

# Elected Officials, USO to honor America's Service Members at Coca-Cola 600, Nation's Largest Memorial Day Celebration

May 18, 2016

CHARLOTTE, N.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 18, 2016-- The 2016 Coca-Cola 600, the nation's largest Memorial Day celebration, will feature a number of elected officials and dignitaries honoring our nation's service men and women at one of NASCAR's most challenging races. Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. (Ret.), Chairman of the USO, will be the Grand Marshal; Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin will serve as Honorary Starter; and Cookeville, Tennessee Mayor Ricky Shelton will serve as Honorary Race Director for the 57<sup>th</sup> running of NASCAR's only 600-mile race at the famed Charlotte Motor Speedway on Sunday, May 29. Continuing its tradition as the biggest Memorial Day Weekend celebration in America, the Coca-Cola 600 pre-race show will pay tribute to veterans and active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

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"This is a special year for the Coca-Cola 600," said Kimberly Kuo, Senior Vice President, Public Affairs at Coca-Cola Consolidated. "Not only will it be an incredible show for race fans – with top drivers facing off on a grueling track, but we

To purchase tickets, camping and race-day upgrades, call the speedway ticket office at 1-800-455-FANS (3267) or shop online at [www.charlottemotorspeedway.com](http://www.charlottemotorspeedway.com). (Photo: Business Wire)

also have an exciting group gathered to honor America's servicemen and women, as well as our longstanding partnership with the USO. We are honored to have military service members and USO volunteers join General Casey in saying those famous words: 'Drivers, Start Your Engines!'"

To commemorate the special 75-year relationship between Coca-Cola and the USO, the USO of North Carolina, with the longest continuously operating USO center in the world, is bringing 75 service members and USO volunteers from across North Carolina to join the Grand Marshal - retired Army General George Casey - in giving the command sequence. Several of the service members and volunteers will also display a special USO 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary flag as the race command is given.

As a founding partner, The Coca-Cola Company celebrates the USO's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with limited edition "Share a Coke and a Song" packaging featuring the classic lyric "I'm Proud To Be An American." Beginning Memorial Day weekend through July 4, the custom design will be available nationwide on limited edition 16-ounce cans and 20-, 24- and 35-packages of 12-ounce Coca-Cola® beverages. Fans are encouraged to join Coca-Cola in honoring the USO during this historic celebration.

Coca-Cola has been involved with stock car racing for more than 50 years and has been the official sparkling beverage of NASCAR since 1998. Through its partnerships with International Speedway Corporation, Speedway Motorsports, Inc. and Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Coca-Cola refreshes racing fans at the majority of NASCAR-sanctioned tracks. A signature part of the brand's NASCAR association is the Coca-Cola Racing Family – a group of top drivers including Denny Hamlin, Joey Logano, Austin Dillon, Ryan Newman, Tony Stewart and Danica Patrick. Coca-Cola Racing Family members make appearances and are featured in advertising, promotions and on packaging.

General Casey served as the 36<sup>th</sup> Chief of Staff of the United States Army from April 2007 to 2011 and is widely credited with restoring balance to the U.S. Army, modernizing and leading the transformation necessary to defend our nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and ensuring the current force deployed in the war on terror was the best this country has ever fielded. From 2004 to 2007, General Casey commanded the Multi-National Force – Iraq, a coalition of more than 30 countries, where he guided the Iraq mission through its toughest days. On the home front, General Casey has been a stalwart advocate for troops and military families.

Matt Bevin was elected as the 62nd Governor of Kentucky in 2015. Born in rural New Hampshire, Governor Bevin immersed himself in public service at a young age. He attended Washington and Lee University, in Virginia, on an ROTC scholarship and upon graduation served Active Duty as a US Army officer. Governor Bevin has served on many non-profit boards, and has permanently endowed several scholarship funds, grants and centers that provide educational opportunities for young people with limited financial resources. He is a husband and father of nine children, a military veteran, a successful entrepreneur and a small business owner.

Ricky Shelton is a Cookeville, TN native and lifelong resident who was elected mayor in 2014. Shelton serves on numerous boards and commissions in his capacity as mayor, including Cookeville Regional Medical Center Board of Trustees, the Upper Cumberland Development District, the Upper Cumberland Regional Airport Authority, the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency, Putnam County 911 Board, the Upper Cumberland Family Justice Center Board, as well as Vice Chairman of the Joint Economic and Community Development Board Executive Committee. Mayor Shelton and his wife Shannon are parents to six children.

Keep up with all the latest news from the speedway by liking Charlotte Motor Speedway on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), or by downloading the Charlotte Motor Speedway mobile app. To purchase tickets, camping and race-day upgrades, call the speedway ticket office at 1-800-455-FANS (3267) or shop online at [www.charlottemotorspeedway.com](http://www.charlottemotorspeedway.com).

Charlotte-based Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated is the nation's largest independent Coca-Cola bottler, selling a broad portfolio of beverages that fit every activity and lifestyle. Learn more about Coca-Cola Consolidated at [www.cokeconsolidated.com](http://www.cokeconsolidated.com), and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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