

Italian 4-wheeled beauties get a car show that's all their own

By Nick Gallup

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Arizona American Italian Club says "benvenuto" as it gears up to host its third annual Italian Car Show on Saturday.

"Please join us for great food, drink, live authentic Italian music by Pietro Rainone of Sorrento, Italy, and plenty of gorgeous vehicles," said Jay Fuller, club vice-president and event chair.

The idea for "Le Bellezze d' Italia la Terza" (The Beauties of Italy Car Show) originated several years ago.

"I'm also a member of the Arizona Alfa Romeo Owner's Club," Fuller said. "It was Alfa's 100th anniversary, and, over a plate of pasta and glasses of red wine, the Italian car show was born."

Previous shows have raised more than \$20,000 for Valley military charities. A food drive for St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance at last year's show netted 1,700 pounds of food, and the food bank

THE BEAUTIES OF ITALY CHARITY CAR SHOW

When: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday.

Where: Arizona American Italian Club, 7509 N. 12th St., Phoenix.

Admission: One non-perishable food item. \$25 to enter a vehicle.

Details: 602-410-0776, italiancarshow.com.

will be there again this year.

All net proceeds from event raffles, auctions, entry fees and commemorative T-shirt sales will go to the Military Assistance Mission of Arizona, which provides emergency financial aid to Arizona active-duty military members, their families and wounded soldiers.

The show will feature such Italian stallions as Panteras, Maseratis and Fer-

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raris. Almost 100 vehicles are expected.

This year's show also celebrates 50 years since Italian industrialist Ferruccio Lamborghini founded Automobili Ferruccio Lamborghini.

Kevin Hayes of Ahwatukee, a retired Air Force major and a captain for Southwest Airlines, plans to showcase his Chairo Blue 1997 Lamborghini Diablo roadster.

"I've owned it since February 2006 and have put over 25,000 miles on it — it's not a garage queen," Hayes said.

Lamborghini manufactured the Diablo roadster from 1996 to 1999, producing about 450 vehicles, with about 200 brought to the United States.

A factory '97 Diablo roadster produces 495 horsepower, but with modifications — mostly to its exhaust system — Hayes' roadster puts out 540 horsepower.

"It will do zero to 60 in four seconds, and its top speed is 202 miles per hour," he said.

Putting aside the Diablo's performance, Hayes believes the coolest thing on his Lamborghini is its license plate: an

Arizona veteran's plate with the number F16 F4.

"The veteran's plate goes really well with the Chairo Blue paint," he said. "But I like to call the paint Air Force blue."

Ferrari owner Steve Julius of Mesa, an automotive-technology instructor at Mesa Community College, will enter his red 1986 Ferrari 328 GTS. It has a 3.2-liter four-camshaft V-8 engine that puts out 270 horsepower through a five-speed manual transmission. Julius restored the Ferrari in 2007, and it has about 39,000 miles on the odometer.

"I purchased the vehicle from one of my students in 2006," Julius said. "He loved the car but found out that a 30,000-mile service (on a Ferrari) costs about \$6,000. At that time, I owned an Acura NSX, and to make a long story short, we traded cars."

The Ferrari was in decent shape for a 20-year-old car but needed quite a bit of restoration work, he said.

"I basically took the car apart and put it back together, and now I use it mostly for shows," Julius said. "I still think it's one of the best-looking cars of all time and a blast to drive. It is, after all, a red Ferrari."