



WWW.WOOD.ARMY.MIL / MSCoE

U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FT. LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
FORT LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI 65473
VOICE: 573-563-4145
FAX: 573.563-4012
BY: Matt Decker, Guidon Leisure/Sports editor
EMAIL: shatara.r.seymour.civ@mail.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No. 15-133

Aug. 6, 2015

2015 Tops in Blue tour brings 'Freedom's Song' to post Aug. 15

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – The U.S. Air Force is slated to bring some of its best singers and dancers to Fort Leonard Wood.

The 2015 World Tour production of Tops in Blue is scheduled at 4:30 p.m., Aug. 15 in Abrams Theater. The show is free and open to the public.

“It’s a great variety show showcasing the talent that the Air Force has,” said LauraLee Neubeck, special events coordinator with the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Installation Wide Events office.

Tops in Blue is one of the oldest and most widely-traveled entertainment groups of its kind.

With a cast and crew composed of up to 40 of the most talented vocalists, musicians, dancers, and technicians anywhere, their primary purpose is to perform for military personnel and their families throughout the world.

“One thing that makes the Fort Leonard Wood show unique is that our Air Force Detachment helps support the setup and cleanup, and help do a lot of work,” Neubeck said.

- more -

Tops in Blue has a distinctive history that spans more than 60 years. Since its first world tour in 1953, the group has performed more than 7,000 shows in all 50 U.S. states and more than a dozen foreign countries, performed on film, produced albums and appeared on national television. Each year, the cast, crew and theme of the show changes.

This year's show is entitled "Freedom's Song" with the tagline, "From the home front to the front line." The show is being billed by FMWR as, "a celebration of the freedom we enjoy as Americans and the hope we have that, someday, the entire world will know what it's like to be free." The show features music made popular by artists such as Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith, Megan Trainor, country artists like Carrie Underwood, Andy Grammer, Randy Howser and the Eli Young Band, and patriotic music that honors the nation, its military and military Families.

According to the unit's website, www.topsinblue.com, being selected for the Tops in Blue cast and crew may sound glamorous, but serving in this expeditionary entertainment unit isn't easy. Each team begins their tour with an intense 60-day training period at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. This training consists of a highly accelerated educational process to prepare them to succeed as world-class entertainers and distinguished Air Force ambassadors during the 10-month tour. Performers must master the instrumental, vocal, choreography, and staging requirements of the show. Performers also serve as their own road crew. Under the guidance of five technical personnel, the performing team is responsible for setting up more than 60,000 pounds of staging, lighting, audio, video and special-effects equipment required for each performance.

"Tops in Blue isn't just a morale building positive gig," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Marc Hightower, 27th Special Operations Component Maintenance Squadron, and member of the Tops in Blue cast in 2009. "It is a life-changing motivator that grooms its Airmen to become just what this Air Force needs. Each member that is chosen for Tops in Blue is special in some way. Their talents and particular skill sets are fine-tuned and challenged until they reach a level that is truly among the best."

Doors are scheduled to open at 3:45 p.m. The Fort Leonard Wood Exchange will have concessions available for purchase.

For more information, visit fortleonardwoodmwr.com or call 573.596.0131, ext. 66913.

(Editor's note: FMWR Marketing and topsinblue.com contributed to this article.)

- 30 -

For more information, contact the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office at 573.563.4145.

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains about 80,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, and the Army's largest Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting a colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.
