

A ‘Unique’ Monument

VFW members help raise funds for Connecticut monument

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A VFW Member in Connecticut helped organize a project that will bring a much-needed veterans monument to the town of Stonington.

Anthony Lombardo, who served in Panama during the Korean War, said that Stonington, Connecticut, only has one veterans monument, which commemorates the town’s veterans of World War I.

Lombardo, who served in the Army’s Americal Division, said that the town did not make a way for residents to honor World War II to present-day veterans, and he believed something needed to be done. In 2018 he began the process of creating a monument in the town.

“The planning for this didn’t happen overnight,” said Lombardo, who served from 1954 to 1956.

Lombardo, a member of VFW Post 1265 in Stonington, Connecticut, said that the monument will honor any veteran with an honorable discharge with connections to the town. He added that people outside of the state have inquired about adding names to the monument. People who visit the monument will be able to use their smartphones to scan a QR code to access a website to view the names.

“We even had a call from the Virgin Islands,” Lombardo said. “The beauty of this memorial is the [smart phone] feature. People will be able to read through the more than 7,000 names at the monument, and the feature will give the opportunity to keep adding names in the future.

“What’s unique about this monument,” Lombardo continued, “is that it includes all veterans with an honorable discharge from the military, whether or not they served in war.”

Lombardo said that Post 1265 accepts donations for the memorial project. About \$83,000 has been raised, and the city of Stonington is planning to make up the difference of the

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estimated \$178,000 memorial.

The location of the Stonington Veterans Monument will be near the city's police station and across the street from Stonington High School. Lombardo said that Post 1265 is only about 40 yards away from the future monument.

The groundbreaking for the monument could be as soon as this summer, according to Lombardo.