

### Village To Host Memorial Day Ceremony

Memorial Day in Orland Park brings the end of the school year, the unofficial start of summer with the opening of the Centennial Park Aquatic Center and an opportunity to remember those who have died serving our country.

The Village of Orland Park Veterans Commission will host its annual Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 25 at 1:00 p.m.

"The Orland Park community will gather to pay homage to the brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives for their country," said Orland Park Mayor Dan McLaughlin.

Orland Park's ceremony is held at the village's Veterans' Memorial, Ara Pace - Place of Peace, adjacent to the Frederick T. Owens Village Hall at 14700 South Ravinia Avenue.

"At each of our ceremonies, we remember and thank those who have served. And, with so many Americans currently overseas, we remember and pray for the men and women who are serving our country right now," said Orland Park Veterans Commission Secretary Gail Blummer.

Father Leo Lyons, a retired United States Air Force Colonel, will offer the blessing and McLaughlin will read the 26 names added to the memorial since Veterans Day. The Carnivele Sisters will sing the National Anthem and Orland Park Police Officer Tim Hasty will play the bagpipes.

"Veterans whose names are added to Orland Park's wall may be living or deceased," McLaughlin explained. "It's especially touching when a veteran stands as his name is announced as his friends and family look on," the mayor added.

This year's ceremony includes the addition of USMC Lance Corporal Sean Kaspar's name to the wall. A resident of Orland Park, Kaspar was severely injured in Iraq and is receiving treatment at a naval hospital in San Diego. Kaspar is expected to attend Orland Park's ceremony to receive the honor from his family.

Longtime Orland Park residents, the Lucas family, are honoring five of their loved ones who served in the military during World War I, World War II and Korea.

Orland Park's ceremony will conclude at 1:30 p.m. with a P-51 Mustang Fly Over. The North American P-51 Mustang was an American long-range single-seat fighter aircraft that entered service with Allied air forces in the middle years of World War II. The P-51 became one of the conflict's most successful and recognizable aircraft.

"We have different generations come to our Memorial and Veterans Day Ceremonies," McLaughlin noted. "It's important for young people to realize all that our veterans have done to protect the many freedoms we enjoy," he added.

Attendees are invited to bring damaged American flags to the ceremony as members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion will conduct the Flag Retirement Ceremony immediately following the Memorial Day service.

Members of Orland Park Cub Scout Pack 383 will serve as an honor guard for the veterans and will assist with the veterans' Flag Retirement Center.

Refreshments will be served in the Orland Park Civic Center immediately following the ceremony. For more information, call 708/403-6203.