

JANUARY 2018 Post 480 Memorial Update:

We did it! The Wilderness Veterans Memorial is now a reality. Many years of dreaming and three years of development, fundraising and construction have resulted in a Memorial which we can proudly say, "Well Done".

The dedication opened on October 14th with soloist Laurie Timm singing the National Anthem while the US flag was raised by two young veterans, Captain Ryan Freckmann and Lt. Michael Gorrilla. Post 480 and Boulder Junction Post 451 Honor Guard presented the Flag and a three-gun volley salute honored deceased military men and women. Echo Taps, played by members of The Big Campanile Band concluded the event.

The program which was moderated by Bryan Jopek included Chaplain Bob Kriehn, Commander Joel Green, WVMFF President Larry Gorrilla, District Veterans Service Officer Mike Biszak, Wisconsin Bureau of Tourism Jeff Anderson and the parents of slain army Sergeant Carson Holmquist.

Donnie and Kelly Melzer's son Gavin Melzer (8 years old) lit the Eternal Flame which is now visible 24/7, 365 days per year.

Together, Commander Green and WVMFF President Gorrilla cut the ribbon with a mighty shears and invited all the guests to view the monuments and enjoy lunch and champagne at the Post. Thank you to everyone who participated in some way to make this long-anticipated day come true.

Please note that although the construction is complete, we have established an endowment to ensure that the memorial is properly maintained and future veteran's services and educational programs can be paid for. You can still help by donating in large or small amounts.

1. Use the Kiosk donation box or the donation box in the Post.
2. Other options are available. Remaining items for purchase are:
Conflict Monuments (War of 1812, Indian Wars, Mexican American War, Civil War, Spanish American War, Korean War, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Global War on Terror) and the East Honor Wall. We also have giving levels: Bronze, \$1,000 – \$1,999; Silver, \$2,000- \$4,999; Gold, \$5,000 – \$9,999 and Platinum, \$10,000 or more.

We continue to accept enshrinements. Engraving will occur annually during the summer months when we have an adequate number of names to add to the Honor Wall. (Current cost is \$300.00/ name) At present we have ten additional names to add to the wall.

We also need help with photos and biographies of Charter Members and past Post Commanders. If you have information regarding these Veterans, please contact us at (715) 686-2517 or (gorrilla1011@gmail.com). Your help is greatly appreciated. Check out the Virtual Wall at

www.wildernessvetmemorial.org. Any bit of information on veterans is helpful.

On behalf of myself, my wife, Colleen, Lorine Walters, the WVMFF Board and all the many volunteers, we thank you for your confidence in us and all your help during these past 3 years through thick and thin. We kept our eye on the prize and got it done on schedule.

Larry Gorrilla

