

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHAEL W. SMITH, JEFF FOXWORTHY BRING MORE THAN 500 TOGETHER FOR “REDNECK RALLY FOR ROCKETOWN” FUNDRAISER

Journeys-Sponsored Event Raises More Than
\$350,000 By Way of VIP Dinner, Live and Silent Auctions

(NASHVILLE, Tenn.) Oct. 21, 2011 -- The Nashville community rallied last night for a special event to raise funds in support of local non-profit teen outreach, Rocketown. The “Redneck Rally for Rocketown,” presented by Rocketown founder and multi-platinum recording artist Michael W. Smith, renowned comedian Jeff Foxworthy as well as primary sponsor Journeys, brought together more than 500 attendees and grossed in excess of \$350,000 for the organization.

Hosted at Rocketown in downtown Nashville, the casual evening consisted of a VIP reception prior to a catered dinner by Black-eyed Pea home style cooking, music by The Hummingbirds, featured entertainer Jeff Foxworthy, and both live and silent auctions. Great American Country television personality Storme Warren emceed the event.

Attendees included political notables such as Governor Bill Haslam, Mayor Karl Dean, Rep. Marsha Blackburn, Congressman Jim Cooper, the Honorable Zach Wamp and a representative from Senator Corker’s office. Also present were Mike Fisher and Carrie Underwood; Tennessee Titans players Rob Bironas, Jake Locker and Barrett Ruud; Dan Cathy, president of Chick-fil-A; and Dave Ramsey.

Among those auction items drawing top dollar were Michael W. Smith’s fully restored 1957 Ford T-Bird Convertible, which fetched \$26,000; a Pro-Team 175 TXW Bass Tracker Boat going for more than \$13,000; two tickets for the “Michael W. Smith & Friends” 2012 Canada/New England Cruise; and a guitar signed by Carrie Underwood. Together the live and silent auctions brought in more than \$70,000.

Smith comments on the event, Rocketown’s most successful fundraiser to date, “I’m humbled by the support we’ve received this year. This city rallied as a community on Rocketown’s behalf and because of that, we get to keep serving kids and families. A special thanks to Jeff Foxworthy, who shared his special brand of comedy with us. I’m not sure I’ve ever laughed as hard!”

Foxworthy adds, “Rocketown gives people a feeling of significance, a feeling that somebody cares, somebody listens and somebody believes. That you got a gift and you can develop it. Boy, if as a community we can do that; if we can help more kids on the front end, it’d cut back on the number of people needing help on the back end.”

“Rocketown was created on Michael W. Smith’s vision and continues to grow through Nashville’s generous support,” shares ReGina Newkirk, Executive Director Rocketown. “The success of this year’s fundraiser will allow us to reach more at-risk kids through after school programming, fun and safe entertaining activities and free counseling and case management services. We’re so thankful for everyone who is committed to investing in the teens we serve. “

To donate, volunteer or find out more about how to support Rocketown, please visit:
www.donate.rocketown.com

To view posted coverage of last night's event, please click on the following links:

Yahoo! News - <http://is.gd/H90Mrx>

The Tennessean - <http://is.gd/plPc7d>

WTVF News Channel 5 - <http://is.gd/s6YWuZ>

WKRN News Channel 2 - <http://is.gd/m7NDc5>

Country Weekly - <http://is.gd/CcVmNI>

About Rocketown:

Founded in 1994 by Michael W. Smith, Rocketown is a non-profit outreach for teens, providing opportunities in arts, music, action sports and mentoring programs. Rocketown has been able to help more teens than ever through free counseling, scholarship programs and material assistance. Some of Nashville's most unique classes for youth and teens are offered at Rocketown, including courses in film, art, dance, rhyme, song writing, journalism and graphic design. Rocketown's nonprofit entertainment facility in downtown Nashville opened in 2003 and provides a venue for all ages concerts. Rocketown's facility is complete with an indoor skatepark (Sixth Ave. Skatepark) and coffee bar where youth come to hang out and be themselves. For more information, visit www.rocketown.com

About Michael W. Smith:

Throughout his 29-year career as a recording artist, **Michael W. Smith** has amassed an impressive catalog of achievements. His prior 22 albums have garnered multiple honors including an American Music Award, three GRAMMY® Awards (from 13 nominations), 44 GMA Dove Awards and 33 No. 1 radio hits. In addition, he holds 16 Gold, 7 Platinum and 2 Double-Platinum albums for career sales of 15 million. *Wonder*, Smith's 22nd career album, released Sept. 28, 2010. Inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2009, Smith has scored film projects, written 12 books and been featured by media outlets including "Hannity," NBC's "Today," ABC's "Good Morning America," "NBC Nightly News," "Larry King Live," "FOX & Friends," *The Associated Press*, *Billboard*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek* and more.

Constantly giving back to the community, one of Smith's current projects is Rocketown – a nightclub for teens in his hometown of Nashville, Tenn. – which serves as a safe place for young people to enjoy music and for artists to be discovered. He and wife of 30 years, Debbie, are the proud parents of five children. **Michael W. Smith** will release *Glory*, his 23rd career project and second full-length instrumental album, on Nov. 22.

For more information on **Michael W. Smith** please visit: www.michaelwsmith.com, www.facebook.com/michaelwsmithofficial, or www.providentpress.com

About Jeff Foxworthy:

"Foxworthy is especially virtuosic in his physical comedy, his flights of fancy and lightning shifts of tone and mood, he blends all these elements effortlessly. He may define being redneck as possessing "a glorious lack of sophistication," but the truth is that Foxworthy, for all his regular-guy image, is a decidedly sophisticated artist." -- Kevin Thomas, LA Times

Jeff Foxworthy is one of the most respected and successful comedians in the country. He is the largest selling comedy-recording artist in history, a multiple Grammy Award nominee and best-selling author of 11 books. Widely known for his redneck jokes, his act goes well beyond that to explore the humor in everyday family interactions and human nature, a style that has been compared to Mark Twain's.

Foxworthy is currently hosting the hit show, "Are You Smarter Than A 5th Grader." Prior to that, he executive produced and starred in, Foxworthy's Big Night Out. Foxworthy had also starred in and executive produced the television series, "Blue Collar TV," which he created for the WB network. Blue Collar TV came about due to the success of the Blue Collar Comedy Tour, the movie and the concert tour of the same name. The movie premiered on Comedy Central and was the highest-rated movie in the channel's history. To date, the movie has sold more than 4 million units. The soundtrack for this movie has been RIAA certified gold (more than 500,000 units).

Away from the stage, an interest which Jeff holds near and dear is the Duke University Children's Hospital. With his help, the hospital, which specializes in treating children with cancer, has raised over \$4 million in the last four years. This Georgia native remains true to his southern roots and resides with his wife and two daughters in Atlanta.

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