and Angela DeCarli, located between the LanMart and McNear buildings on Petaluma Boulevard North. A team of volunteers headed by Al Villa Builders, Redwood Sign Company, Stewart Warren Landscaping and North Bay Construction will begin resurrecting the Jerry's Cherries Used Car Lot façade several days prior to the event.

Only about 100 people will be able to witness the destruction scene close-up. Petaluma Boulevard will be closed to spectators and traffic beginning at 2 AM. A limited number of viewing tickets that include special mementos and a full *American Graffiti* breakfast at Jacqueline's High Tea are available for purchase online at standbyforjustice.com or by calling 707.762.3394.

On Thursday evening, May 15, from 5 to 8:30 PM, a Dinner with the Stars will be held at Cattlemens Restaurant on Petaluma Boulevard North just west of Highway 101. Enjoy socializing and dinner with Jackie Travers and movie stars Candy Clark, Paul Le Mat, Bo Hopkins, Lynne Marie Stewart, and movie car owners Clay and May Dailey, Mike and Sandra Famalette and Rick Figari - as well as members of the *American Graffiti* production crew. Tickets are \$85 per person and advance reservations are required. Proceeds benefit the Henry Travers' Memorial Scholarship Fund.

On May 16, from 4 to 8 PM, a Cruise-In and Kickoff Party will be held at Plaza/Plaza North Shopping Center at East Washington Street and North McDowell Boulevard. Dress in your best '50s

duds, jump into your candy-colored hot rod (or the family car) and cruise on in. It's free. There will be live music by 707 Band, games and prizes, a Poker Walk, appearances by the stars of *American Graffiti*, classic cars, and much more.

On Saturday, May 17, more than 200 classic cars, trucks, hot rods and specialty vehicles will be displayed on the historic downtown Petaluma streets where *American Graffiti* was filmed. All four of the movie's remaining featured cars (the '32 Deuce, the '58 Impala, the '56 T-Bird and the '55 Chevy, together valued at more than \$10 million) will be together in one place for the first time since the filming. Movie stars Paul

Le Mat, Candy Clark, Bo Hopkins and Lynne Marie Stewart will be on hand - and visitors will enjoy *American Graffiti* collectible souvenirs, food vendors, rides in the Cop Car, eight live bands, raffles, prizes, fun for the kids and lots of surprises. There is no charge for this event.

Proceeds from all aspects of Petaluma's Salute to *American Graffiti* Celebration benefit community projects, Petaluma schools and Petaluma nonprofit organizations that support the arts and history and provide for the safety, health and welfare of the community. For event tickets and details, visit [americangraffiti.net](http://americangraffiti.net).

## Food, Music & Fun in the Greek Tradition

Staged at the spectacular hilltop complex of the Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in the Ignacio Hills of Novato, the annual Marin Greek Festival offers a sensory banquet for the entire family. Each year, nearly 3000 visitors come to eat, drink, dance, visit, shop, browse, and have fun indoors and outdoors.

Food preparation for the event began in mid-February, using recipes handed down from generation to generation. Guests may choose a full dinner of lamb souvlaki, roasted chicken or lamb shanks with rice pilafi, bread and Greek salad - or an ala carte selection featuring pastitso (macaroni and beef), spanakopita (spinach pie), tiropita (cheese pie), dolmathes (stuffed grape leaves), fasoulakia (green beans in a tomato sauce), taramasalata (caviar salad), calamari (fried squid), gyros, lamb chops and lots more. The expected crowd will consume more than 80 pans of spanakopita alone. (See photo on page 4.)

Of course, there will be plenty of pastries for dessert:

baked baklava, diples and galatobouriko. Stop by the Loukomades booth for a bowl of delightful warm, syrup-drenched dough.

The women in charge of the cooking and baking this year are Sophia Stathis, Kay Simon, and Ann Yiulos - although many volunteers get involved as the event nears. It sounds like a daunting task, but Stathis says, "After so many years it's a piece of cake. We do it because we love it. How else can we keep our Greek traditions alive."

The bouzouki beat of the Fotia Greek band will accompany community line-dancing each day of the Festival. The award-winning Minoan Dancers will perform four times daily and also provide free Greek dance lessons each afternoon. They will also perform a Greek wedding each evening, including Cretan and Pontic dancing. (See photo on page 4.)

Recipes from the church's best selling cookbook, *Greek Cookery Marin*, will be demonstrated each day by Katina Pantazes. This year dolmathes (stuffed grape leaves) will be

featured.

Greek import booths and a delicatessen will offer specialty items. Tours of the church will also be given, and arts, crafts and games will be provided for children.

Each year the festival donates 5% of the net proceeds to a local organization. This year the committee has chosen the Novato Youth Center.

The Annual Marin Greek Festival takes place over Memorial Day Weekend - Saturday, May 24, and Sunday, May 25 - from noon to 10 PM each day. Admission at the door is \$5 for adults and Free Admission for children 12 and under.

Free parking and continuous shuttle busing, starting a half-hour before Festival opening times, will be available from the Indian Valley College Parking Lot at the west end of Ignacio Boulevard. Disabled parking will be available at the Festival site, 1110 Highland Drive. Follow the signs near the Ignacio Boulevard off-ramp from Highway 101. For details, call 415.883.1998 or visit [NativityofChrist.org](http://NativityofChrist.org).