

Gold Star Memorial Planned

The Sheveland-Taylor American Legion Post 14 of Iola is currently in the process of raising funds to upgrade Veterans Memorial Park.

Plans include installing a sidewalk and a new Gold Star Recipients Monument at the park located in the 200 block of North Main Street.

The new monument will honor 20 military personnel from Iola and Scandinavia who lost their lives while fighting for our freedom during five different wars.

The proposed sidewalk will make it easier for all visitors to be able to get to the existing granite monuments. This access currently can be very difficult for those in wheelchairs or using walkers, because of the uneven ground.

The existing granite monuments honors all of those from Iola and Scandinavia after their passing who have served in the military.

The new Gold Star Recipient Monument will feature a bronze sculpture call the 'Fallen Soldier,' which was designed after the ceremonial arrangement that soldiers do themselves in the battlefield when one of their own loses their Life. When the life of a serviceman or women is lost on the battlefield, it is customary to arrange their boots, rifle and helmet into what is know as a Battlefield Cross, or a Battle Cross.

The surviving members of their squad gather around and memorialize their fallen comrades. Some of the troops will pray, others might recall personal stories, in a ceremony that is taken very seriously.

The Sheveland-Taylor American Legion Post 14 wanted a memorial that would show gratitude to these 20 men and make visitors stop and think about the cost of war.

The bronze sculpture of the 'Fallen Soldier' will be placed on a 3-foot-high octagon base that will feature eight bronze plaques honoring those who lost their lives.

The following veterans are being honored.

Civil War: 1st Sgt. Joseph S. Burnham, Thomas Ginty, Sgt. Hans Gunderson, Peter O. Harstad, Soren Jacobson, Soren Johnson, Pvt. Simon A Myhre, Simon Peterson, Thomas Torstenson.

World War I: Pfc. Barnard 'Barney' M. Sheveland, Cpl. Clarence Strand, Pvt. Martin Thorson.

World War II: Lt. Charles Gottschalk, Staff Sgt. Elroy J. Olson, Pfc. Hugh L. Phelps, Staff Sgt. Donald E. Taylor, Pfc. Clifford W. Torgerson, Pfc. Lloyd Tschurwald.

Korean War: Pfc. Gordon Peterson.

Vietnam War: Cpl. Carl Dennis Ruenger.

Another feature of the new monument will be a POW/MIA flag with the flag pole being on the octagon base honoring those who were or are either a Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA). The POW/MIA flag will be flown 24 hours a day with proper lighting.

The American Legion is currently raising fund for the materials and labor of the project, will cost approximately \$22,000. Donation payable to The American Legion Post 14 can be sent to Lyle Mork, c/o Sheveland Taylor American Legion Post 14, 295 Blaine Street, Iola, WI 54945.

Note: the project ended up costing \$50,000 after additional items were added to the project.