

DEFENDERS of FREEDOM

PIONEER VALLEY

SUMMER 2015

**Profiles of
Local Veterans**

**Veterans
Organizations**

**Granby Veterans
Memorial**

A TURLEY PUBLICATION

Granby veterans' memorial a community effort

The center of Granby is a historic district. Front and center, just past the town common and across the street from the old Kellogg Hall, will stand a brand new Veterans' Memorial, recording and commemorating once and for all the precious history of the town's veterans.

The Friends of Granby Veterans (FGV) has shown that remembering all those who served is more than fieldstone and plaques. They have become a strong presence in the community through their efforts to raise funds and awareness for the Memorial. The non-profit group, committed to erect and maintain the Granby Veterans' Memorial and assist Granby veterans in whatever way they can, was set up by Michael Pandora, the group's president, and Jason Richard, chairman of the Granby Veterans' Memorial Project Committee (GVMP). "Being a town committee," said Pandora, "it cannot raise the funds needed to design or build the memorial. So, we got a group of people together (the Friends) and we took it from there."



In the past two years, the Friends have put on three annual fundraisers that have become increasingly popular in the community: the pork loin dinner held during the winter; the chicken barbecue held in June; and the 5k road race/walk, which will be held in October.

In addition to music, raffles and great food, the group welcomed the following military displays to the barbecue this past June: Western Mass Chapter of the Purple Heart Association and Massachusetts Army National Guard Recruiting Command. Hundreds attended the event, which was held during the town's Charter Days.

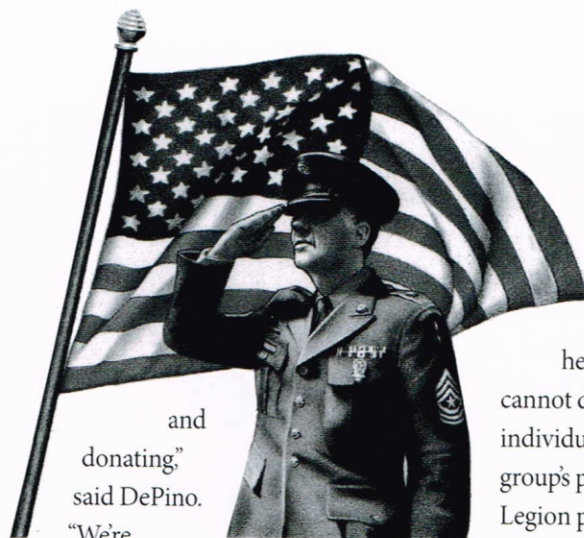
The number of participants doubled at last year's road race, and Pandora is hoping that they will

double it again at their third annual 5K Run/Walk slated for Sunday, Oct. 11, at 10 a.m. Check-in will take place at Happy Days Family Fun Spot at 172 West State St., Granby, beginning at 9 a.m. The 5K will take participants through picturesque country roads, including the town center, during the height of the fall foliage season. "Again, this year, all the money from the road race will go toward the Memorial," said Pandora. The group is currently seeking sponsors to donate toward the event, including T-shirt sponsorships.

Over the years, FGV has participated at Granby Charter Days, the Granby Library fall craft and tag sale and other community events where they sell imprinted apparel and are available to show the

project plans and answer questions about the Memorial. This past May, FGV and GVMP members made their first appearance in the town's annual Memorial Day parade. "Several members of FGV and some community volunteers came together to support our veterans and the Memorial Project by participating in the parade," added FGV member Laurie DePino.

The Memorial park, which will be built on the sloping lawn at the corner of North Street and Route 202, will feature a wall made of New England stone, which can be found all over Granby, and a small park. "There will be cherry trees, walks and benches," added Pandora. Replicas of two marble plaques that hung in the former town hall will be placed on the new wall as well as additional plaques honoring those veterans who served in Lebanon-Grenada, Panama and the Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Much of the work, materials and supplies will be donated. "More people are participating, volunteering



and donating," said DePino. "We're

having really great success, but we're not done." Pandora added, "What will put us over the top is the sale of three acres of land donated by Joseph Partyka." Anyone interested in purchasing the property, which is located on Batchelor Street in Granby between the Land Trust and the Chicopee Sportsmen's Club, should contact Pandora at (413) 205-6646.

Once the Memorial is built, "We will continue to hold fundraisers to maintain

it. We will also be able to help any veteran in town who needs help,"

he added. While the Friends cannot donate money directly to an individual, they can support another group's project, such as the American Legion providing a handicap-accessible ramp for a veteran, for example.

Anyone interested in more information about the Granby Veterans' Memorial, purchasing branded apparel, becoming a Friend or donating to the project, should visit the group's website at granbyveteransmemorial.org.



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Thank you to all of those who have served and are currently serving in our armed forces

This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.

~Elmer Davis



It is an Honor to represent those Veterans who are serving and have served our Country. Thank you for your service.

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