

24 in



Louis J. Ferris
Staff Sergeant - USAF
Active 8 years
Wisconsin 32nd Red ARROW
Division National Guard
Active 2 years
Korean War Veteran
Former Commander
VFW Post 1530 in La Crosse
President of the
Korean War Veterans Assoc., Chapter 275

While president of the Korean War Veterans Association, Ferris was concerned about his aging members. They were in their late eighties and dying at rapid rate. The Korean War was called the "forgotten war", and Ferris was afraid that soon they would all be dead and forgotten. The members decided to have a plaque made and placed at Riverside Park in South La Crosse near the canon with a brief message about the Korean War. The Park and Recreation Department wouldn't allow it because of the yearly flooding. However, they said they'd consider it if located in Veterans Freedom Park on Clinton Street in North La Crosse.

The chapter drew up an architectural plan and cost; the Park and Recreation Department approved. Fundraising went well and a year later on July 27th, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. the dedication took place. The theme, "Freedom is not Free".

Everything went so smoothly, Louie decided to create another memorial; this time remembering the World War I Veterans. Ferris mapped it out, fundraised, worked hand in hand with the sculptor, contractors, and scheduled the dedication. He quickly realized all the WWI veterans and families were deceased. The fundraising was difficult, and Ferris needed help. The River Bank in La Crosse came forward with a sizable donation and Louie was able to meet the dedication deadline, October 25th, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.

Ferris visited memorials throughout Wisconsin and noticed they were all male oriented, such as, fighting soldiers, tanks, and aircrafts. He asked himself, where was the role model for little girls? He decided to build one more memorial with one theme in mind, "A Role Model for Little Girls". He chose the U.S. Cadet Nurses of World War II; they not only served our country, but they saved the healthcare system from total collapse and likely shortened the war. Most were deceased or an average age of 92 if still alive. Ferris planned the memorial, raised the funds, and dedicated the third memorial on July 19th, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Louie Ferris had a long history of working, fighting, and supporting veterans. He also had a long history of supporting the Hmong-Lao Vietnam Veterans. Ferris felt the young Hmong need to know and be reminded of their history and understand why they are here. Above all, Americans need to know and be reminded of the sacrifices the Hmong-Lao Vietnam Veterans made for American's freedom. Louie decided he needed to do one more memorial, "The Hmong-Lao Vietnam Veterans Memorial". It was dedicated in July 2019.

"Four Memorials in Four Years"

18 in

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