

May 16, 2008

## Memorial Day parades and ceremonies scheduled May 26

Memorial Day parades and ceremonies for Sarasota and Venice will begin at 10 a.m. Monday, May 26, at Main Street and Osprey Avenue in Sarasota and at Veteran's Park at the west end of Venice Avenue in Venice. The events are coordinated by the Sarasota Patriotic Observance Committee, the Venice Area Veterans Council and Sarasota County's Veterans Benefits Unit.

The Sarasota parade route will be west along Main Street to Chaplain J.D. Hamel Park on Gulfstream Avenue. Marching units will include veterans services organizations, law enforcement agencies, fire departments and their color guards, civic organizations and historical military equipment. The theme of the Sarasota parade and ceremony is "Honor Their Sacrifice."

"The parade and ceremony is an opportunity for the citizens of Sarasota to honor not only veterans of the Armed Services, but police officers, sheriff's deputies, firefighters and emergency medical personnel," said Patriotic Observance Committee President Dan Kunkel.

A ceremony at Hamel Park will begin immediately after the parade, with guest speaker Lt. Col. William Brockman from the Sarasota Military Academy. A Suncoast Communities Blood Bank Bloodmobile will be stationed at the park for blood donations.

The Venice ceremony at Veteran's Park will feature guest speaker Dr. Richard Swier, president of the Sarasota County Veterans Commission.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000.