

## **City of Richfield Unveils Memorial Design and Proclaims Friday, Feb. 23 in Honor of Charles Lindberg**

*The Richfield Resident is the last surviving Iwo Jima flag raiser*

Richfield, Minn.-- February 21, 2007 -- The City of Richfield is unveiling the design for a new "Honoring All Veterans Memorial" and has declared Friday, Feb. 23, as "Charles Willard Lindberg Day." Friday marks the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the raising of the American Flag on Iwo Jima on Feb. 23, 1945.

Marine Corporal Charles "Chuck" W. Lindberg is the last surviving person to have raised the first American flag on Japanese soil at Iwo Jima during World War II. Chuck has been a Richfield resident since 1953 and is the honoree for the "Honoring All Veterans Memorial," to be built in Veterans Memorial Park at 64<sup>th</sup> and Portland Ave. S. in Richfield, Minn.

For more than 50 years, Richfield's Veterans Memorial Park has ironically not had a memorial to veterans despite the city's development during the post-World War II building boom.

"This memorial is my way of saying thanks to the veterans," said Travis Gorshe, city resident and artist who hatched the idea. "They have given me the freedom I now enjoy, and since I never served, it has become a source of light for me."

The 36-year-old initiated the project through his role on the Richfield's Arts Commission. He, his wife and three children live near Veterans Memorial Park. Gorshe first met Lindberg when he called him to gain his signature for his collection of veterans autographs. Now close friends, Gorshe is eager to bring a memorial to Lindberg's hometown. Memorials honoring Lindberg already reside in Rochester, Bemidji and Long Prairie, Minn.

### **Memorial Engraving Sales – Sponsor A Veteran Program**

Len Gudmunson, President of Honoring All Veterans Memorial, Inc. and who is Commander of the Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555, is leading the non-profit corporation to coordinate the memorial engravings, fundraising and construction. Phase one is expected to cost approximately \$250,000. Eighty percent of funds will come from individual graving donations of \$400 each. To start construction, the Honoring All Veterans Memorial, Inc. plans to sell 600 names by June 1, 2007.

For each \$400 donation, a veteran's name will be engraved on a granite tablets as part of the memorial. The names of all Veterans are welcome on the memorial, active or retired, wartime or peacetime, full service or reserves, deceased or living and regardless of residency. The only qualification for an engraving is an honorable discharge. Names will be listed on a first-come basis and cataloged for ease of navigation on the memorial.

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Sponsorships for memorial engravings are available through the “Sponsor a Veteran Program.” Sponsor a veteran by donating any dollar amount to defray the cost of an engraving to a veteran on the sponsorship list or one of your choosing.

A special Groundbreaking/Memorial Day event is planned for Monday, May 28, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. in Veterans Memorial Park, 6400 Portland Avenue, Richfield, Minn.

To donate an engraving or to the Sponsor a Veteran program contact: John Evans, Honoring All Veterans Memorial, Inc., 7000 Nicollet Ave, Richfield, MN 55423, or by phone at 612-861-9395 or by e-mail [contact@richfieldveteransmemorial.org](mailto:contact@richfieldveteransmemorial.org).

For corporate donations or sponsorship at the groundbreaking event, contact Travis Gorshe, 612-345-6862, or [twgorshe@gmail.com](mailto:twgorshe@gmail.com).

### **About the Memorial**

The memorial is to honor U.S. Military Veterans from all six military branches (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Merchant Marines and Navy), and to provide a place for people to reflect and thank those who have served, are serving or will serve.

The memorial stands in a 60 feet diameter, representing the “Circle of Life” of Mdehwakanton Sioux, which originally occupied Richfield, in the southwest corner of Veterans Memorial Park. At the center is a granite base with a large rock that holds a bronze bust of Chuck Lindberg. The American flag waves 25 feet above. The other five flag raisers are listed on the granite. Five black granite tablets will stand seven feet high by three feet wide to hold the engravings of veterans’ names. Additional tablets can be added to accommodate more names. From above, the memorial will appear as the same shape of a tear drop signifying “tears of joy, tears of sorrow and purity of water” for all our Veterans.

Phase two of the project will add six-12 foot columns that curve inward representing each military branch. Each column has three-foot granite inlays on all four sides with an Armed Services insignia on the outside and the hymn on the inside. Two diamond shaped glass prisms will be mounted between the columns to reflect sunlight. The sunlight will cross the memorial as the sun passes to mark a full day’s remembrance of our Veterans.

To view the concept plan approved by the Richfield City Council, visit [www.richfieldveteransmemorial.org](http://www.richfieldveteransmemorial.org).