Patriot Plaza at Sarasota National Cemetery

Patriot Plaza, a 2,800-seat ceremonial amphitheater, was built and donated to Sarasota National Cemetery in Florida by The Patterson Foundation. It features commissioned art that honors veterans, inspires patriotism, and embraces freedom. The space is a place of peace and reflection and exists for our community to honor veterans through ceremonies and events for generations to come. Sarasota National Cemetery, like all 155 national cemeteries managed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, is a place where all active duty or honorably discharged veterans can be buried. Some spouses and dependent children of eligible veterans can also be buried there.

Detailed eligibility requirements can be found at www.cem.va.gov.

What is the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day?

Memorial Day honors American service members who died in service to our country, while Veterans Day honors all American veterans, living and dead, who have served honorably during war and peacetime.

We honor the service and sacrifice of all veterans, but in this issue we would like to highlight some specific groups. You may have heard of or seen movies about some of them.

After you read this activity book, you may be inspired to go to the library and do some research on your own about these very interesting and brave veterans.
The Tuskegee Airmen were the first Black military aviators in the U.S. Army Air Corps. They trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama.

- They flew 15,000 sorties (missions) in Europe and North Africa during World War II.
- They earned more than 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses.

A movie was made in 2012 about the Tuskegee Airmen called Red Tails.

U.S. Navy WAVES

In 1942 President Roosevelt signed a law that created WAVES - Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service.

- The WAVES were created to free up male personnel for sea duty and they performed all kinds of non-combat related jobs.
- By 1945 there were more than 94,000 women in the Navy.

Although the official song of the Navy is “Anchors Aweigh,” the Navy WAVES had their own song during World War II, “Waves of the Navy”.
Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASPs)

Although they were not directly involved in combat, these civilian women played an important role during World War II. Their main purpose was to fly planes from one place to another. Some women towed targets for target practice and some served as instructor pilots. There were over 1,000 WASPs.

DID YOU KNOW?

In less than 2 years, WASPs flew 60 million miles in every type aircraft in the Army Air Force arsenal—from the fastest fighters to the heaviest bombers.

442nd Regimental Combat Team

President Roosevelt activated the 442nd in 1943. It was made up completely of Nisei, second generation Japanese-Americans. Two-thirds of them were from Hawaii while the rest were from the mainland United States.

For the size of their unit they are known for being one of the most decorated. Having 18,000 men, they earned the following:

- Over 4,000 Purple Hearts
- 4,000 Bronze Stars
- 560 Silver Stars
- 21 Medals of Honor

DID YOU KNOW?

The motto of the unit was “Go For Broke,” a phrase that meant putting everything on the line in an effort to win big.
Code Talkers

Code Talkers were Native Americans who used their tribal languages to send secret communications on the battlefield. This method was first used in World War I.

- Although the Navajo code talkers are the most well-known, there are at least 14 other Native nations that served as code talkers, including Cherokee and Comanche.
- The Navajo Code Talkers were made up of 29 U.S. Marines who developed a code based on their language that was used in the Pacific theater during World War II.
- These codes were NEVER broken. It was such a secret that they couldn’t even talk about it after the war because they had to protect the code. It was declassified in 1968, so now you can go online to learn more about it!

DID YOU KNOW?

There is no Navajo word for submarine so they used a term that translated to “iron fish”.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Navajo language was initially chosen because of its complexity, and because it is only spoken; there is no written Navajo language.

DID YOU KNOW?

A movie was made in 2002 about the Navajo code talkers called *Windtalkers*. 
COLOR THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN P-51 MUSTANG

P-51 Mustang

Take a picture of you and your colored art, email it along with your name to be entered into a drawing for a prize! Send to: connect@gradelevelreadingsuncoast.net
Take a picture of you and your secret decoder, email it along with your name to be entered into a drawing for a prize! Send to: connect@gradelevelreadingsuncoast.net
To learn more about Patriot Plaza at Sarasota National Cemetery, visit:
thepattersonfoundation.org/patriot-plaza

Twitter: #PatriotPlaza
#ForAllAges

Office hours: Monday to Friday 8:00am–4:30pm
Closed federal holidays

Visitation Hours: Open daily from sunrise to sunset

- Sarasota National Cemetery is located at 9810 State Road 72 in Sarasota
- Admission is free
- Please no pets or picnics
- Burials occur on weekdays so please be respectful of those attending services

Generously funded by

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Family Engagement Presentations

Join THIS BOOK IS COOL! host, Beth Duda and various artists for interactive family presentations sponsored by the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and The Patterson Foundation. Families will have Fun and Explore thoughts and feelings, Share ideas, and Create your own work of art.

These family presentations are designed for adults and children Pre-K through Grade 3. Presentations start on Tues, June 7th. All are welcome! ***Registration is required ***

Join in the creative fun! Use your mobile device camera app on the QR code to learn more and to register!