



UPDATES FROM THE EDITOR

January begins a New Year with hope for the future and gratitude for all that has gone before us. This edition takes a look at some of the visitors, tours and activities that took place at Patriot Plaza in 2015 and looks forward to many more events in the coming year. Take a look [here](#) for some of the highlights past and future that honor veterans throughout the year. We hope you will visit Patriot Plaza in the near future and encourage your friends and neighbors to visit as well. Feel free to share this newsletter with your friends, family, and co-workers. If anyone would like to be added to the distribution, just let me know! Linda Gould, LLGouldsm@gmail.com

EXPERIENCE PATRIOT PLAZA

VISITORS



Over 2,000 visitors toured Patriot Plaza with a Guide in 2015. One family that came to visit was Dr. Michele Olsen and her husband, Gary. Michele is a master teacher, arts educator and curriculum developer from Champaign, IL, and Bonita Springs, FL. While very impressed with the art at Patriot Plaza upon her first visit, it was when she brought her husband Gary, an architect and Vietnam Veteran, that she saw it even more powerfully, from an architectural and emotional point of view. The impact of Patriot Plaza was so strong that they created a photo essay which includes some of Gary's photos and Michele's captions for an amazing photo essay that we are sharing with you [here](#).

TOURS



The diversity of tours at Patriot Plaza abounds! Whether a visit from your business colleagues or a school tour, there is something special for everyone to experience. Click [here](#) to learn more about the tours that made last year one of education and inspiration.

Recently John Berteau, The Patterson Foundation Chairman hosted visitors from Northern Trust. The top photo shows: John Keshner, SVP Investment Mgt, John Berteau, Phil Delaney, Vice Chairman FL, Eric Hsueh, VP Investment Mgt, and Paul Partington, SVP Investment Mgt.

Visible Men Academy students visited Patriot Plaza the day after Veterans Day 2015 and as these photos from one of the teachers, Karen Arango, shows, they all thoroughly enjoyed experiencing the artwork!

The Arts and Cultural Alliance can schedule a free guided tour for your friends, family, business or school and can also schedule a school tour through [EdExplorationsSRQ](#) as well. Sign up your classes now!

EVENTS



On Veterans Day 2015, the [Diocese of Venice](#) performed a special mass for Veterans and their families at Patriot Plaza. It was a lovely ceremony attended by many from our community. The Diocese was the very first community-based organization to host an event at Patriot Plaza when it first opened in 2014.

On December 12, the annual [Wreaths Across America](#) program was held at Sarasota National Cemetery. A motorcycle escort led the truck that held over 9,000 wreaths to lay at the gravesites of our veterans and family members buried or interred at the national cemetery. Our wonderful community ensured that every hero was honored with a remembrance wreath through their generous donations to the program. Patriot Plaza was once again a place of honor, remembrance and pride as 3,000 members of our region came to participate in the ceremony held in the amphitheater.

Upcoming Events at Patriot Plaza

Save the Date in 2016:

May 29, Memorial Day Ceremony

June 12, Flag Day Celebration and Flag Retirement Ceremony

November 11, Veterans Day Mass

November 13, Veterans Day Celebration Concert

PATRIOT PLAZA IS A GIFT TO THE NATION FROM [The Patterson Foundation](#)

SHARE YOUR STORY

We welcome stories from people who have visited Patriot Plaza. Please tell us about your visit and the impact Patriot Plaza has on you, your family and friends. Share your stories with us by sending them to: Linda Gould, LLGouldsm@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Patriot Plaza in Sarasota National Cemetery is available free of cost for you and the community to use for events honoring veterans.

Events at Patriot Plaza need to:

- 1) Be free and open to the public
- 2) Honor veterans
- 3) Maintain the dignity of a national cemetery

Download the [events guide](#) and contact Sarasota National Cemetery Director John Rosentrater via email at john.rosentrater@va.gov or (941) 922-7200 to request holding an event at Patriot Plaza.

In order to learn more about Sarasota National Cemetery please visit www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/sarasota.asp.

GUIDED TOURS & ED EXPLORATIONS

Public tours are available at [Patriot Plaza](#) every Tuesday at 10am -- except federal holidays.

Through a partnership with The Patterson Foundation and the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, Guides were recruited from the Sarasota National Cemetery (SNC) volunteers and trained on the history and meaning of the art elements at Patriot Plaza to provide visitors with a deeper understanding of Service and Sacrifice.

Tours are free and open to everyone who is interested. To schedule a group or school tour, contact Cindy Balistreri, Arts Education Manager for the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, (941) 365-5118, x301 or cbalistreri@sarasotaarts.org. In addition to scheduling free guided tours, the Arts and Cultural Alliance can schedule tours through EdExplorations. <http://www.edexploresrq.com>

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