

Memorial Day In Hillsborough: A Time For Honoring and Remembering Those Who Served

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Grand Marshal Ted Dima, a Vietnam Veteran who serves as Senior Vice Commander of the Chapter 27 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, led Hillsborough's veterans, emergency volunteers, elected officials, the Hillsborough High School Marching Band, and over one thousand other participants in the annual Memorial



Day Parade and Garden of Honor ceremonies on May 29th.

The Grand Marshal, a Combat Infantryman with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade in the Republic of South Vietnam from 1967 through 1968, offered moving remarks during the Garden of Honor ceremonies.

Dima said he was proud and honored to serve as Grand Marshal, "When I returned from Vietnam, like most veterans of that

time, there was no parade, no recognition of our service, and no welcome home. So I consider this honor today to be my welcome home and I thank you for it."

"Despite his humility in regard to his service to our country, Ted Dima is an American Hero," stated Mayor Frank DelCore.

Over 200 local veterans turned out for the 5th Annual Salute to Veterans Breakfast event and then marched in the parade. As a special tribute this year, the Township recognized the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II, by putting together a commemorative montage using the front pages from the New York Times announcing Victory in Europe, or V-E Day, on May 8, 1945, and Victory over Japan, or V-J Day, on September 2, 1945.

"65 years ago this year, American soldiers, sailors and marines led our nation to victory in World War II. 20 million Americans served under arms during World War II and over 400,000 Americans died fighting that war. The highest price ever paid by our nation," stated Mayor DelCore, in his remarks to the veterans.

"We want commemorate the victorious end of World War II and recognize the sacrifices that were made by the heroes of America's greatest generation. As time passes it is sad to note that less and less of these heroes remain with us. So it is



important to take the time to again thank them," continued DelCore.

All veterans in attendance were asked to sign the montage, which will be displayed at the "in a place of honor at the Municipal building, as a commemoration of our recognition of the great sacrifice on the

behalf of freedom that was made by so many, 65 years ago," according to DelCore. During the Roll Call of Veterans, the cornerstone of the breakfast, each veteran offered information on their individual service to the nation. The veterans and the other attendees were entertained by the Hillsborough High School Chorale and the Somerset County Police Pipes and Drums.

Following the solemn Wreath laying ceremony at the Garden of Honor, the morning's tribute to those in the military who made the ultimate sacrifice was concluded with a rendition of Amazing Grace by Claire Reddan, the firing of a ceremonial volley by the Company B, 2nd Infantry, Civil War re-enactors, and Taps, performed by High School Band Member Katie Bonnano.

"In Hillsborough, Memorial Day isn't about celebrating the unofficial start of summer; it is first and foremost about honoring and remembering those who gave their lives to protect the freedoms living in America affords all of us," Committeeman Bob Wagner, the Township Committee's Veterans Liaison, said.