

News and stories

Gold Star Mother hopes to have monument erected

Aug 20 2018

Megan Soult | [Carolina Coast Online](#)

BEAUFORT, SC - A local Gold Star Mother wants a special way to honor those who have lost family members to war.

Maria Myers of Beaufort hopes to have a Gold Star Families Memorial Monument erected in the county.

A Gold Star family member can be any relative of someone who died in action while protecting the country.

Ms. Myers' three sons grew up to serve in the U.S. Army. One of them died as a helicopter pilot. Her daughter works as a 911 operator.

Ms. Myers said surviving family members often carry the weight of that loss, and it is something that she feels should be honored.

"It would be a beautiful thing for us to have," she said.

Fred Harvey, who is helping Ms. Myers with her quest, agrees.

"The service member lost his life, but the lingering loss belongs to the family," he said.

Gold Star family monuments can be obtained from the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation.

This foundation was formed in 2010 as a nonprofit organization that pursues the vision of Medal of Honor recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams.

The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument project began as a way to thank Gold Star Families for their sacrifice while ensuring their family members' sacrifice will always be remembered, as well.

To achieve this goal, the foundation builds monuments throughout the United States by offering scholarships to Gold Star children, sponsoring outreach programs and events and educating communities about Gold Star families and their sacrifices.

According to the foundation, the monument is made of black granite and features two sides.

One side bears the words, "Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, a tribute to Gold Star Families and Relatives who have sacrificed a Loved One for our Freedom."

The other side tells a story through four granite panels, that of homeland, family, patriot and sacrifice.

The scenes on each panel are a reflection of each community's Gold Star families and their fallen heroes.

At the center of this tribute is a cut out that represents the loved one who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom.

Each monument weighs around 15,000 pounds, stands at just over 7 feet and is 13 feet long. In total, the cost estimate for a monument is around \$60,000.

Ms. Myers will go before county commissioners to see if they can help foot the bill and explore where such monument could be erected in the county.

Monuments have typically been erected in donated public places such as parks, shared municipal space, veterans' cemeteries, school campuses, college campuses, state capitol grounds and previously privately held land, such as private cemeteries.

Ms. Myers and Mr. Harvey said they want the monument in a prominent and well-traveled location, and have four places in mind – two in Morehead City and two in Beaufort.

“But the commissioners may know of other sites that would get the desired exposure for the monument,” Mr. Harvey said.

If the county cannot help, Ms. Myers plans to start fundraising efforts.

She said having the monument in the county would help educate those on what a Gold Star family member is.

“It seems like a lot of people are really interested in the idea,” she said.