

News and stories

Gold Star Memorial Plans Unveiled in Bay City

ABC12

BAY CITY (WJRT)-- One of Bay City's oldest parks is about to get a new addition.

The Bay Veterans Foundation has plans to build a Gold Star Families Memorial Monument at Battery Park. It sits at the corner of Center Avenue and N. Jefferson Street near the Bay County Building.

"How does a community or how does a neighbor express in the right words their condolences, you can't," said Tim Eckstein, secretary of the Bay Veterans Foundation and project chairman for the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

"This honors the family and recognizes their loss in that missing member, and their lives are never the same," said David Bledsoe, with the Bay Veterans Foundation.

More than a dozen nearly identical monuments have already been built across the United States, with several more planned.

"This was the vision of Hershel "Woody" Williams, he is the last living recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor for Iwo Jima."

The 93-year-old behind the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation wants to see one in every state.

The Bay City monument will be the first in Michigan. It'll join the existing military memorabilia at Battery Park.

"In this case, it's an awareness of those that have gone before us and sacrificed for the way that we live," Bledsoe said.

Eckstein and a chaplain with the local American Legion post picked the park, near the cannon, for this special Gold Star tribute.

"He selected this site as being perfect with the balance of shade trees, the aesthetics of black armaments, the black granite, the County Building, the flag flying across the street at the library, the Legion post over there," Eckstein said.

Groundbreaking on the project is scheduled for Saturday, April 29 at 3 p.m. They hope to have it finished by the end of September.

The foundation aims to raise \$100,000 for the project. Already, some of that money has been donated, but they will also be selling commemorative coins to raise the funds needed.