

News and stories

Gold Star Memorial Groundbreaking in Marietta

Oct 11, 2017

Megan Vanselow | [The News Center](#)

Woody Williams, a Medal of Honor recipient, had a vision of honoring gold star families across the United States. A gold star family is anyone who lost a loved one at war.

He says, "Communities all over America are realizing for the first time that the families that sacrificed these loved ones have really never been honored in any way. So this is their opportunity so their loved one will not be forgotten"

Woody has worked to have 25 Gold Star Family Memorial Monuments dedicated around the country, with 50 in progress, accounting for 38 states. Woody's home state of West Virginia has five.

Marietta will be added to the national count, after their groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday. Woody was in attendance and spoke to the crowd about the true purpose of the memorials.

He said, "[the monument] pays tribute to those families in this area who made that sacrifice"

Also speaking was a representative from the Gold Star Mothers organization who thanked Woody for his efforts to honor not only

mothers, but entire families in a way never done before. However, Woody reminded the crowd that the monuments were not for him.

At 94 years old, Woody has worked selflessly for these families across America. "On the day of the dedication I will be here. That was a commitment I made when we started this program. I'm going to be at every ground breaking that I can, at every dedication that I can" says Woody. The only dedication Woody has missed was when two fell on the same day and were too far apart to attend both.

Marietta Safety-Service Director, and retired Marine, Jonathan Hupp, has had the opportunity to work with Woody Williams on several occasions "'[he's] alive as ever, as sharp as ever, as himself, his memories, everything about the marine core and being a recipient of the medal of honor"

It will take about 50,000 dollars to have the monument completed. People's Bank pledged \$15,000 to this memorial. Once funds are raised, the city will display their monument at lookout park. You can go to the Woody Williams foundation website to make a donation, or stop by city hall and write a check.

"There were many wonderful words spoken this evening about the service members who earned their families the right to be called gold star" Hupp adds about Tuesday.