



MARCH 2016

UPDATES FROM THE EDITOR

Patriot Plaza continues to draw visitors to our region and is a Must Experience tourist destination in our region. Currently Sarasota National Cemetery and Patriot Plaza are in the top four destinations when visiting Sarasota according to Trip Advisor. 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



Patriot Plaza evokes such rich and interesting stories. Marlene Spalten, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, accompanied a group of veterans from the Sun City Center in February to visit Patriot Plaza. The artwork throughout the amphitheater includes tablets that tell stories through words and images. The tablet "Order" spoke to Marlene who shared that her father, Charles Radosevich, was the son of Croatian immigrants who came to the US and settled on a farm in Iowa. He joined the US Army at age 16 and served during WWII in Africa and Italy with the Army Infantry. Marlene's father loved the Army which he felt gave his life direction. Although he did not remain on Active Duty, he continued in the Army National Guard and rose to the rank of Brigadier General. Marlene is so proud of her father's service and has many fond memories of herself and her five siblings growing up in a military family.

TOURS



The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay hosted a President's Day Tour to Patriot Plaza and the Sarasota National Cemetery in February. A group from Freedom Plaza at the Sun City Center included veterans and members of the Community Foundation. The tour was so successful they hope to make it an annual event. The Patriot Plaza Guides that day each had their own affiliation with the military. Jim Robinson with the US Air Force and Lorraine Glixon with the Army, Air Force and the Civil Air Patrol. Jim and Lorraine, in addition to presenting the overview of Patriot Plaza, shared stories from other visitors as well as what Patriot Plaza means to them. A special tour guide was present that day as Ann Wykell, the Lead Art Consultant for the construction of Patriot Plaza, led portions of the tour and added insight and vision behind the artists depictions.

EVENTS



The Sarasota National Cemetery and visitors to Patriot Plaza are lucky to have some amazing volunteers that make the experience for anyone visiting dignified, moving and impactful. We thank the Sarasota National Cemetery (SNC) volunteers who assist visitors to the national cemetery with information and give so much of their personal time and attention. After becoming an SNC volunteer, you can ask to become a Patriot Plaza Guide and will receive specialized training in order to provide visitors to Patriot Plaza insight on the amphitheater and incredible artwork to ensure a memorable experience. Thank You to the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County for not only providing this training but also managing all the tours that are requested from individuals, groups and schools. Would you like to become a volunteer and a Patriot Plaza Guide? A new training class is starting soon. Contact Cindy Balistreri, Arts Education Manager for the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, (941) 365-5118, x301 or cbalistreri@sarasotaarts.org to sign up!

Upcoming Events at Patriot Plaza

On Tuesday, March 29 at 5:00pm there will be a Vietnam War 50th Commemoration - America Thanks You program conducted at Patriot Plaza. This Commemoration event is sponsored by the Sarasota National Cemetery and the Sarasota County Veterans Commission and will recognize all who served in the uniformed services from November 1, 1955 through May 15, 1975 irrespective of the fact that they may not have physically served in Vietnam. The theme for the evening is: "America Thanks You" This musical and patriotic one-hour program will thank and present Vietnam War Veterans Pins to all Vietnam era Veterans who have not previously been presented a personal pin. Pins will also be presented to families of Vietnam Veterans who are deceased or unable to attend the ceremony. All persons who wish to share in the Commemoration are invited to attend. Click here for more information, or contact BG Jim Hesson at bhesson@verizon.net - (941) 926-8702.

Save the Date in 2016:

- May 29, Memorial Day Ceremony
June 12, Flag Day Celebration and Flag Retirement Ceremony
November 11, Veterans Day Mass

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

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