



City of McKinney Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ceremony at future site of Veterans Memorial Park in McKinney

State, county and local leaders present Community Covenant to veterans, servicemen and women

McKINNEY, Texas (Oct. 29, 2009) - The City of McKinney will honor all veterans with an emphasis on those from Collin County at a ceremony at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 7 at the site of the Veterans Memorial Park in McKinney, 6053 Weiskopf Ave. The event will be a full celebration of all military personnel who have served and are currently serving our country. The service is on Weiskopf Ave. south of Collin McKinney Parkway and the Tournament Players Golf Course Clubhouse in Craig Ranch.

New to the ceremony this year is the Community Covenant presentation, designed to develop and foster continued support of military personnel and their families, both at current duty station and as they transfer from state to state. The program, originated with the Army but extending to all military branches, is tailored at the local level and brought to McKinney by Congressmen Sam Johnson and Ralph Hall, Mayor Brian Loughmiller and Collin County Judge Keith Self.

"McKinney is extremely proud of our hometown heroes who we are memorializing in the future Veterans Memorial Park, those who are serving now, and those who have joined or returned to our community after their service has ended. The Community Covenant and the ceremony on Veterans Day underline our appreciation for the priceless service military personnel give to all of us," said McKinney Mayor Brian Loughmiller.

The Veterans Memorial Park in McKinney will honor all veterans and memorialize those who lost their lives from Collin County by engraving their names on a wall to be built at the park. The McKinney Armed Services Memorial Board has raised a total of \$720,500 to build the park, including a \$350,000 donation from the McKinney Community Development Corporation. The estimated cost of the project is \$1.1 million.

Ronnie Foster, a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran from McKinney and McKinney Armed Services Memorial Board member, also will address the crowd at the Veterans Day Ceremony. Foster generated interest to build the park by gathering names of Collin County veterans who never returned home from wars overseas. So far, 322 names of Collin County residents who died in the service of their country have been confirmed.

To start the ceremony, the McKinney North High School Choir will perform the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *God Bless America*. The McKinney Fire Department Honor Guard and the Pipes and Drums unit will present the colors. A fly-over in the Missing Man formation by four AT-6 aircraft out of Aero Country Airport in McKinney will end the program.

For more information about how to donate to the memorial, submit a name for the wall or to purchase a brick paver, visit www.mckinneytexas.org.

#

About McKinney

McKinney, Texas, is unique by nature. As one of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S., McKinney has a current population of 122,000. Incorporated in 1848, the city is located 30 miles north of Dallas and is the county seat of Collin County. McKinney offers rolling hills, lush trees, a historic downtown square and unique neighborhoods and developments, and it was recently ranked as one of the Top 10 Best Places to Move by Forbes Magazine. Visit the city's Web site at www.mckinneytexas.org.

Media Contact: Anna Folmnsbee, afolmnsb@mckinneytexas.org, 972-547-7525