



Patriot Plaza Newsletter

May 17, 2018

UPDATES FROM THE EDITOR

Spring of 2018 has been a busy season at Patriot Plaza with group tours that included a local group from The Meadows Community Association, as well as a group of veterans stationed together in Somalia that came to Sarasota for a reunion. Visitors have included three different visits from the [National Cemetery Administration](#)'s national and regional offices. School tours are abounding and so are community events. [Tidewell Hospice](#) hosted a beautiful event this year to commemorate Vietnam Veterans Day on March 29.

As we lead up to Memorial Day please make plans to join us for the **Tribute to Fallen Heroes Event on Saturday, May 26, 10-11:30am at Sarasota National Cemetery**. There will be local parades on Memorial Day in Sarasota, Bradenton, and Lakewood Ranch as well. Never forget those who gave their lives in the service of their country to give you the freedoms you enjoy every day.

Please share this newsletter with your friends, family, and co-workers. To be added to the distribution, just let me know, Linda Gould, LLGouldsrq@gmail.com.

Follow and "Like" our [Legacy of Valor Facebook page](#) for inspirational and informative posts covering national and local topics concerning veterans.

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 made on you, your family, and friends. Share your stories with us by sending them to Linda Gould, LLGouldsrq@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Patriot Plaza at 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 [Event Hosting Guidelines](#) and contact Sarasota National Cemetery Director John Rosentrater at john.rosentrater@va.gov or (941) 922-7200 to request holding an event at Patriot Plaza.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Sarasota National Cemetery.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION (NCA) VISITORS

Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs



GUIDED TOURS & EDEXPLORATIONS

Public tours of [Patriot Plaza](#) are currently conducted every Tuesday at 10am, except on federal holidays. Private group and school tours can be scheduled Tuesday through Friday.

Through a partnership with [The Patterson Foundation](#) and the [Arts and Cultural Alliance of](#)



With over 135 national cemeteries across the country remembering Vietnam Veterans Day, the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Randy Reeves, chose to attend the 2018 commemoration program at [Sarasota National Cemetery](#) this year. Under Secretary Reeves made remarks and assisted in handing out the Vietnam War Commemoration pins to members of our community.



Mr. Stephan Frank, Executive Director for the Southeastern District of the National Cemetery Administration, came down from Atlanta, Georgia to visit Sarasota National Cemetery and to experience Patriot Plaza. He had heard so many amazing stories about this outdoor

[Sarasota County](#). Guides are 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 the Arts Education Manager for the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, (941) 365-5118, x301 or education@sarasotaarts.org

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Vietnam Veterans Day is commemorated across the country on March 29. This year Tidewell hosted a poignant and memorable program at Patriot Plaza with General (Retired) Hugh Shelton as the Keynote Speaker. Over 1200 from our community came together to pay homage to Vietnam Veterans and Welcome them Home. At the end of the program Vietnam War Commemoration pins were handed out to Vietnam Veterans or family members to say Thank You for their service and sacrifice over 50 years ago.



many amazing stories about this outdoor amphitheater and wanted to see firsthand the result of the ongoing partnership with the [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and The Patterson Foundation.

Mrs. Sandy Beckley was the first Director of Sarasota National Cemetery and spent over 40 years with the NCA and the VA. As the lead consultant for The Patterson Foundation's Military Initiative, she spearheaded the team that was able to develop, construct, and gift Patriot Plaza to our local and national communities. Recently Sandy was able to personally lead the tours for many of the NCA visitors.



Our most recent visitors from NCA were Michelle Buhr, Senior Associate for Strategic Partnerships and Development, and Dr. Bryce Carpenter, Educational Outreach Officer, who is working on the NCA's educational outreach initiative called the Veterans Legacy

Program (VLP). The mission of the VLP is to memorialize our nation's veterans through sharing their stories of service and sacrifice. The NCA partners with universities, schools, teachers, professors, and students of all levels to research veterans interred in NCA cemeteries and how they contributed to their country as servicemembers, and how they contributed to



their community as veterans. During the visit Michelle and Bryce were able to experience Patriot Plaza while also connecting and learning more about [The Patterson Foundation](#) and how Patriot Plaza has been incorporated into our local school system through [EdExploreSRQ](#).

TOURS



Guided tours for local groups are a great way to get out and about in our community! The Meadows Community Association organized an outing for many of their residents to come out and experience Patriot Plaza. The gentleman in the blue vest is one of the 20 Patriot Plaza Guides that ensure the tour group receives as much information as possible during the time they are out at Sarasota National Cemetery. Our Patriot Plaza Guides are trained by the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County and would love to have you join them!

STAY CONNECTED

[#PatriotPlaza](#)

[@ThePattersonFdn](#)

REUNION OF US VETERANS WHO DEPLOYED TO SOMALIA TOGETHER



Sarasota and Patriot Plaza are attracting Veterans from all over the country who are looking for unique locations for their reunions and meetings. In early April, more than a dozen veterans who served together in Somalia (many years ago) came together in Sarasota. As part of their four days in town a visit to Patriot Plaza was considered a Must See experience. A tour was arranged through the [Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County](#) and three Patriot Plaza Guides ensured that the tour was indeed memorable.

SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

FLAGS FOR FALLEN VETS

Sign Up to Place Flags at Gravesites at
Sarasota National Cemetery

Saturday, May 26, 8:00am

MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM

Sarasota National Cemetery

Saturday, May 26, 10:00am