



2010 Outstanding Event of the Year Arizona Celebration of Freedom



Entertainment Solutions, Inc. nominates the first annual **Southwest Ambulance Arizona Celebration of Freedom** for **Best Overall Event 2010**. Conceptualized by City of Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, this event was designed to stand apart from other local fireworks shows as a truly patriotic event celebrating America's freedom.

The idea for this inaugural event may have been born in Mesa City Hall, but the programming elements were brought together by several dedicated and passionate community entities. These groups worked diligently together to incorporate their ideas into one seamless patriotic themed event that the downtown Mesa community can be very proud of. The Arizona Celebration of Freedom has all of the elements of the perfect community event: American nostalgia, education and patriotism all brought together through volunteerism and community involvement.

Funding for this inaugural event was provided by 100% sponsorship with more than \$200,000 raised by local businesses to present this event. With upwards of 50 sponsors, from a title sponsorship by Southwest Ambulance to in kind donations by the local Wal-Mart and AmeriCopy, all elements of this event were underwritten by the local business community.

Marketing and promotion included public service announcements on Mesa's city cable channel, as well as a presenting sponsorship by KOOL FM, who sponsored six KOOL Zones at the event. *The Arizona Republic* was also instrumental in promoting the event through promotional advertisements.

Programming for the event was a true patriotic and community-based theme. Attractions included a motorcycle show, American car show, Main Stage, Community Stage as well as many themed areas including a **Family Fun Zone** packed with families enjoying 15 free traditional carnival games; **Heritage Lane** lined with historic inflatables including replicas of the White House, Washington Monument and Independence Hall; **The Honor Walk**, one of the most memorable elements of the event, an area that paid homage to the hundreds of Arizona serviceman killed in service since 2003; **Mesa Arts Center**, featuring choice patriotic themed programming; **The Wet Zone**, where kids enjoyed 12 free water attractions; **The ATS 'Red Means Stop' Safety Zone** featuring educational public safety booths and City of Mesa government displays; and the **KOOL FM Kool Zones**, featuring professional misting zones every block.

The community outreach on this event was overwhelming with more than 400 community members who volunteered their time to do everything from sell water for Sertoma Club to post-event clean up. The support of the local community was a true testament to the belief in this new event concept. In addition, local businesses provided in-kind product to keep the volunteer crews cool in the 116 degree heat. Donations included everything from free sandwiches from Subway and free bottled water from Wal-Mart.

Although an official economic impact study has not been completed for this event, it is known that all downtown restaurants and businesses had one of their biggest weekends of the year. In addition, event producers utilized services from more than 20 Mesa businesses putting money back in the community.

The Arizona Celebration of Freedom is, in our opinion, the Outstanding Event of the Year. It was a quality event, featuring activities for all ages. For a first-year event to attract more than 50,000 people to a street festival on a 116-degree weekend in July says it all!



2010 AzTEC Awards Competition
Best Overall Design and Appearance
Arizona Celebration of Freedom

