



MAY 20, 2015
Vol. 24, No. 20

News

Shelby - Utica

Combat veterans to tell their stories at Memorial Day ceremony

BY SARAH WOJCIK

swojcik@candgnews.com

SHELBY TOWNSHIP — For the first time, Shelby Township's annual Memorial Day ceremony, which commemorates those fallen in action, will feature three speakers — combat veterans who served and were wounded in the Vietnam War.

Residents, military members and families are invited to the ceremony, which will take place at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 24 at the veterans me-

morial located just outside the Shelby Township municipal building, located at 52700 Van Dyke Ave., south of 24 Mile Road.

In the past, the ceremony featured a single keynote speaker, but this year, Veteran Events Coordinator Phil Randazzo, who organizes the township's Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances, chose a different format.

“The guest speakers, Vietnam veterans who were wounded in combat, will be talking about

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their experiences from the combat fields," said Randazzo, who is also a Vietnam combat veteran. "We are honoring all of the Shelby Township heroes who were killed in action, giving their life for our country and freedom."

Randazzo said the ceremony will be enjoyable and educational for the public to learn about what Vietnam veterans went through, including the draft, Vietnam's

jungles, facing the enemy, getting wounded and spending months in hospitals overseas, then returning home, getting married and raising families.

"We want the theme to be reversing (the negative stereotype) that Vietnam veterans have (regarding substance abuse)," he said.

The 2015 ceremony will feature patriotic tunes from the Lakeside Assembly of God Choir and a performance of taps on the trumpet by Eisenhower High School student Angelica Phillips. Dignitaries and scouts will also be

in attendance.

Shelby Township Supervisor Rick Stathakis said that the service gets bigger every year.

"I would love nothing more than to see all of the township's residents come out to honor the men and women (who) gave their lives and to those who are continuing to do so," Stathakis said. "I want to thank Mr. Phil Randazzo for organizing this event, as well as all of our men and women in Shelby Township that have served in the U.S. military."

For more information about

Shelby Township's Memorial Day ceremony, call the Supervisor's Office at (586) 731-5154.

Call Staff Writer Sarah Wojcik at (586) 498-1029.

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