

Scouts take charge of airport veterans memorial

Dedication for Jefferson County Heroes Memorial set for Saturday

BY JASON SILVEY
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — Honoring Jefferson County's fallen soldiers has become a mission for a future Eagle Scout and the fellow members of his troop.

On Sunday afternoon, Andrew Dreas and his friends in Boy Scout Troop 102 of Woodlawn were hard at work at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport painting the frame which will house a sign listing the name of Jefferson County residents who died in U.S. military service.

"It was the AMVETS sign at their original location, and it was taken down when they relocated. They wanted to put it up somewhere else and needed someone to do it, so I decided to take it on as my Eagle Scout project," Dreas said.

With cooperation from the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority and Airport Manager Chris Collins, Dreas embarked on a plan to refurbish and reconstruct the sign at the facility as the Jefferson County Heroes Memorial.

Dreas said, "Ever since this summer, I've been working with Chris Collins to raise money for the project."

The Eagle Scout candidate solicited the help of area veterans organizations, hosted fundraisers and sought donations for materials, flags and lighting to make the \$8,000 project a reality.

"It was a big experience for me in the business world, learning how to ask for things and dealing with some people saying no, how to raise money and work with people who were willing to give,"

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Dreas said. "It's not for me or the airport. It's for our fallen soldiers."

Dreas said Todd Ham of T. Ham Sign is currently working on the sign panels and to add images of soldiers carrying flags behind the list of named. The finished memorial will also include American flags surrounding the sign and lighting, and several service groups have pledged support in maintaining the memorial.

A dedication ceremony for the finished Jefferson County Heroes Memorial will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday during the 15th annual Little Egypt Fly-Inn and Veterans Reunion.

jsilvey@morningsentinel.com



PAINTING PROJECT — Members of Woodlawn Boy Scout Troop 102 including, FROM LEFT Andrew Dreas, Judah Navarro, Daniel Smart, and Augusto Navarro spend Sunday afternoon adding a coat of blue paint to the frame which will house the Jefferson County Heroes Memorial sign at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport while adults Beth Dreas and Steve Willis provide some assistance.

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