

REO Speedwagon To Headline Wildflower! Festival

RICHARDSON, TX – REO Speedwagon, a pop-rock legend from the 1970s and early 1980s, will headline Richardson's annual Wildflower! Arts and Music Festival on the ViewPoint Bank Stage on Saturday, May 21, at 10:00 pm. Taking its name from the flatbed truck and fire engine manufactured by the REO Motor Car Company, REO Speedwagon was formed by students attending the University of Illinois in the fall of 1967 to play cover songs in campus bars – from humble beginnings the band steadily climbed the charts, dominated the airwaves, and became classic rock icons along the way.

With lead singers coming and going, the band finally found its mainstream rock sound when singer Kevin Cronin rejoined the group in the late 70s and started the band on a winning streak unmatched by few acts in that era. And although REO was slowly inching their way to big-time success, no one could have predicted the massive hit that one of their next albums would turn out to be. Issued at the tail end of 1980, *Hi Infidelity* became one of 1981's biggest selling albums with more than nine million copies sold and spawned one of the best-known power ballads of all time, the #1 "Keep on Loving You," as well as such popular rock radio hits as "Don't Let Him Go," "In Your Letter," and "Take It on the Run."

REO Speedwagon continued to score further hit albums (1982's *Good Trouble*, 1984's *Wheels Are Turnin'*) and singles ("Keep the Fire Burnin'" and the #1 hit power ballad "Can't Fight This Feeling,") and ended the 80s with thirteen Top 40 hits and album sales that topped the 40 million mark.

The 2011 festival's three-day pass goes on sale for \$30 on Monday, April 18, at any Metroplex Tom Thumb store or online through www.wildflowerfestival.com. The three-day pass is available for sale until 5:30 p.m., Friday, May 20. Single day adult tickets are available at the gates for \$20 as well as through the festival's website beginning April 18. Kids age 5-12 are \$3, and kids 4 and under are free. *New this year* will be a "Kidz in Free" promotion on Sunday, May 22, when all kids under the age of 12 will get in free with a paid adult, courtesy of Bank of America. **2011 Primary Sponsors include ViewPoint Bank, Methodist Richardson Medical Center, metroPCS, Bud Light and the City of Richardson.** Sponsorships are still available by contacting Robbie Hazelbaker at 972.744.4316 or robbie.hazelbaker@cor.gov.

Wildflower! takes place in the Galatyn Park Urban Center at 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson, just off US 75 at the Galatyn Parkway exit. For complete, up-to-date event information including a festival map, performance schedules, festival dos and don'ts, lodging options, driving directions, parking information and festival hours, visit www.wildflowerfestival.com or call 972.744.4580, or follow Wildflower! on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/wildflowerfestival>.

Media Note: For more information, please contact Geoff Fairchild, special events manager for the City of Richardson, at 972-744-4583 or geoff.fairchild@cor.gov.



About Wildflower!

The Wildflower! Arts & Music Festival began as a small community event in 1993 held in a local park in northeast Richardson, Texas. Eighteen years later the festival has become the premier music event in the area. Originally a community event designed to celebrate the acres of wild flowers planted throughout the city each spring, Wildflower! quickly “blossomed” when national headlining entertainment was added after only the second year. Growing crowds and subsequent logistical challenges lead the event to its first move to the Greenway Corporate Office Park at US 75 and Campbell Rd. Here the event was able to expand with multiple stages, over 30 acres of arts, music, and family activities.

In 1998, the Wildflower Nights! Program was added, bringing an additional weekend of concert-style entertainment to the event. Wildflower Nights! featured evening concerts in an amphitheater setting and the program quickly gained popularity as bigger and better artists were added to the lineup each year. In 2010, over 60,000 attendees, ranging primarily from ages 25 to 54, and from 17 different states, attended the event.

About the City of Richardson

With over 99,200 residents, the City of Richardson is widely recognized for its commitment to excellence, its rich history and its bright future, all of which make Richardson a smart choice for residents and businesses. Known globally for its high-tech business leadership, the City of Richardson also offers a high quality of life, diverse array of neighborhoods, convenient Metroplex location, multi-modal transportation infrastructure and outstanding City services. Richardson has been repeatedly recognized as one of the top places to live and work by the national media, and the City remains dedicated to continuous improvement, as well as to the principles of open government and two-way communications with residents. To learn more, visit www.cor.net.

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