



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Veterans Foundation Reveals Its Conceptual Design for a Veterans Memorial to Silicon Valley in Celebration of Independence Day**

LOS GATOS, June 30, 2016 – The Town of Los Gatos Town Council approved a veterans’ memorial conceptual design in support of the Veterans Memorial & Support Foundation recommendation at the Town of Los Gatos Town Council meeting on Tuesday, June 21. The Council also voted in a streamlined process for an architectural design and site plan review that will return to the Town Council for endorsement. The Veterans Memorial & Support Foundation will reveal the design and begin its fundraising campaign at the upcoming Town of Los Gatos Independence Day celebration that will be held on July 4<sup>th</sup> at Oak Meadow Park. There, donors will be able to glean a better look at the memorial design and contribute \$250 to \$1000 for donor bricks/pavers depending upon size and inscription in honor of veterans to donate to the cause.

The Veterans Memorial will be a tribute to the men and women who have honorably served the nation in the United States Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines, in support of natural disaster recovery, humanitarian aid, and in defense of America’s freedom. In addition, the Memorial will also recognize Emergency Services First Responders personnel who so often combine forces with the United States military in playing a pivotal role in homeland security.

Look around and take notice of something we really value. We can’t touch it, we can’t see it, we often take it for granted and yet, it is something highly respected by Americans and around the world. Liberty. Liberty, first gifted to Americans by the *Declaration of Independence*, has touched tens of thousands of hands before we got to experience it. If we track it back to the first sets of eyes that saw it, we find others who had a vision and really understood what it took to lead. The fact that Americans are free is a testament to someone else’s leadership who came way before our time. Those who played a role with America’s *Declaration of Independence* could have been every bit like the innovators of Silicon Valley – creative, thoughtful, brilliant and inspirational. They knew how to motivate the hearts and minds when they spoke. Regrettably, freedom isn’t free and in fact, liberty has been challenged many times. Defending our liberty results in the ultimate sacrifice, an occurrence known all too well by those serving in our United States military. Such was the inspiration behind *The Flame of Liberty* rendering designed by artist Frank Kocian Morris.

*The Flame of Liberty* is a sculpture of an eternal flame inspired by the flame of the Statue of Liberty. The flame sculpture is proposed to be made of a thin, steel wire frame, with sections within the frame filled with thick, transparent, champagne-colored hand-poured antique glass evoking the style of a lighthouse lantern or a stained-glass window. A tough polycarbonate clear plastic outer layer on the glass will protect the glass from damage.

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The interior of the flame sculpture is open, and nestled inside the flame is a second, smaller bronze sculpture of a "Soldier's Cross", a nationally recognized symbol in the form of a helmet resting on an inverted rifle, representing the service and ultimate sacrifice of America's Fallen military members. The Soldier's Cross first came into being during the Civil War as service members placed the bayonet into the ground identifying the place of the remains of a comrade for later removal. Over time, the Soldier's Cross, which does not have any religious connotation, has also been used in tributes to the fallen on deployment where funerals and other services are not possible. A serpentine wall serves as the backdrop to the sculpture, with interior lighting in the flame casting a dramatic nighttime glow on the memorial structure. Bronze insignias or bas-reliefs will recognize the five branches of the United States military and the Merchant Marines. The Los Gatos historic fire bell, casted in 1899 and used at one time to summon fire and police to scenes of a fire, will recognize Los Gatos Emergency Services personnel.

Artist Frank Kocian Morris is an award-winning designer, illustrator and portrait artist. His design clients include *Newsweek*, *New York Magazine*, *Boy's Life*, *Readers Digest*, Bantam Books, Dell Books, Simon & Schuster, New American Library, Warner Brothers, Random House, Vintage Books, multiple major television networks and advertising agencies. His paintings are in private collections and board rooms and have been reproduced in magazines such as *Newsweek* and *New York Magazine* where he was asked to paint luminaries such as Presidents Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, First Ladies Nancy Reagan and Rosalynn Carter, Hamilton Jordan, the Shah of Iran and government dignitaries from his home state of Tennessee. The U.S. Department of the Treasury recognized Mr. Morris' excellence and chose Mr. Morris for the artist-elite position of Master Designer for the U.S. Mint. He has designed three Congressional Gold Medals to honor the Native American Code-Talkers of WWII and multiple gold collector coins. Finally, what better person to create a design for veterans than that of a veteran himself - Mr. Morris served in the U.S. Air Force early on in his career.

The proposed Veterans Memorial would provide a place to honor the servicemen and servicewomen who have served, those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and those who continue their courageous work around the world today.

The Veterans Foundation of Los Gatos is a 501(c) 3 non-profit local enterprise staffed by volunteers consisting of veterans, military advisors, parents of active service members and citizens who desire to honor, express gratitude and support those who support America's freedom. Donations are accepted at [www.honorAvet.org](http://www.honorAvet.org).

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If you desire more information, please contact:

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Attachments/Links:

- Press Release
- Memorial Renderings: Five images, two duplicates in very high res and high res

Memorial Design:

- 3D video of *The Flame of Liberty* link: <https://youtu.be/S-gcJlVu5tY>
- Artist's Inspiration Video link (background info & quotes): <https://youtu.be/F7ptUjr-tqY>

Frank Kocian Morris, the Artist:

- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/frankmorris2>
- Master Designer, U.S. Mint: <https://vimeo.com/164009266>
- Portrait Artist: <http://www.frankmorrisportraits.com>