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Anthem Area Edition

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Public supporting the memorial expansion

BY COLE JANUSZEWSKI
Foothills Focus Staff Writer

The Anthem Veterans Memorial is challenging the community to show their support of veterans.

The Anthem Veterans Memorial is expanding to add more than 3,000 veteran commemorative pavers along with other improvements to the memorial.

It will more than double the 2,400 veterans from the United States and three allied nations who are currently honored.

Elizabeth Turner, a volunteer who is coordinating fundraising activities to offset costs for the memorial's 2023 expansion, said the project is entirely funded by donations.

She said the project will cost \$172,000. However, they are looking to raise only

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The expansion of the Anthem Veterans Memorial is entirely funded by donations. (Anthem Community Council/Submitted)

Phoenix eyes 2% primary property tax hike

BY PAUL MARYNIAK
Foothills Focus Staff Writer

The city of Phoenix administration is proposing a 2% increase in the primary property tax rate.

The administration last week unveiled the proposed increase, saying it would generate an additional \$4.1 million in revenue and raise the

total tax paid on a home valued at \$100,000 to \$128.51 — up \$2.53.

“The proposed increase is exclusive of increased primary property taxes received from new construction,” the city said in its official “Truth in Taxation Notice.”

“The increase is also exclusive of any changes that may occur from property tax levies for voter approved bonded indebtedness or budget and

tax overrides.”

A public hearing on the proposed tax increase is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 14, at council chambers, 200 W. Jefferson Street, with a vote by council on the new tax rate slated for 10 a.m. Monday, July 3.

The surprise announcement of the tax hike

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MEMORIAL FROM PAGE 1

\$150,000 as Haydon Building Corp., the original builder, has donated its labor to construct the memorial.

The Rotary Club of Anthem has pledged to match the first \$25,000. Also donating to the project are:

- Estes-Comp family: \$5,000, signage sponsor.
- Bonnie and Robert Smith: \$111.
- Todd Ninneman, owner of RE/MAX Fine Properties: \$6,000.
- Knights of Columbus Assembly No. 3438 Anthem: All proceeds from its food sales at the Independence Day celebration July 3 at Anthem Community Park.
- An anonymous Anthem Navy veteran and a Marine family: \$1,111 each.
- The Ceren families: \$555.
- The Musical Theatre of Anthem: \$500.
- Dave and Marge Newham, owners of North Valley Water Solutions: \$3,000, lighting sponsor.

Turner said there are also opportunities to sponsor the new structures. For example, she said one can donate \$10,000 to sponsor the turf.

Even if one can't donate, she said they can spread the word about fundraising efforts.

If interested in donating to the memorial to help fund its expansion or other ceremonies and educational programming, visit onlineatanthem.com.

Construction for the expansion will run from July to August. During this time, the memorial will be closed.

Turner, who has worked for the memorial since its creation in 2011, said the expansion project is important as she believes the memorial is the heartbeat of Anthem.

"It's a living memorial and it's a place for family members from all over the world to come and pay their respects to people who fought for freedom," she said.

"There's nothing more important ever that we could do in a community."

In fact, she said that people "come to Anthem to check it off on their bucket list. Back in 2011, we had a young man who had flown from Belgium to tend the grave of a veteran who was killed during World War II in Belgium."

Turner said the memorial is so meaningful to so many around the world, as



For the Anthem Veterans Memorial expansion, there are opportunities for the public to sponsor specific structures. Any donation is welcome, however. (Anthem Community Council/Submitted)

everything about it is symbolic.

"The Circle of Honor is reserved only for veterans," she said. "It's in a circle intentionally because all soldiers look after their own and never leave one behind. It's surrounded by two rows of pavers that are laid almost perpendicular to the circle, because in bricklaying, when you lay a paver in that direction, it's called a soldier row.

"We added two soldier rows outside the Circle of Honor because soldiers look after their own and never leave one behind. "There are five benches, each one is symbolic for each branch for the families of the veterans waiting for their loved ones to come home from service."

"The seal on the pillars is the great seal of the United States. It was given to us with permission from the secretary of state and it's a hand-cut glass mosaic that was done by artisans in Phoenix," Turner added.

"The pavers are red. The pillars are white marble and under the Arizona blue sky — they symbolize the flag. And we placed the eagle of the great seal facing the pillars intentionally because we as a nation turn to our military to defend us."

The memorial, which is meticulously detailed, came from a sketch on a napkin.

"Navy Rear Adm. Ron Tucker (founder

and project manager of the original memorial) had been traveling around the country and saw some small memorials in little towns and thought, 'You know, we should do something in Anthem,'" Turner said.

"And he got with (Anthem resident and artist) Renee Palmer Jones and talked about ideas for a memorial, and it just kind of came from a sketch on a napkin between the two of them.

"They took it to Jim Martin (chief engineer of the original memorial) and said, 'Could you make this happen?' And he said, 'Absolutely,'" Turner added.

"So he made those pillars with the holes cut into them, and on Nov. 11 of the 11th minute of the 11th hour, which is the exact time that we signed the Armistice to end World War I, the sun's rays go through the holes and put a perfect solar spotlight on the great seal of the United States.

"I've seen it 12 times now and I still get chills." ☑

To donate

To donate to the Anthem Veterans Memorial expansion efforts, email Elizabeth Turner at elizabethturnerus@yahoo.com. Donation information and the sponsorship package can be found at onlineatanthem.com/avm.