Honoring Veterans, Inspiring Patriotism, and Embracing Freedom Continues at Patriot Plaza

The Sarasota National Cemetery Advisory Committee once again demonstrated that our community continues to honor veterans with their virtual Memorial Day 2021 program. On Memorial Day itself, there were hundreds of visitors to Sarasota National Cemetery throughout the day. Many families came to visit their loved ones interred on the grounds and to experience Patriot Plaza.
Recently, a father brought his two sons to Sarasota National Cemetery and Patriot Plaza to honor the veterans who served their country. He showed them all the fun activities and information shared in the Independence Day special edition of the Family Engagement Activity Book. The family then walked around and experienced the artwork as Shane read the plaques and the boys were able to touch and enjoy all the different types of art.

The latest Patriot Plaza Family Engagement Activity Book attracted the attention and interest of both children and Mom and Dad as this entire family took a break from walking around Patriot Plaza to sit down and check out the fun activities and information. Click here to connect to the archive!
VIRTUAL TOURS OF PATRIOT PLAZA AND ZOOM SESSIONS WITH PATRIOT PLAZA GUIDES

Above: Bob Arnet, one of our stellar Patriot Plaza Guides, interacting with students using the Zoom program.

In-person guided tours at Patriot Plaza are now available and can be scheduled by contacting the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County.

Taking a virtual tour is an alternative available to you and can include the opportunity to have a Patriot Plaza Guide join you after viewing the video for a question and answer session.

The first of those interactions took place in late May before the end of the school year with students from Pine View School. The Patriot Plaza Virtual Tour can be accessed on several websites, including The Patterson Foundation Patriot Plaza page and the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County Patriot Plaza page.

WELCOME TO THE NEW DIRECTOR AND ADMIN
This year we have seen some turnover at the Sarasota National Cemetery. Our community bid farewell to John Rosentrater and wished him well in his retirement. Mr. Roberto Pizarro was the interim director for eight months and ensured smooth operations continued at our regional national cemetery.

In June, we welcomed the new SNC director and the new administrative officer.

Richard Wallace

Richard Wallace was named Director of Sarasota National Cemetery effective June 7, 2021. As the Director, he is responsible for all burial, maintenance, and administrative operations.

Prior to this appointment Mr. Wallace served for three years as the Director of Massachusetts National Cemetery, effective May 27, 2018. He was responsible for all burial, maintenance, and administrative operations at the facility, and for Togus and Acadia National Cemeteries located in Northern Maine. In addition, he was responsible for the Woodlawn (Mass.), Green Mount (Vt.), Prospect Hill (Vt.) and Mount Pleasant (Maine) Soldiers Lots located throughout New England.

Micah Lee

Mr. Micah Lee joins the staff of Sarasota National Cemetery as the new Administration Officer. In this position Mr. Lee will oversee the administrative efforts at the cemetery to include volunteers. Mr. Lee joins us from his latest assignment which was at the historic Salisbury National Cemetery in Salisbury, North Carolina.
In August, Patricia McIlreavy, president and CEO of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, was able to experience Patriot Plaza for the first time. She was accompanied by the new SNC Director, Mr. Richard Wallace. Patriot Plaza is an outdoor amphitheater and we encourage you to bring your out of town visitors to experience the unique art and architecture that serves as a lasting tribute to veterans and their families. To schedule a tour for you, your family, business colleagues or out of town visitors, contact the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County.
Jymil Thompson, Community Outreach Manager of J2W foundation, braved the hot and sometimes stormy weather to experience Patriot Plaza while in town for meetings with the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading team.

WE RISE, BUT WE NEVER FORGET
9/11 COMMEMORATION
September 11, 2001 - September 11, 2021

The Sarasota Ministerial Association hosted a 20th-anniversary commemoration of September 11 at Patriot Plaza. This was the first public event hosted at the outdoor amphitheater in over 19 months. More than 500 visitors from our community attended this moving tribute honoring those who lost their lives on that fateful day 20 years ago.

The posting of the colors was presented by the Sarasota Combined Fire, Police, and Sheriff Honor Guard with Darrin Simone, ELKS District Vice President presenting the ELKS 9-11 Flag.
Director of Sarasota County Emergency Services, Rich Collins, and Sarasota Fire Chief, Michael Regnier, begin the Tolling of the Bell, while Sarasota County Veterans Commission Chaplain, Ted Smith, prepares for a scripture reading.

A 21 Gun Salute was performed by the American Legion NO-VEL Post 159 from
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Follow and "Like" our Legacy of Valor Facebook page for inspirational and informative posts covering national and local topics concerning veterans.

#PatriotPlaza @ThePattersonFdn