

## SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ DECEMBER PREMIERE HIGHLIGHTS

**Washington, DC, December 1, 2009 –Smithsonian Channel** dishes out some serious slices of Americana this holiday season with December original premieres. Take an in-depth look at everything from our first president to space exploration, as well as some of our nation's most irreverent regional festivals. All original series and special are presented in stunning HD and Dolby Digital 5.1 sound.

December Premieres:

**HISTORY IN HD: THE LAST BOMB** - Premieres Sunday, December 20 at 9pm ET/PT

Special that documents one of the 21st Bomber Command's long distance, low altitude, daylight strikes over Tokyo during the spring and summer of 1945. Launched from the hard-won South Pacific island of Iwo Jima, the 3,000 mile death-defying mission was considered one of the most dangerous of World War II. Yet this rare Technicolor film, transferred to stunning HD, covers the mission in its entirety – from General Curtis Lemay's initial planning stage, through fighter action and "bomb's away," and finally to final touchdown back at the base on Iwo Jima. Featuring spectacular gun-camera footage shot by P-51 Mustang pilots as they engage in air to air combat and escort the huge B-29's to their targets, this unique film from the archives - and now in high-definition - takes you on a perilous journey over Japan.

**HISTORY IN HD: AMERICA IN SPACE** - Premieres Sunday, December 20 at 8pm ET/PT

Explores NASA's development from its founding in 1958 to its preparation for a moon landing in stunning HD as it has never been seen before. Originally released in 1968, the film is more than an account of hardware evolution. It recounts the unshakable optimism of a time when space seemed to offer unlimited opportunities, tracing back to the birth of American space exploration. From activities at Langley and Goddard and reviews of sounding rockets and instrument probes, to experiments at Cape Kennedy, "America in Space" takes audiences back to a time when the possibilities of space travel seemed endless. This gem from the archives now in full high definition will take you on an exciting journey that is as much about the past as it is about our future.

**ANIMAL WINTER GAMES** – Premieres Friday, December 4 at 8pm ET/PT

An action-packed contest with animals from the Arctic, Antarctica and alpine regions competing alongside humans in seven grueling events including cross-country, giant slalom, ski jump, sledging, ice skating and, a first for the Games, cold endurance.

**AMERICA WILD AND WACKY: EPISODE 3** –Premieres Sunday, December 6 at 9pm ET/PT

When America celebrates, it does so with some of the most strange and wondrous festivals imaginable. What could be more American than wrestling in a pool of mashed potatoes, or launching giant pumpkins hundreds of feet into the air? From San Francisco art car parades to outhouse races to chocolate haute couture fashion, this program highlights the most wondrous, wacky and quirky festivals, gatherings, and events that take place all across America. Events include the Punkin Chunkin in Delaware, the Road Kill Cook-Off Festival in West Virginia, and The Frozen Dead Guy Festival in Colorado.

**PICTURING THE PRESIDENT: GEORGE WASHINGTON** – Premieres Monday, December 14  
at 8pm ET/PT

December 14th is the anniversary of Washington's death (1799). This is story of the most famous American portrait – Gilbert Stuart's painting of George Washington. It's an unforgettable portrait that captures the spirit of this victorious general, stalwart leader and pioneering president of the United States of America. The story of the painting reverberates to present times. Known as the Lansdowne, the full-length portrait of Washington came to illuminate and symbolize not only a man, but also a fledgling country and revolutionary new leadership.

**ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS**

Smithsonian Networks (SN) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution. It was formed to create new channels that will showcase scientific, cultural and historical programming largely inspired by the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. The networks will feature original documentaries, short-subject explorations and innovative and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Visit them on the internet at [www.smithsonianchannel.com](http://www.smithsonianchannel.com).

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