

News and stories

New site proposed for Gold Star Family Memorial

Proposed Veterans Park would also honor other heroes

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Amy H. Peterson | [Estherville News](#)

Terry Reekers leads a team of local citizens who are planning for a Gold Star Family Memorial sculpture in Estherville. The group has raised \$30,500 of the \$48,000 needed for the memorial.

At Monday night's Parks & Recreation board meeting, Reekers and city administrator Penny Clayton said an idea had formed to locate the Gold Star Memorial on the highway instead of at the Emmet County Courthouse as originally planned.

Perry Russell of the VFW said, "If we give the park the name Veterans Memorial Park, I'd like to see it include firefighters and police officers, but not just anyone. I think it would mean more that way."

The VFW has been working on a granite bench project without a specific location in mind. The bench, according to Russell, will be inlaid with the insignia of the branches of the military, including the Merchant Marine, which was active during World War II.

"It makes so much more sense to be teaming up with someone to create a worthwhile project than to have the Gold Star monument off by itself," Reekers said.

The location south of Homestead at 18th Street and Highway 9/Central Avenue would include a few offstreet parking spaces, and a walkway leading to the bench donated by the VFW, the Gold Star Memorial and a group of six American Flags that would be lit up, a separate group of flags to include the American, Iowa, and POW-MIA flags, and a continuous section of walkway that would surround a fountain and lead to a gazebo with picnic tables.

The accoutrements to the park would bring the project to an estimated total of \$66,000, raised in large part by the sale of engraved or laser cut bricks for \$100 each, according to Clayton.

The flags would be uplit so they could stay on the poles, Clayton said.

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