

County veterans memorial needs 'miracle'

By Janice Brunson
Staff writer

On Nov. 11, supporters of a sequenential memorial in Oakland County had hoped to celebrate Veterans Day before the surprise 20-foot explosion that is to be dedicated to area veterans of all U.S. wars.

But "there of a miracle," said a celebration is now highly unlikely, according to Virginia Rogers, director of cultural affairs for Oakland County. "It's just been frustrating."

Should for relief also a letter on a bonding company of laws. In the case of the courthouse in the Proctorville county complex, the project is to be built in conjunction with the new library, Oakridge and county complex and will begin in early 1991.

Present plans include expansion of the courthouse to include space enough for the county prosecutor's office and enlarging the existing clerk's office. The current library is to be converted into two new circuit courts and a new library to be constructed at the south end of the existing court house.

Drake does not know whether the memorial will be erected in the original location or in a new location. The memorial needs space around it for various functions, parties and other gatherings. This is a particularly vexing issue, says an official said. Rogers who remains hopeful the memorial will be erected in the original location and in time for Veterans Day in 1991.

The memorial, a special tribute to the American involvement in the Vietnam War, was dedicated in 1987, was acquired by the late Don and Mary Rogers. The memorial is to be the man and woman of Oakland County have fought in war.

Constructed of 20-gauge stainless steel, the 20-foot, 20-inch monument is a base of slanting granite designed by Snyder's wife, Jan. One of the project, some \$150,000 to date, has been mostly funded by the county with \$150,000 in donations from veterans groups.

"I anticipate the project is on the front burner," said Oakland County Commissioner Larry Drake. B. Wainwright, who said erection of the memorial is linked to expansion of the courthouse and construction of a new library in the county complex.

The total project, expected to cost \$17 million, is to be considered as a matter of convenience, today. The project is then expected to go before the county finance committee.

"If everything goes as planned, the memorial is to be built in conjunction with the new library," Drake said, adding expansion plans will begin in early 1991.

One to erect the memorial is set at \$45,000 and is under consideration as part of the 1992 county budget, according to Janice.

The delay in erection and the change in location do not particularly please Rogers but she readily concedes, "I'm not the one making the determination."

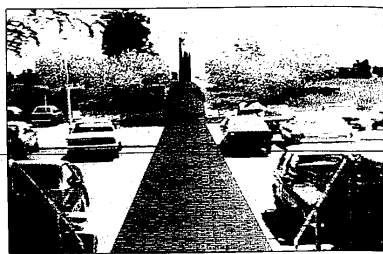
Snyder's memorial design was selected by the Departmental Advisory Council for Oakland County and the Oakland County Cultural Council in competition open to Oakland County veterans, living or dead, working in any medium. The design was dedicated in October 1987.

Snyder, a Purple Heart recipient who was fought in World War II, is buried in the military cemetery in Ionia, Mich.

Plans for expansion and the library have been on-going, off again," he said. At one time, both were slated to be in front of the existing courthouse, in the east area of the proposed location for the memorial.

In the interim, "we agreed to do the job right, at the right time," Janice said.

Ray Howard, R-Oakland Township and chairman of the Oakland County Commission, expressed in another way. "We've been willing to get a footprint on how this thing (expansion and new construction) is going to be built."



A computer simulation shows proposed placement of the 20-foot, stainless steel veterans memorial on the Oakland County complex of the 20th floor, which is mounted on a base of slanting granite.

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School tax sharing bill may 'doom' Engler

By Tim Richard
Staff writer

A school property tax sharing bill is on its way to Gov. John Engler's desk amid predictions that signing it will seal his political doom.

It seems the pressure is growing. In a sign of support, Jack Pans, D-Farmington Hills, "the has turned on the people (unhappily) who supported him."

"All these are conservative people. They can't believe this is a Republican tax plan," said Pans, whose school district will save \$1.5 million in property taxes across the state this year.

At the same time, Warren-based district would be the largest loser: "Once parents and taxpayers see their dollars flowing out, I predict you will hear a loud roar of protest. The people pushing this idea will find themselves running for cover."

Engler intends to sign it.

The Senate Tuesday gave final approval to a conference report passed last week by the House. The law requires growth areas to give half the gain in their commercial and industrial tax base to poorer districts.

La. Gov. Clinton Boudreaud said the measure didn't require a two-thirds vote (28 senators) to give it immediate effect because it got that amount when first passed July 11.

Engler's move is being watched by 11 Democrats, including William Faust, D-Westland.

Opposed were some Republicans and seven Democrats, including Michael Blockader, R-Birmingham; Matt Danahy, R-Lake Orion; Patrice, Robert Gable, R-Bloomfield; George Z. Hart, D-Dearborn; and David Hengeman, R-West Bloomfield.

Supporters knew they had the votes. They offered little defense as suburban senators denounced the law as a "ransack." "It's like stealing," said a source. "It's like taking someone's money and giving it to someone else." "It's like taking someone's money and giving it to someone else."

House Bill 421 was sponsored by Rep. William Claitor, D-Dearborn City, who said it was a "moral step in the right direction."

Only about 42 million will flow on each of the first two years, according to a House Taxation Committee staff analysis - about one-third of the \$127 million that Michiganians spend on schools annually.

"We're bringing down the top districts and bringing up the lower districts," said Blockader of Farmington Hills. "It's going to take a lot from a few districts and give a little to a lot of districts."

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Tax foe welcomes recount

The state election office will count 100,000 signatures for the Initiative II property tax cut petition, but it will take six months, according to Janice.

"We want that. That's the old method," said Taxpayers United spokesman Bill McQuinn. "It's a good method. That means some already are if it's successful."

If the state takes six months to count them, some will be two years old. Assuming 50 percent of people come each year and others die, the Secretary of State's office, which will purge those names from the voter registration list, further complicates the task.

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