

News and stories

Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Dedication

Aug. 17, 2017

Nebraska Statehood 150

Sunday, September 24, 2017, also Gold Star Mothers' Day, at 1:00 p.m., the Nebraska Gold Star Families Memorial Monument will be dedicated. The Dedication Ceremony will be held in Antelope Park east of the Auld Center located at 1650 Memorial Dr in Lincoln, Nebraska. The Nebraska Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Project Committee and the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation cordially invite the public to attend the Dedication Ceremony. This monument is a gift to the State of Nebraska in its Sesquicentennial year, honoring all those families who, throughout the entire 150 years of the State's history, have lost loved ones in the service of our country. Funders include the Lincoln Community Foundation, Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation, City of Lincoln, The Clark Enersen Partners, Rixstine Recognition, Sampson Construction, Inc., and the Gold Star Wives – Omaha Chapter.

Nebraska Gold Star Families Memorial Monument

America has many memorials and monuments honoring those patriots who have faithfully served in our Armed Forces since becoming a Nation. They protected our freedom and have given freedom to many who had never experienced it. Some of them did this by making the ultimate sacrifice of giving up their lives for our freedom.

There is another group of Americans who have contributed and are affected by the same ultimate sacrifice for freedom. These citizens are the families who lost loved ones in the service of our country, and are known as Gold Star Families. Their sacrifice and suffering is ongoing for their lifetime and they are deserving of recognition and honor for their own sacrifice in keeping America free.

How can we honor our Gold Star Families in Nebraska? Marine Chief Warrant Officer-4 Hershel "Woody" Williams at age 93 is working tirelessly to honor Gold Star Families with Gold Star Monuments in all 50 States. Woody, who was also awarded the Purple Heart, is the last living Medal of Honor recipient of the battle of Iwo Jima. As a young man, one of his jobs was driving a taxi in his state of West Virginia. As was the practice of those times, one of his tasks was to deliver telegrams to the families of fallen soldiers. Making those deliveries, and witnessing the suffering of the families as they received the news, was one of the reasons, some 70 years later, that Woody Williams felt compelled to encourage national recognition of those families.

The Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments have been designed to honor the families who sacrificed more than most of us. The monument illustrates that America has citizens in every community and hamlet willing to make such sacrifices and that their families are also part of that sacrifice. Besides their suffering and grieving, it also illustrates that without the sacrifice the family has made, freedom could not and would not have been preserved. The monument will be a continuous reminder that freedom comes at a cost.