



For Immediate Release

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Fireworks Display Companies Rise Above Tough Economic Challenges

U.S. Communities Will Be Showered With Spectacular Displays This Independence Day Albeit
Tightening of the Budgetary Belt May be Necessary

Bethesda, Maryland, June 24, 2009 – The U.S. fireworks industry has become accustomed to facing challenging times throughout the past decade and this year is no different, especially with the poor state of our nation’s economy. “Despite the current economic burdens, professional display fireworks companies will weather the economic rollercoaster and deliver their patriotic red, white and blue tributes to America across the country this Fourth of July,” says Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director, American Pyrotechnics Association (APA).

Based upon industry reports, communities are fighting for their annual Fourth of July fireworks displays, sticking with previously approved budgets or cutting back ever so slightly to ensure that Independence Day goes forward as usual with a big bang. Heckman said, “small towns and big cities alike, realize the importance of continuing this annual tradition of providing their citizens with free entertainment to celebrate our freedom and independence.” And with travel and tourism on the decline due to the economy, “home town celebrations have never been more important to bring communities together, give them hope, and restore optimism.”

According to Heckman, the display fireworks industry has faced challenge after challenge ever since 9/11 – from increased security and burdensome background check requirements for personnel setting up and executing the 14,000 plus fireworks displays that annually grace our skylines each 4th of July, to rail embargoes and shipping crises. “The industry has been tested time after time and each challenge unites the industry, makes it stronger, and ensures that communities do not go dark on Independence Day,” said Heckman.

What keeps the fireworks display industry going amid the constant sea of change and challenge? According to James R. Souza, of Pyro Spectaculars by Souza, a fifth generation family owned and operated display company based in Rialto, California, “it’s all about America, our patriotism and our desire to honor our troops who fight so hard to keep us safe and protect our freedom. My family, immigrants from Portugal, brought our family trade to the U.S., where we have found liberty, prosperity and freedom and we are appreciative of all that America the beautiful has bestowed upon us. For us, it’s not just about being a fireworks entertainment enterprise but it’s about giving back to our country so all Americans can collectively celebrate our great nation’s birthday.”

Stephen Vitale, Pyrotecnico –Vitale Family Fireworks, based in New Castle, Pennsylvania, a fourth generation family business with roots originating in Italy, said “we as an industry bleed red, white and blue and we stand by and along with our industry competitors, unite with our customer base in hard economic times, to provide the best entertainment that we can at competitive and affordable pricing.” Some recent headlines have suggested that fireworks displays are facing tough economic times and are examples of wasteful spending. To the contrary, Vitale says, “we’ve worked very hard with our client base, like the rest of the U.S. fireworks industry, to slightly trim back our shows where necessary to ensure that excellent displays are provided on Independence Day. We believe every community expects and deserves a display honoring our country. Fireworks are a great American tradition symbolizing how we celebrate our freedom and independence and we are doing our part to make certain that this tradition continues to happen.”

At Rozzi’s Famous Fireworks, Loveland, Ohio, also a fourth generation Italian fireworks display company and one of the few remaining U.S. fireworks manufacturers, Arthur Rozzi says, “we put our blood, sweat and tears into this one day a year where we can entertain and delight communities across the country with patriotic pomp and celebration. Certainly we have felt some budget pinches impacting our bottom line, but like all members of the fireworks display industry, we are tightening our belts, working with our customer base to ensure that no one is disappointed this 4th of July. It takes creative planning, nipping and tucking in ways that spectators won’t notice so that it’s a win – win for industry’s bottom line and putting smiles on the faces of Americans nationwide. We shall weather this economic storm, like other industry challenges faced by my Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather preceding me and we’ll rebound even stronger when America is on better footing.”

About the American Pyrotechnics Association

The APA is the leading trade association of the fireworks industry. The APA supports and promotes safety standards for all aspects of fireworks. The APA has a diverse membership including regulated and licensed manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, importers, suppliers and professional display fireworks companies. Additional information about the fireworks industry, facts & figures, state laws and safety tips can be found on APA’s website at www.americanpyro.com

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