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**DESTINATION AMERICA AND USA WEEKEND ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF THE
INAUGURAL “RED, WHITE AND YOU” CONTEST**

*Fayetteville, NC and Hurricane Sandy-Ravaged Union Beach, NJ Win National Competition,
Offering Towns a Memorable 4th of July Celebration*

(Silver Spring, Md.) – [Destination America](#), the only television network that celebrates the people, places, and stories of the U.S., and national weekly magazine USA WEEKEND announce the winners of their first-ever **RED, WHITE AND YOU** contest, which awards two deserving communities a spectacular Fourth of July celebration. *And the winners are...* **Union Beach, NJ**, a coastal town still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, and **Fayetteville, NC**, a major military community forced to cancel its annual fireworks display at Fort Bragg due to budget cuts. Launched in March, the contest asked folks across the country to put their patriotism on display to prove why their respective towns were most deserving of an over-the-top Independence Day party.

“Fireworks, fanfare and food are synonymous with the Fourth of July for many families, but lack of resources has forced many American towns to put their patriotic memory-making festivities on hold,” said Marc Etkind, SVP of Content Strategy for Destination America. “In light of natural disasters and budget constraints, Destination America hopes to restore the spirit and tradition of Fourth of July in Union Beach and Fayetteville, two very worthy communities.”

“The nominations were so moving and heartfelt — USA WEEKEND is grateful to be part of this wonderful outpouring of patriotism and affection for American cities and towns. We congratulate the people of Union Beach and Fayetteville and all the good neighbors across the country who share our mission to make a difference in the community,” said Heather Frank, Editor-in-Chief of USA WEEKEND.

The **RED, WHITE AND YOU** contest received more than 3,500 entries from Americans nationwide sharing moving stories of why their towns deserve an all-American celebration. Below is a list of the actual submissions for the two grand prize winning towns as well as the runners-up, which will be

awarded \$1,000 each to be used toward one of the following local organizations: Parks and Recreation Department, YMCA/YWCA or Habitat for Humanity:

GRAND PRIZE–WINNING SUBMISSIONS

Fayetteville, NC – Nominated by Jeff Wells

Due to governmental budget cuts, there will be no post fireworks for Fort Bragg. Our post is home to more Army tradition than any other installation, has produced the most Medal of Honor recipients, and is seen as the center of the Army Universe. To not have a fireworks display on our nation's day of independence for those who have fought to secure our freedom is not only a morale-degrading scenario but also a shame to those who have sacrificed so much. As an Army leader, I believe a fireworks event celebrating all that Soldiers fight for would not just boost morale but also let them know that, despite our difficult fiscal times, they are not forgotten and still have the support of those they fight to protect.

Union Beach, NJ – Nominated by Robert LaBerta

I'm a humble 37-year resident of a small NJ town. During Superstorm Sandy, 90% of our town was flooded and many homes destroyed. The residents of my small town came together to not only rebuild but save each other emotionally. I had the honor of being the Union Beach Fire Department Chief during Sandy. There were incredible acts of valor and courage not only by our emergency services but also by our residents. Many of those in neck-deep water saving whoever they could however they could. Our town will rebuild, displaced residents will come back, and we will prevail. Please consider having this great event in our small town of Union Beach. It would bring back a sense of normal life to our community and celebrate our determination and pride after Sandy. Thank you for your attention.

RUNNERS-UP SUBMISSIONS

Enterprise, AL – Nominated by Julia Lewis

Enterprise, Alabama is not our hometown but my husband's duty station. Even though we did not pick to live here, we still feel it is our home. Enterprise is a military town that is right next to Fort Rucker. We feel that this town would deserve a big 4th of July celebration because of all the brave men and women that serve this country on a daily basis. It would also benefit all the local businesses that support families like ours. Most people here make big sacrifices to serve our country and they should be able to have a fun celebration. I am sure the soldiers of the United States Army would appreciate this very much!

Lewistown, MT – Nominated by LaVonne Jurack

I write this essay for my Mom, Elizabeth Limpus, 82. Our town of about 6000 is a great place to grow up, but times were and are hard for families. Mom and her sister, a nun, Sister Claudellen, now 81, ran a firework stand into their 70s for over 50 years, a tradition they continued from their father, who started it in 1943. People came to the stand to see my Mom, mainly. She gave away more fireworks than she ever sold. Little kids, with dimes, nickels and quarters, would leave with bags of delights for their celebration. Kids would travel on their bikes all the way across town to see Mom, even if there was a stand just down the road. Mom made a lot of people happy. Mom misses her stand very much and would like to offer our town one last shabang with your help!

Blue Ridge, GA – Nominated by Jill Brewer

There is not thanks enough for this town that has given us so much. My husband was injured while serving in Afghanistan. He is being medically retired from the Army, and we received a house in Blue Ridge. We have never been here and didn't know what to expect. We have been met by overwhelming support, love, and caring. My husband can't use his hands much, so a bunch of people from the town

came out to help us move our furniture into our new house. Everywhere we go, people greet us, thank my husband for his service and sacrifice, and ask if there is anything we need. This town has made us feel welcome. We can never thank them enough for what they have given us. We would love to be able to give back to them. My husband is a Hero, but this town is full of heroes.

Pontiac, IL – Nominated by Kristy Schires

I call Pontiac, Illinois home. Pontiac created heartfelt memories for me growing up there in the '60s, '70s and '80s. A small Midwest community, it is full of special people who come together when needed. Whether it be painting a house, fixing a car, delivering meals for someone who can't get out, or fundraising for friends in need (they raised over \$10k in 1998 when my father had major surgery), Pontiac pulls together. I couldn't have picked a better place or time with better people to grow up. The bond with the folks I had in Pontiac is hard to explain, but it's a feeling of comfort, a safe feeling, a true feeling of being loved, and I'm reminded of that each time I visit. The people of Pontiac deserve, and would be most appreciative of, a wonderful 4th of July celebration. Thank you for your consideration.

Box Elder, SD – Nominated by Shaney Bowlds

I believe my town deserves a 4th of July celebration because nothing says America more than Box Elder, SD. We are home to the Lakota Native American tribe and the Ogalala Sioux Tribe. The first Americans. Also, Box Elder is Home to the 28th Bomb Wing Air Force Base. We are proud of our American men and women that fight for the freedoms we all enjoy daily! Additionally, Mount Rushmore is a close-by favorite American family destination enjoyed by thousands of Americans annually. We are hardworking, honest Americans that deserve this celebration.

ABOUT USA WEEKEND

USA WEEKEND Magazine is the national weekly that empowers America to start taking action every weekend, with 22.6 million circulation and 50 million readers in print and online. Awarded for its journalism and design, USA WEEKEND is an action based news source for people throughout the country who look for real stories behind change and a source for American families to find food, health, family and celebrity information. USA WEEKEND is a Gannett Co., Inc. (NYSE: GCI), publication. Find us on Twitter and Facebook and visit usaweekend.com.

ABOUT DESTINATION AMERICA

Destination America is the only network to celebrate the people, places, and stories of the United States. The inclusive network targeting Adults 25-54 is available in 60 million homes, emblazoning television screens with the grit and tenacity, honesty and work ethic, humor and adventurousness that characterize our nation. Destination America features travel, food, adventure, home, and natural history, with original series like *BBQ Pitmasters*, *A Haunting*, *Epic*, and *Buying Alaska*. For more information, please visit DestinationAmerica.com, facebook.com/DestinationAmerica, or twitter.com/DestAmerica. Destination America is part of Discovery Communications (Nasdaq: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK), the world's #1 nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.8 billion cumulative subscribers in 218 countries and territories.

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