

# Celebrating America, Her Patriots And Heroes

(NAPSA)—America's military personnel, police officers and firefighters often are thought of as heroes, but how does a grateful nation say thank you to this special group?

Pigeon Forge, at the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains in East Tennessee, has an answer in its fourth annual Celebrate Freedom!, Aug. 9 to 23, 2003. This award-winning event pays tribute to America's veterans, patriots and heroes with 15 days of activities designed to entertain, educate and pay homage to these special people.

Event highlights include a who's who list of intriguing figures. Celebrate Freedom! visitors can meet people whose lives have been depicted in recent movies. "Windtalkers" was a popular film that chronicled the lives of Navajo Code Talkers in World War II and Pigeon Forge will welcome some of the original Code Talkers to this year's special event. Joe Galloway, co-author of the book *We Were Soldiers Once. . . And Young*, will make a special appearance. The photographer's saga about a gut-wrenching battle in Vietnam was the basis for the movie "We Were Soldiers."

Capt. Scott O'Grady will deliver the keynote address during An Evening of Remembrance on Thursday, Aug. 21. The former Air Force pilot gained national prominence in 1995 when his F-16 was shot down over the skies of Bosnia. Capt. O'Grady survived six days in hostile territory before being rescued by the U.S. Marines. He recounted his amazing story in a best-selling book *Return With Honor*.

Award-winning entertainer Lee Greenwood will perform a special Celebrate Freedom concert, Tues-



day, Aug. 11. A long-time supporter of America's military, Greenwood's touring schedule has included performances at military bases and a number of government functions. His signature song "God Bless The U.S.A." was named the Country Music Association Song of the Year in 1985.

Other events planned during Celebrate Freedom! include a series of Freedom Forums with veterans and historians participating in roundtable discussions; canteen dances featuring music from the Big Band era; and performances of "Celebrate Freedom! The Musical." This original musical production details America's military history, telling the story of both military personnel and the families left at home.

Firefighters and police officers will compete in a number of events that will challenge the skills used in their day-to-day activities.

Veterans and active military personnel, police officers and firefighters will receive a special Celebrate Freedom VIP card, good for discounts at businesses throughout the city during the 15-day event.

More information about Celebrate Freedom! is available by calling 1-800-365-6993 or at [www.mypigeonforge.com](http://www.mypigeonforge.com).