

Statue will fulfill Vietnam vets' dreams

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

Although funding for the Luzerne County Vietnam Memorial statue is moving right along, committee members say they will still accept donations to help fulfill their dream.

"The donations are coming in a lot faster," said Michael Balash, of RD 3, Dallas, vice-chairman of the committee. "We are hoping to raise between \$40,000 and \$45,000, but if anyone would like to help out with a donation, we would certainly appreciate it."

The statue, an 8'3" copper and bronze model which will stand on a 10 foot limestone base, is expected to be in place by next September on the South Lawn of the Luzerne County Courthouse.

"We approached the commissioners and laid out our plans for what we wanted to do," Balash explained. "And they were very cooperative and should be commended for what they have done. They said they would help as much as they can and they did."

The idea of erecting a statue to commemorate the MIA's (Missing in Action), POW's (Prisoners of War), and KIA's (Killed in Action) of the Vietnam War began last December. Ten thousand Luzerne County residents served in Vietnam and 75 of them were killed there.

"We started talking about it one day at the Post 2, Veterans of the Vietnam War building in

Swoyersville," Balash said. "That's where we started laying the groundwork - who would be chairman - and so forth. But there are places all over the country that have something to honor the Vietnam veterans and we thought this area should have one, too. It was a long time coming."

Balash, who served in the Air Force from 1969 to 1972 and who saw some time in Vietnam (non combat), said he believes the Memorial will be good for the local veterans.

"Personally, I think it will bring them closer together as individuals," Balash said. "It will be a place where they can go; where they can grieve a little."

Although Balash spent most of his time in Thailand where he was a security policeman (canine handler), he knows what things could have been like for him during his stint.

"You think about some of the areas you were in and some of the things you went through," Balash recalled. "You wonder what it could have been like to be a POW or a MIA. You don't think about it all the time. But, there are times when you think back."

Anyone wishing to send donations to help fulfill a dream can mail them to: Luzerne County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, c/o First Eastern Bank, P.O. Box 1167, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 18703.



Memorial statue

Shown here is a photo of a statue scheduled to be constructed on the South Lawn of the Luzerne County Courthouse. The statue will pay tribute to all veterans of the Vietnam War.

Kingston Twp. will add policeman; promote another

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

The Kingston Township Police Department will add one officer to its force and promote another to the rank of sergeant, effective January. The announcement was made last Wednesday at the supervisors' monthly meeting.

It has not been determined who the new officer will be until township officials can review the list of civil service applicants. But if no individual under consideration is able to accept the position, the township will ask that another test be given to another set of applicants.

"The Department of Community Affairs said it would be able to give a test the second week of January," said Kingston Township Manager Fred Potzer said. "Our first job will be to review the list of applicants we have now. But if those people cannot accept the job because of some reason, then we will ask that another test be given."

The sergeant's test will administered in January and an

appointment could be made as early as February. That person will be second in command and will work primarily on investigations such as burglaries and thefts and other matters.

"This way he won't have to stay around for things like answering the phone," Potzer said. "And it will also allow the department to have two men on duty at all times. We could have one policeman patrolling the main arteries (roads) and another handling the other parts of town."

The new addition will also allow the township to meet the state's preference of having one policeman for every 1,000 residents. Kingston Township currently has a population of approximately 6,800 people and, with seven full-time and seven part-time policemen, the township would meet that criteria.

"This will be the culmination of something we have been working on for about a year and a half," Potzer said. "Now we have made enough improvements so that we can handle the future growth of the community."

Births

(The following Back Mountain couples have announced births during the past week:)

WALTER, CHARLENE and ROY, RD 6, Box 96, Dallas, a

son, Monday, Dec. 8, at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, Kingston.

CLARK, LAURA and ALLEN, P.O. Box 98, Noxen, a son, Monday, Dec. 8, at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, Kingston.

Statue is significant

This model of the Vietnam War Memorial for Luzerne County is a depiction of a heavy-gauge copper and bronze sculpture with a natural sulfide bronchite patina set atop a limestone base. The base is 10' long, 6'10" wide, 2' high. The sculpture atop measure 9'6" high, for a total of 11 1-2' from the ground. The figure of the valiant veteran is 8'3" tall from toe to head, or 1.43 times life size.

The warrior, wearing combat fatigue pants and boots, holds a broken K-Bar Knife and stands

atop the shield - the Keystone of Pennsylvania, an allegory to the (See STATUE, page 12)

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