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Operation Swingtime

By Cathy Tyson



The Big Band of Rossmoor will be playing at "Operation Swingtime" July 19 at the Lafayette Reservoir. Photo Steve Hobbs

In a unique, first of its kind collaboration, five local Rotary clubs are partnering with the USO to share a musical evening with the community to honor service members, past and present.

The famous Big Band of Rossmoor and the very talented Swinging Blue Stars, a quartet of ladies who sound amazingly like the Andrew Sisters - think "Don't sit under the apple tree" - will be treating active duty men and women from Travis Air Force Base and Camp Roberts along with Lamorinda residents to a free evening of swing. The USO will be providing transportation for hard working troops for this special show.

"It's rare that troops are invited off-base to be entertained," said director of the Bay Area USO, Jeff Herndon. Rotary groups are organizing the festivities and generously providing dinner for the service members.

Veterans from conflicts across the globe are invited to meet with active duty personnel prior to the show by the 32-member strong Big Band of Rossmoor and the special harmonizing vocal guests. Military vehicles will also be on display at the new stage and picnic area overlooking the Lafayette Reservoir, just up from the eastern edge of the parking lot, near the kids' playground.

For those unfamiliar with the organization, the non-profit, non-political USO has provided a tangible way for Americans to say thank you to our troops for the last 70 years by offering a home away from home for service members and support for those deployed overseas, here at home or those transitioning from service. The very first USO show

featuring Bob Hope in 1941 from Camp Roberts, Calif.

Organizers would like to encourage veterans to attend. In order to recognize those who served our country, please email band director Mo Levich at gto@67goat.com with the veteran's name, rank, branch and years served. A golf cart shuttle is available for those who may need some assistance. Uniforms are optional but encouraged.

Bring your own blanket, lawn chairs and picnic goodies to Operation Swingtime to celebrate troops past and present and enjoy a fine summer evening of Glenn Miller and George Gershwin melodies from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, July 19 at the Lafayette Reservoir.

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