

Ribbon Cutting Scheduled for Elkhart's Renovated Veterans' Park

The newly renovated Veterans' Park on Governor Oglesby Street in historic downtown Elkhart will be rededicated on Saturday, November 10, at 11:00 a.m. The project, spearheaded by Elkhart's Needs and Goals (NAG) group, has made the park handicap accessible, improved seating, and updated the landscape design. The park will be used by veterans, their families and friends, and provide a place for community events.

Immediately following the ceremony from 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., the Elkhart Public Library, erected in 1904 and located one block north of Veterans' Park at 121 Bohan Street, will be open with several activities. "On view will be the library's World War I K-14 cannon - a unique German weapon to have on American soil - and a display of books from our collection pertaining to US wars, weapons, and ammunition," says Sarah Wilson, Director, Elkhart Public Library District. The library will also host a cookie reception featuring coffee from the veteran owned and operated Black Rifle Coffee Company.

The following organizations were major donors for the Park renovation: The Danner Trust, Robert J. Woods and Joan Jarrett Woods through the creation of the Woods Foundation, Landmarks Illinois, 100 Cities 100 Memorials and Pritzker Military Museum and Library, and The Allen P. and Josephine B. Green Foundation. Business partners helping with the project were: Mark Moughan, Moughan Electric Inc.; Howard Conrady, Conrady Construction; Duane Howell, 3D Concrete Solutions; Tim Currier, Timberline Pergola; Timothy J Hawley, Inc., metal design artist; and Mark and Laurie McWilliams, CopperTree Outdoor Lifestyles.

"CopperTree Outdoor Lifestyles' expertise and support kept this project on track," says Janice Funk, NAG's project manager. "We relied on volunteers to help with much of the labor. The final result is a park that honors veterans, is a usable community space, and improves historic downtown Elkhart. Now the park is a location worthy of cultural and historical events - and a pleasant stop for tourists who travel through Elkhart on Rt. 66."

The NAG group was also assisted by the Lincoln American Legion Post 263 veterans and volunteers who worked with John Heider, RIP Ltd. of Monticello, to clean and repair the Doughboy statue in May. Veterans helping were: Mike Downen, Gene Hickey, Scott Schaffenacker, Joe Schaler, Melanie Schaler, and Myron Slack. In addition to their volunteer labor, it was because of their guidance that Elkhart was made aware of a grant that helped pay for some of the restoration of the statue. "Veterans Posts can and do work together regardless of the community or the project," says Joe Schaler, chaplain for American Legion Post 263. A complete list of donors, partners and volunteers will be available at the ceremony.

#####

FOUR PHOTOS are attached with this emailed press release:

1. Veterans' Park before renovation
2. Veterans' Park – Great Improvement!
3. Vets cleaning the Doughboy statue
4. K-14 Cannon

For more information contact:

Peggy Lee

217-947-2046

peg.lee1@gmail.com