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Fiesta Association Names Special Parade Honorees for 2010 Swallows' Day Parade

San Juan Capistrano, Calif. –The San Juan Capistrano Fiesta Association recently announced two special guests for the 52nd Swallows' Day Parade to be held on March 20, 2010. The parade will be dedicated to the memory of Richard O'Neill and Michael Lewis, the first rider at the J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center, will be the parade's special guest.

Fiesta Association Board President Rita Propersi said, "The Fiesta Association is extremely pleased to be in a situation to honor two very special individuals to San Juan Capistrano."

Richard J. O'Neill was a prominent landowner and activist who helped transform the landscape of Orange County by developing his family's vast Rancho Mission Viejo. O'Neill supported the Swallows' Day Parade through the Ranch over the years and was a parade participant with the Portola Riders. He passed away on April 4, 2009 at the age of 85. O'Neill's sister, Alice O'Neill Avery, is expected to represent the family at next year's parade.

Michael Lewis has cerebral palsy and was just 10 years old when he became The J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center's first client in 1978. At age 41, he still participates each week in the San Juan Capistrano-based organization's therapeutic horse-related programs. His parents Nancy and Derek Lewis were instrumental in founding the organization and will ride with Michael in the parade along with friends, family and staff members of The Shea Center.

For more information about Fiesta de las Golondrinas events, call 949.493.1976 or visit www.swallowsparade.org.

The San Juan Capistrano Fiesta Association is an all-volunteer organization that manages and produces the annual Swallows' Day Parade and other Fiesta de las Golondrinas events throughout the year. A nonprofit, nonpolitical organization, the Fiesta Association is led by a board of directors and is entirely self-funded through donations and various fundraising activities.

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