

November 11th, 2008

Dedicating the new Eden Prairie Veterans Memorial

By Scott Neal



This past Sunday was a cold and windy day at Purgatory Creek Park. But me and three hundred other people were there for an important event. It was the dedication event of the new Eden Prairie Veterans Memorial. Mayor Young was the emcee for the program. The program included a brief speech by retired Brigadier General Dennis Schulstad and remarks from State Senator David Hann, State Representative Maria Ruud, and brand new U.S. Congressman-elect Erik Paulsen.

I could have included a photo of the memorial. I've got some good ones. It's a beautiful memorial.

I've decided, however, to include a photo of the people that made it all happen. A project like a veteran's memorial doesn't happen without the grit and determination of dedicated people. They worked with the City to get all the necessary regulatory approvals. They worked with local businesses and residents to raise money, including convincing elected state officials to dedicate \$100,000 in state financial assistance for the project. They worked with design and construction professionals to advance their intangible idea to something that is not only tangible but permanently so.

Did they do it for personal glory? No. They did it because they are dedicated to the preservation of our memory - our memory of the sacrifices of our fellow citizens who served our country in peace and in war. I can't list all of the names of the people that made those sacrifices, but I can list all of the names of the people in this photograph that have worked so hard to honor them. They are:

John Mallo, Bob Grant, Steve Steele, William Cochrane, Bud Schwartz, Richard Fey, Ed Holt, Elizabeth Grant, Mary Ann Bryndahl, Bill Dobbins, Carol Steehler, Kevin Rofidal, Travis Wuttke, Tim Sather, Eric Ahlstrom, Dick Foley, Ernie Shuldhiess, James Moran, Marie Wittenberg, Tommy Johnson, Toby Sarahan, Jerry Renner, James Bevilacqua, Jr., Ronald Schlangen, Lou Ellingson, John Menden, and Duane Cox.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Thank you for your service. *Well done.*