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Local Air Show Provides Healing Moment for Veterans with Disabilities

(Atlanta, GA) June 2, 2011 - Atlanta area wounded veterans with disabilities will share the unusual experience of close formation flight with the world's largest air show team, Atlanta-based Team RV, at DeKalb Peachtree Airport (PDK) in a special mission Friday June 3 at 4 pm. The 12-member formation and aerobatic pilot group is flying at the PDK Good Neighbor Day air show on Saturday, June 4.

These veterans came to the attention of Team RV and PDK through Faces of Freedom, an organization based in Woodstock, GA that helps returning servicemen with disabilities reconnect with their families and their community after life-changing injuries and accompanying psychological stress. "Faces of Freedom is Georgians making sure that Georgia veterans are acknowledged, honored, included, and empowered," said Colonel Mike Steele, who in 1993 led 120 rangers into the battle now known as Black Hawk Down. Steele is the driving force behind Faces of Freedom, a nonprofit entity with no paid salaries founded to provide support for these warriors as they seek a return to routine civilian life so they don't fall into the tragic statistical pool of divorce, substance abuse, and hopelessness. Last weekend – Memorial Day weekend – Faces of Freedom hosted a retreat for 10 wounded warriors and their families to share their pain, fears, triumphs, and goals.

Some of these veterans will need help and a little extra time getting into the sporty aircraft that Team RV flies, but it won't stop them from settling into the backseat for an exhilarating ride over Atlanta less than 6 feet from several other aircraft. "Formation flying, even as a passenger, demands your attention and keeps you in the moment," said Mike Stewart, flight lead and founder of Team RV. "We hope that riding with us will provide an adrenaline rush for these heroes that will in some small way help bridge the gap between memories of camaraderie with their buddies in conflicts on the other side of the world and life back at home in Atlanta."

[Team RV](http://www.teamrv.us) is a precision formation and formation aerobatic team that flies in air shows throughout the eastern US. Pilots fly homebuilt experimental aircraft called RVs in a lyrical routine that fills the sky with graceful aerobatics, high speed close trail, and large formations. PDK Good Neighbor Day is an annual free air show on Saturday from noon to 5 pm. Other honorees at the show include veterans who have served during war and conflicts dating back to WWII.

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Mike Stewart
Founder and Flight Lead

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