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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2007

WHEELS

Hot rods, custom cars are stars



Sacramento Autorama

Claremont resident Steve Frediani's 1951 Ford won the H.A. Bagdasar-ian World's Most Beautiful Custom Award at last year's event.

Besides competitive awards, the Sacramento Autorama offers music, entertainers, movie stars.

By Mark Glover
BEE AUTO EDITOR

If your idea of a car is something that makes a personal statement, your weekend has arrived.

The 57th Sacramento Autorama, the massive custom-car and hot-rod show featuring some of the West's top automotive craftspeople, kicks off its three-

day run today at Cal Expo.

The show, operated by Rancho Cucamonga-based John Buck Enterprises Inc., also features more than 150 vendors, numerous auto-themed exhibits and entertainers, and several internationally known auto industry names.

More than 400 custom, hot rod, classic and specialty vehicles, as well as motorcycles, will be on site at 1600 Exposition Blvd.

For the car builders and customizers, the focus will be the traditional "Big B" awards - trophies that honor Autorama's founding fathers and some of the

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AUTORAMA AT A GLANCE

What: 57th Sacramento Autorama, with hundreds customs, hot rods, classics, motorcycles and other vehicles.

Where: Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento.

When: Noon to 10 p.m. today, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday; trophy presentations will begin at 5 p.m. Sunday.

Costs: General admission is

\$18, \$15 for seniors ages 62 and up and \$10 for ages 6 to 12. Children ages 5 and under accompanied by an adult will be admitted free.

\$2-off discount coupons are available at area Les Schwab Tire Center outlets; \$1-off discount coupons are available at area Togo's Eatery restaurants.

Details: Call (877) 763-7469 or visit www.hotrodshows.com.

Autorama: Long list of exhibits

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area's legendary customizers. The most coveted is the H.A. Bagdasarian World's Most Beautiful Custom award, which includes the winner's name on an 8-foot-tall perpetual trophy.

The other Big Bs are the Sam Barris Memorial Award, started in 1968 and presented to the car with the best metal-and-paint finish; the Joe "Candy Apple Red" Bailon Award, recognizing an outstanding paint job selected by Bailon, the Northern California customizer who created the signature red color; and the Dick Bertolucci Award of Excellence, presented to the car with the best craftsmanship in assembly, fit, finish and detail.

The Big B awards and others will be handed out Sunday, starting at 5 p.m.

New this year is Saturday's Autorama Drive-In, a show open to pre-1973 hot rods, customs, classics and trucks. About 200 vehicles are expected to be on display in the Cal Expo parking lots by 9 a.m. Show awards for the daylong Drive-In, which includes live music, will be handed out at 4 p.m.

Other attractions include:

- California native Chip Foose, star of the Learning Channel's "Overhaulin'" show, will have his award-winning 1936 Ford roadster, "Impression," and spectacular hot-rod coupe, "Hemisfear," on-site. He will sign autographs from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

- Celebrating the 75th year of the classic 1932 Ford "Deuce," 10 one-of-a-kind, custom pedal cars built by prominent customizers such as Foose and Boyd Coddington are on-site. All the cars are to be auctioned off in August at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance.

- Tricked Out Entertainment is hosting the weekend's Import/Custom Truck Competition.

- George Barris, the Hollywood-based customizer whose creations have appeared in numerous TV shows and movies for two generations, will be on the grounds throughout the weekend, along with Barry White, the hot rod and muscle car builder who is star of the Learning Channel's "Wrecks to Riches" show.

- Actors Candy Clark and Bo Hopkins, both of whom appeared in the 1973 film, "American Graffiti," are among the celebrities at Cal Expo.

- The Car Audio Sound-Off competition will showcase top-tier audio systems, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

- The new Suede Pavilion, which recreates the hot-rod era of the 1940s and '50s, is where you can get a cell phone or laptop detailed hot-rod style at the Pin Strippers' tables.

- Gary and Jeremy Cope of Auburn have their 1947 Chevy Aero sedan/racer parked at the Cruisin' News booth.

- This year's model car contest has hundreds of entries.

- Country music artist Dave Russell is scheduled to perform at 7 p.m. tonight. Captain and the Divas is scheduled for various times Saturday and Sunday.



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