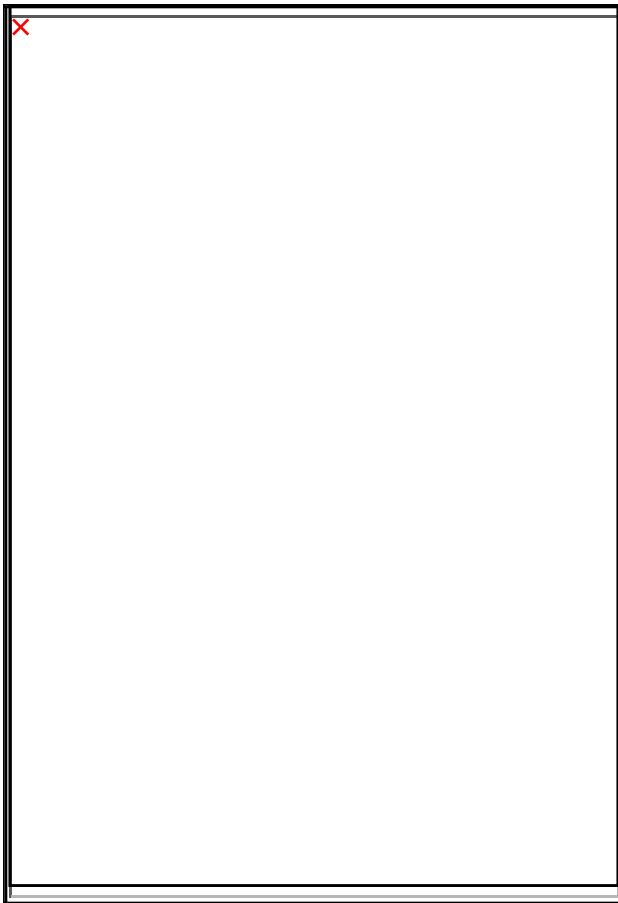


Two original sculptures now stand as silent sentinels at the Army War College Alumni Memorial

Donated Soldiers Crosses now stand at the Army War College Alumni Memorial



Two original sculptures now stand as silent sentinels at the Army War College Memorial at Carlisle Barracks. They have been donated by George and Michelle Turak on behalf of the American Legion Post 405 at the Union League of Philadelphia.

The Soldiers Cross sculptures are 'posted' within the quiet, reflective memorial space that was refined and developed by the Resident Class of 2015 as their class gift: an enduring contribution to the memory of those USAWC alumni who died in conflict.

"I'd like to honor the people who have sacrificed everything," said Turak, a veteran of the 1st Cavalry Division, 2nd of the 12th, in Vietnam, 1969-70.

"Because I lost some of my buddies over there, this is how I try to give back, honoring the men and women who have sacrificed everything, and honoring the gold

star families.

"They've given more to America than all the politicians put together," said Turak. "These are the people who do things for America."

On November 9, at 3:30 p.m., the leadership of the Army War College will join with Turak and his colleagues to dedicate the Soldier Cross. He will be accompanied by Vietnam veterans who share Turak's passion for honoring veterans, having themselves earned Purple Hearts and a long list of

honors: Bill Vosseler, David A. Christian, Bill Wheatley, Paul Werner, and the artist Andrew Chernak.

Chernak is a Vietnam veteran with a Purple Heart, and a skill for sculpting. He has created these Soldiers' crosses, gave a gold star plaque of his design and sculpture to each of the Armed Services, and is currently creating the Gold Star Mother statue at Arlington, said Turak.

Turak is a long-time art dealer now retired from his gallery in center city Philadelphia. He has demonstrated his commitment to honoring America's current and veteran military members. He is a friend to, and donor for, the Army Heritage & Education Center and the National Museum of the US Army. "The average Soldier doesn't get his story told," he said, about his support to the two organizations. And, after attending the National Security Seminar at the Army War College in June 2014, he was inspired to give back, and turned to his colleagues on the Union League's Armed Services Council.

American Legion Post 405- The Union League of Philadelphia is descended from Meade Post 1 Grand Army of the Republic, established in 1866. Colloquially known as "Benjamin Franklin's post or "Philly Post 405" it is the City of Philadelphia's cornerstone in support of military veterans and the patriotic spirit of the city, according to its web site.

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