



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on August 30, 2012

Report Says Eastwood Will Be “Mystery Guest” at GOP Convention

According to the CNN “Political Ticker,” the mystery is “solved”:

“Clint Eastwood will be the ‘mystery guest’ at the Republican National Convention’s final night, a GOP source confirmed Thursday,” the cable news channel [announced](#) on its political blog. How well placed and reliable that source is left for the reader to guess, but news channels and Internet blogs have been rife with speculation that Eastwood is the one who will speak in the “To Be Announced” slot, just before Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) introduces Mitt Romney to formally accept the party’s nomination for president. And while Romney’s acceptance speech is expected to be the focal point of the evening, the “mystery guest” aspect of the scheduling for the convention’s final night has increased both interest and speculation as to who will show up to grasp and hold the attention of the national TV audience between singer Taylor Hicks and Sen. Rubio.



The guessing game started on Monday when the “TBA” slot appeared on the roster of speakers. Speculation has ranged over possibilities as varied as former President George Herbert Walker Bush, talk-show host Rush Limbaugh, former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, football star Tim Tebow, and Nancy Reagan, widow of the popular president who borrowed a line from one of Eastwood’s “Dirty Harry” movies. Reagan promised to wield his veto pen as effectively as Harry Callahan used his .44 Magnum if Congress sent him a tax hike: “Go ahead, make my day,” Reagan [said](#), quoting a line from the film *Sudden Impact*.

But attention focused on Eastwood after reports surfaced yesterday that the 81-year-old film star was traveling to Tampa. CNN reported today he would be at the convention site this afternoon for a brief rundown of the evening’s events.

Eastwood’s tough guy persona was featured in a number of westerns, as well as the “Dirty Harry” movies in which he played a two-fisted, straight-shooting and frequently rule-breaking cop. He has also directed a number of movies, including the *The Unforgiven*, which won the Academy Award for best picture, *Million Dollar Baby*, about a woman boxer, and last year’s critically acclaimed *Edgar*, about legendary FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover.

In the mid-1980s he made a brief sojourn into politics for himself, winning election and serving a single



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two-year term as mayor of Carmel-by the-Sea, California. He has long been involved in endorsing candidates and causes, however, and his eclectic views might make him a strange fit for the Republican convention. He has supported a number of Democrats in California, including former Gov. Gray Davis, having both voted and held fundraisers for Davis in 1998. He has said he is “pro-choice” on abortion and has endorsed same-sex “marriage.” He has described himself as “libertarian” and once said his political views were a fusion of the free-market principles espoused by the late Nobel-winning economist Milton Friedman and anti-war activist Noam Chomsky. He was opposed to the war in Iraq.

“I didn’t understand why we invaded and I still don’t,” he said in a 2011 [interview](#) with the *Daily Mail* of London. It’s the same with Afghanistan. I want the troops from Great Britain and the U.S. to be successful, but by the same token Afghanistan has always been a screw-up. The Russians, who live right next door, couldn’t prevail there, so what are we doing?” Some Republicans were also critical Eastwood’s role in an ad for Chrysler that ran during the halftime of this year’s Super Bowl, celebrating the resurgence of the nation’s auto industry. Some saw the “It’s halftime in America” as an endorsement of the government bailout of the auto industry and an implied pitch for a second Obama term.

But Eastwood, who endorsed John McCain for president in 2008, has already endorsed Romney in this year’s race. If he does address the convention tonight, the delegates will likely be cheering his on-screen persona, rather than his real-life political views. Political conventions are generally more about image than reality and chances are the party faithful in Tampa have already forgotten that Reagan put down his cocked and loaded veto pen and his “Make my day” stand to sign more than a dozen tax increases during his eight years as president.

Photo of Clint Eastwood: AP Images



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