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## OFFICIAL MEDIA RELEASE

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### THUNDER BY THE BAY CELEBRATES 20 YEARS THIS WEEKEND

Suncoast Charities for Children's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Thunder By The Bay Motorcycle Festival will be held this weekend February 15-18. The event continues to honor veterans, active duty military and first responders with a special Eagle Award being presented to local area veterans on stage throughout the weekend.

The two day Festival portion of the weekend, being held at the Sarasota County Fairgrounds, will continue to offer free admission to the general public. Thunder By The Bay plans to offer a wide variety of live music for all ages touting the theme "The Festival Where Rock Meets Country". Headliners this year include Vegas McGraw (Tim McGraw Tribute) performing on Saturday (Feb. 17) and The Bobby Friss Band on Sunday (Feb. 18). Other bands performing live on stage include the Alter Eagles (Eagles Tribute), Tobacco Rd. Band, Soul Circus Cowboys, China Grove (Doobie Brothers Tribute), U.S. Stones (Rolling Stones Tribute), Diary of an Ozzman (Ozzy Osbourne Tribute), The Boss Hawg Band, Twinkle, and The Billy Rice Band. The Festival will continue to offer over 100 vendor displays, Flatout motorcycle freestyle shows, a motorcycle charity ride, and expanded food court area. The weekend begins with a ticketed "Born To Be Wild" Kickoff Party on Thursday night at Michael's On East.

NASCAR fans attending the Festival on Sunday will be able to watch the Daytona 500 on a big screen. New things planned for this year include a "Bikes On Main" Block Party on Friday night, Zambelli fireworks display and a "Ride for Riches" (to include both cars & motorcycles) on Saturday. Also this year's Festival will feature three bike shows, a "Miss Thunder By The Bay" contest, expanded VIP area, and a "Thunder Tap Room" featuring craft beer, cigars, a picnic area, and a lounge area featuring Cornhole & Jenga.

Lucy Nicandri continues to serve as the Festival Director. Suncoast Charities for Children Board Member and local attorney, Greg Linehan, and the President of Rossiter's Harley-Davidson, Rick Rossiter, are serving as Honorary Co-Chairs for the Festival. Thunder By The Bay is produced by Suncoast Charities for Children and is a major fundraiser for this local non-profit that provides support to over 8,000 local children, teens, and adults with special needs and their families. Over the past 19 years, Thunder By The Bay has raised \$1.7 Million for charity. The 2016 Festival was last held in the City of Sarasota and generated an estimated economic impact of \$8.8 Million and 8,400 room nights.

Presenting Festival Sponsors include Rossiter's and Manatee River Harley-Davidson, Sarasota Ford and Budweiser. Major Festival Sponsors include FCCI Insurance Group, Wittmer Linehan, and The Loaded Barrel Tavern. For information visit: [thunderbythebay.org](http://thunderbythebay.org)