VFW and SPARC to Kick Off Venice Memorial Restoration

Special ceremony to be held April 5

Mar 31, 2017

B.J. Lawrence, national junior vice commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., and several VFW members from local Posts will join the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) at a special ceremony on April 5, to commence the restoration project of the POW/MIA Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Venice, Calif., and speak out against memorial desecration.

The Venice memorial was recently vandalized for the second time in the past year, and restoration efforts will be extensive given the over 2,273 names which appear on the memorial.

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Reports of veterans memorials being defaced have been on the rise in recent years, and the VFW along with SPARC are calling on America to help preserve and protect these sacred monuments.

“The VFW will not sit idle while the monuments honoring those who’ve fought and died for our freedom are blatantly disrespected,” said Lawrence. “I’m pleased to join with SPARC to lay a wreath at this site, raise awareness of the importance of upholding the integrity of our memorials, and to offer VFW’s support to this restoration project.”

Lawrence went on to note he’ll use Wednesday’s opportunity to rally citizens to remain vigilant of these senseless acts, and his hope is that anyone caught damaging veterans memorials is quickly prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The restoration project’s kick off ceremony will begin at 11:15 a.m. (PDT) at the POW/MIA Vietnam Veterans Memorial at 614 Pacific Ave., Venice, Calif., 90291.

SPARC volunteers will begin the restoration process immediately following the event, and VFW members will be on hand to provide needed support.

"SPARC is honored to have the VFW lay a wreath at the site as we begin the restoration of this beloved memorial. This restoration would not have been possible without the support of the Venice Chamber of Commerce, Venice Neighborhood Council, Councilman Mike Bonin and the community at large," said Debra J.T. Padilla, Executive Director of SPARC.

The VFW has a long-standing commitment to honoring America's veterans and service members through memorials. It has championed the creation of hundreds of local veterans memorials and constantly works in local communities to maintain them. The organization has also sponsored many national memorial projects to include: the National WWI Memorial, the Liberty Memorial Museum, the National WWII Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Women in Military Service to America, the Disabled Veterans for Life Memorial, and the National Desert Storm Memorial.

The Venice Chamber of Commerce is accepting donations to the POW/MIA Vietnam Veterans Memorial restoration project at: http:http://venicechamber.net/powmiamural.

ABOUT SPARC:

SPARC is a community-based non-profit arts organization founded in 1976 by Distinguished UCLA professor and artist Judy Baca, filmmaker Donna Deitch, and artist Christina Schlesinger. SPARC is rooted in Art, Community, Education and Social Justice. For more info visit: www.SPARCinLA.org.

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