

News and stories

Gold Star Monument: Bay Veterans Foundation Aims to Honor Families

March 28, 2017

Dave Rogers | [My Bay City](#)

Nothing stirs the American spirit more than the recollection of sacrifices made by individual heroes to preserve our liberty and way of life.

The newly restored focal point of patriotic community sentiment, Battery Park, will be enhanced under plans of the Bay Veterans Foundation for a Michigan gold Star Family Memorial Monument.

This will be the first such memorial in the State of Michigan, according to Dr. Tim Eckstein, one of the leaders of the project.

The foundation has kicked off a fundraising drive for \$100,000 to pay tribute to the dead of America's wars with a stunning black granite monument that will be installed in the near future.

Groundbreaking ceremonies will be held Saturday, April 29 at 3 p.m. in the park, Center Avenue, and Jefferson Street, where community faithful have gathered back to days after the Civil War to express their gratitude to military veterans.

Cocktails and a dinner will follow the groundbreaking at American Legion Post 18. The public is welcome to this event at a cost of \$20. Reservations may be made at www.bayveteransfoundation.org or by contacting committee members Dr. Tim Eckstein, 616-822-9498, Dave Bledsoe, 989-385-0358, or Keith Markstrom, 989-450-5109.

Accomplishment of this latest goal of the foundation will link Bay City with the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation, a nationwide organization that has promoted such monuments in many states.

"We are proud and happy to have Bay City as the location of the Gold Star Monument for Michigan," said Mr. Markstrom. "It will honor our long history of military veterans who making contributions to the security and safety of our nation."

Gold Star Family Monuments are now located in 33 states and are in progress in 41 locations.

Such monuments, according to the Williams Foundation, are tributes to families of "a member of the Armed Forces of the United States that sacrificed their life for our way of life, while serving in the United States Military."

The mission statement of the foundation states: "Perpetuate the memory of the sacrifice made by those in America's Armed Forces who gave their lives for America, our Freedom and our way of life. To honor and give tribute to Gold Star family members, relatives and Gold Star Children who suffered through those sacrifices.

"To educate the American public, specifically our youth, about the sacrifices made for our freedom and way of life; and encourage all Americans and Communities in which these Gold Star families reside to recognize those sacrifices.

"And, through the establishment of the Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments provide a means for Gold Star family members and others in the community to remember that freedom has not been and is not free."