



Malden readies for 2018 Veterans Day parade and WWI Memorial dedication

By PJ Montezuma / malden@wickedlocal.com

Posted Nov 6, 2018 at 10:28 AM

Updated Nov 6, 2018 at 10:28 AM

The annual Veterans Day Parade, sponsored by the Malden American Legion Post 69, is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 11. The parade will begin by the Malden Train Center, across from the former American Legion.

Kevin Jarvis, Director of Veterans Services, said that this year's parade route will be changed to integrate the 11 a.m. introduction of the new World War I Memorial at Devir Park. The WWI Memorial is being revealed at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, to coincide with the signing of the armistice that ended WWI 100 years ago on Nov. 11, 1918.

The route of this year's parade will go south down Pleasant Street before turning left onto Highland Avenue, then right onto Malden Street before it ends at the corner of Malden Street and the Fellsway just before Devir Park.

The guest speaker for the Veterans Day Parade this year is retired Brigadier General Leonid Kondratiuk, commissioner of the Massachusetts WWI Centennial Commission.

The WWI Monument Refurbishment Project began a little over a year and a half ago. There is already one WWI Monument at Devir, which was dedicated back in 1920. On the original monument there is 550 Malden veterans memorialized, which accounts for only 20 percent of Malden Veterans who served in WWI.

Jarvis said that when he was researching the city's veterans he found that there were 2,821 Malden men and women who fought in WWI, and he wanted to honor them all. He brought the idea of adding to the original WWI Memorial at Devir Park to Malden Mayor Gary Christenson, who helped create the WWI Restoration Committee.

This committee includes Jarvis, Christenson, Ward 2 Councilor Paul Condon, Malden Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Deborah Burke, Malden Chief of Police Kevin Molis, and State Rep. Steven Ultrino, among others.

The WWI Restoration Committee members were unsure at first about how to raise the money for this event, so they began fundraising. Back in August, Ed O'Connor and Brittany Tremble of Cambridge 5K gifted Christenson and the WWI Committee a \$10,000 donation. That donation was the result of proceeds from Malden's first 10K Road Race, which pulled in more than 1,500 runners.

Donations have also come from multiple Malden organizations and veterans' groups, as well as Malden residents who participated in "Adopt-A-Veteran," a program where a person donates \$25 in memory of a specific man or woman who served during WWI. A donor may "adopt" more than one veteran. The donors' names will be listed alongside the name of their "adopted" veteran(s) on the program that will be present for the Memorial.

So far about \$65,000 has been raised by the WWI Restoration Committee towards the memorial. With the money raised, committee members were able to install two new WWI monuments next to the existing one at Devir Park from 1920. Now these three monuments include the names of all 2,821 Malden residents who fought in WWI. Of those 2,821 men and women, 75 died at war, so they will have a gold star next to their names to signify that they lost their lives on the battlefield.

More help needed

Although the WWI Restoration Committee raised more than \$65,000, members are still in need of \$20-25,000 to ensure the memorial is completed and well-kept. Anyone who would like to send a donation, checks or money orders may be made to "City of Malden" with "WWI Monuments" noted in the memo section and mailed to Kevin Jarvis, Director of Veterans Services, 110 Pleasant Street, 3rd Floor, Malden, MA 02148.