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Fourth of July parade honors Count Haraszthy

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APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE May 16 to join the Sonoma Community Center's annual Fourth of July parade.

Index-Tribune file photo

The Sonoma Community Center's Fourth of July Committee has selected Count Agoston Haraszthy's 200th birthday as the theme of this year's Fourth of July Parade and Plaza celebration, it was announced recently. Applications to take part in the annual hometown celebration can be picked up beginning Wednesday, May 16.

The parade's marshals will be the count's great-great-grandson Val Haraszthy, his wife, Vicki, and his mother, Mianna, all residents of Sonoma.

Agoston Haraszthy, born on Aug. 31, 1812 in Pest (now Budapest), Hungary, founded Buena Vista Winery in 1856, and hired Charles Krug as his winemaker. His winemaking expertise and practical advice for planting vines and making wines encouraged the planting of grapes throughout the state and he popularly came to be known as the "Father of California Viticulture."

Buena Vista Winery will act as the Fourth of July's wine sponsor. The winery was purchased in 2011 by international wine entrepreneur Jean-Charles Boisset, and is in the midst of a complete renovation which

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On The Plaza

will focus on the history of the winery and Count Haraszthy's importance to the development of the California wine industry.

Buena Vista director of retail operations Tom Blackwood said, "We are thrilled that the Count's 200th birthday will be the theme of this year's Fourth of July celebration and parade. The count was an exceptional Hungarian/American and came to love Sonoma with all his heart. We are very pleased to be the wine sponsor, and to honor the count in this way."

All are invited to join in the parade, from families to service groups to businesses. Applications can be picked up in the community center's main office at 276 E. Napa St., or found online at sonomacommunitycenter.org.

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