

GUEST SPEAKER - CHAD COLLEY

Chad Colley, a veteran of the Vietnam War, is a pilot, businessman, and advocate for disabled Americans.

In 1966, immediately after graduating from North Georgia College (now the University of North Georgia), Colley enlisted in the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army. The next year, he married Betty Ann Putnam, a native of Georgia; they had two children. Colley arrived in Vietnam in November 1967. Once there, he was put in charge of a platoon based roughly fifty miles north of Saigon.

Within six months, Colley rose to the rank of company commander. In late July 1968, during his eighth month "in country," Colley was in the field with his men, waiting to attack a Vietnamese position, when a mine detonated. The blast knocked him unconscious briefly and mangled both of his legs and his left arm. In the hospital, Colley's legs were amputated above the knee, and his wounded arm was amputated below the elbow. Upon his release from the military, Colley had the rank of captain, a Silver Star, and the Infantryman's Badge.

After leaving Vietnam, he settled in Barling, where his family lived. In May 1970, Colley accompanied Governor Winthrop Rockefeller, Lieutenant Governor Maurice Lee "Footsie" Britt, and Medal of Honor recipient Nick Daniel (Nicky) Bacon on the steps of the Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock at the groundbreaking for a Medal of Honor memorial.

In honor of his accomplishments, in 1970, Colley was awarded Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year, which he accepted in Los Angeles, California. That same year, he began working in real estate. He also received his pilot's license and soon afterward bought his own plane. He also took up skiing.

In the 1980s, Colley was nationally recognized for his work with veterans' causes and for making public facilities accessible to disabled Americans. In 1981, Colley—who was a member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) National Amputee Chapter 76 in New York and served as the DAV Department of Arkansas second junior vice commander—was awarded the national Medal of Honor from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. During Ronald Reagan's second term as president, Colley served as national commander for DAV, living in Washington DC from 1984 to 1985. In 1986, the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped named him Handicapped American of the Year. In 1992, he won two gold medals at the Paralympics in Albertville, France, in the downhill and slalom events.

He has continued to advocate for veterans. In 1997, he received the Unsung Hero Award from the Louis Pope LIFE Foundation. In 2010, Colley was the first recipient of University of North Georgia's Ralph Colley Spirit of North Georgia Award, which honors those who have "experienced adverse circumstances" but have nevertheless led "an exemplary life." In 2014, he appeared in the documentary series Unbroken Soldiers, produced by Disabled American Veterans.

He has also served on the National Council on Disability and the Disabled Veterans and the DAV's Committee for the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, which has involved several hundred veterans traveling to Colorado to ski. In 2013, a park was named for Colley in Van Buren called the Colley Wilderness Park. Chad Colley Boulevard in Fort Smith is also named after him.



Schedule of Events

8:00AM - 11:00AM – Family Time

Please respect this time to allow the families of our heroes to lay wreaths on their loved one's headstone(s).

11:00 - 11:30AM (approximately) – Ceremony at the Pavilion

Laying of the Wreaths. Immediately following the ceremony, attendees will be asked to lay wreaths on all remaining headstones.

Please do not start to lay wreaths until the ceremony is complete.

You can donate online at

ChristmasHonors.org

or by mailing a check to:

Christmas Honors
PO Box 10696
Fort Smith, AR 72917

Christmas Honors is a 501c3 tax deductible organization.

Christmas Honors

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED
WITH A WREATH THIS DECEMBER

Christmas Honors

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7TH

**FORT SMITH NATIONAL CEMETERY
11:00 AM AT THE PAVILION**

PROGRAM

Vocal Prelude
"My Country 'Tis of Thee" Members of Fort Smith Chorale
Under the Direction of Tom Hill

Welcome Marshall Murphy
 Director of the Fort Smith National Cemetery

Posting of Colors Northside High School
 JROTC Grizzly Battalion
Under Command of SFC Aaron Lincoln

National Anthem Gabrielle Gore
Community School of the Arts

Invocation Ch Col., Ret. Tom Smith
Command Chaplain, AR National Guard

Welcome The Honorable Mayor George B. McGill
City of Fort Smith Mayor and United States Army Veteran

Guest Speaker Introduction Chad Colley
United States Army, Ret.

Members of the Fort Smith
Chorale Selection "America the Beautiful"

Wreath Ceremony Northside High School JROTC
 Grizzly Battalion and
 Fort Smith Fire Department

Honored Guests:

George Goins - *United States Army Master Sergeant, Ret.*
 Robert Cates - *United States Air Force, Lieutenant Colonel Ret.*
 Commander Gretchen Hill - *United States Navy, Ret.*
 Ed Curtis - *United States Marines Corp., Corporal, Machine Gunner*
 Andy Walters - *United States Coast Guard*
 Marshall Murphy - *United States Merchant Marines*
 The Honorable Mayor George B. McGill - *All Branches POW/MIA*

PROGRAM (cont'd)

Ceremonial Rifle Salute River Valley Marine Corps League
Detachment #1248

Echo Taps Justin Legris and Claude Legris

Benediction Msgr Patrick Gaalaas
Diocese of Tulsa, Oklahoma

Closing Remarks Philip H. Merry, Jr.
Chairman of Christmas Honors

Billy Dooly
Western Arkansas Veterans Coalition

Laying of the Wreaths Fort Smith Fire Fighters
 and Pipe and Drum Corp



Christmas Honors Board of Directors

Philip H. Merry, Jr. - *Chairman*
 Claude Legris - *Vice Chairman of Event Coordination*
 Todd McCorkle - *Vice Chairman of Operations*
 Elly Gibbons - *Secretary/Treasurer*
 Jim Berngen
 Shawna Burgess
 Kelly Clark
 David Ferguson
 Johnny Helms
 Patti Kimbrough
 Lea Taylor
 Larry Todd
 Chris Ward

Advisory Board

Arline Coatney, Melissa Hanesworth, Kyra Jenner, & Sheri Neely

Event Team

Kimberly Arnoldi, Marvin Chapin, Casey Collyar, Victoria Hardy,
 Bryan Merry, Earl Massey, & Wendy White

FOUNDING SPONSORS



CONTRIBUTING SPONSORS

Annidale Sound
 American Red Cross Fort Smith
 Coca-Cola Fort Smith
 Corrugated Specialties
 David and Pat Hightower
 DCS Radio
 First Western Insurance
 Glidewell Distributing

Marriott Courtyard
 McDonalds
 Movemart Relocation
 Philip H. Merry, Jr.
 Rheem
 Taylor & Team/Kyle Hale
 Weldon, Williams & Lick, Inc.

MEDIA SPONSORS

DoSouth
 Entertainment Fort Smith
 Fort Smith Radio Group
 iHeartRadio
 KFSM 5News
 KISR 93.7 FM & KFSA 93.1 FM
 KTCS

Fort Smith A&P Commission
 Fort Smith Convention
 & Visitors Bureau
 Spirt 106.3
 Things to Do in Fort Smith
 Times Record

EVENT VOLUNTEERS

Alma High School JROTC
 American Legion Auxiliary
 Community School of the Arts (CSA)
 Fort Smith Chorale
 Fort Smith EMS
 Fort Smith Fire Department
 Fort Smith Parks & Recreation
 Fort Smith Police Department
 Fort Smith Public Schools
 Fort Smith Roundtable/Golden
 Knights and Jewels

Fort Smith Sanitation Department
 Fort Smith Street Department
 (A Team)
 Greenwood High School JROTC
 Northside High School JROTC
 River Valley Marine Corps League
 Sebastian County
 Sheriff's Department
 Southside High School JROTC
 U.S. Department of Justice