

MEMORIAL

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he used on the local memorial through work on the national memorial.

"The granite, the same style of lettering, is all the same as the wall in Washington," Century said. "As I worked on the wall in D.C., I felt the incredible number of lives resonating at my fingertips. Doing this wall, seeing my reflection again in the deep granite, I felt aware of them again."

The idea for a memorial to honor war dead from Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry and DeSoto counties started with Tonjes about 10 years ago. Tonjes said neither he nor his fellow veterans knew the process to get the memorial built.

Once the site and design were selected, research on the names had to be done. Permits and permissions had to be secured.

There would be a cost, but the veterans didn't know how much it would be.

"Having the heart to do something is not having the knowledge," Tonjes said. "Once we decided on a design, I went to (local builder) Owen Ames Kimball and submitted the plans."

The company president came out to talk, Tonjes said.

"Instead of getting a cost estimate, I said 'Why don't we just build it,'" said Steve Shimp, the local company presi-



COURTESY PHOTO

The Southwest Florida Vietnam Memorial lists the names of 76 dead from five area counties etched into three, black granite, 9-foot-by-8-foot panels. It's located at the corner of McGregor and Colonial Boulevards.

dent. "We had a meeting with some sub-contractors and they said they'd do their share of the work or donate cash."

Despite donations, Century ran into about \$25,000 in costs for his work.

"When I heard about that, I decided we could raise some money to help," said Al Hanser, president of Sanibel Captive Trust Company. "Lucas (Century) is so popular and does so much community work, we raised close to \$30,000."

The memorial could cost as much as \$125,000 to complete. Plans call for black granite panels to be etched with service members' thoughts from their war time letters.

"We would like to start a fund for the maintenance of the memorial," Tonjes said. "If there are any memorials like pictures or medals left at the site, like they do in Washington, we would like to archive them for display." ■

get involved

>> To share all or part of a letter from Vietnam for the memorial, call Craig Tonjes at 239-482-6903. Donations can be made to Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 594 Memorial Fund at P.O. Box 9325, Fort Myers, FL 33902.

if you go

>> Names on the wall: Arthur James Anderson; Ralph Lee Ford; Leo Fred Johnson; James Alvin Pace; Allan James Williams; Nicholas Joseph Cutinha; William Ray Cruckshank; James William Peterson; Norman Casey Ballard; Cullie Wilson Bryant; Donald William Atwell Jr.; Christopher J Dean Jr.; Robert Gene Floyd; John Berkley Rolle; Ernest M. Schultz III; Thomas J. Smallwood; Columbus Watson Jr.; Robert Eugene Whitten; John Kent Hayward; George Daniel Theisen; William B. Brown; Charles W. McKinnie Jr.; Paul Edward Irvin; Michael Joseph Thielen; Daniel Harold Hackett; Robert Louis Crews; James Frederick Askin; Tadeusz Marian Kepczyk; James Edward Taylor; Willie Michael Rhodes; George Hayes Barger; Wayne Morris Bell; Robert Elmer Bryant; Warren Nelson Chapman; Harold Clarence Cook; Gary Leonard Daniels; Robert Harry darling; Frederick C. Forte Jr.; Stephen Douglas Gucofski; Robert Fulton Helveston; Wil-

liam Colqueth Hix Jr.; Roy Donald Hutting; Ronald Rene Kirkpatrick; James Alfred Luckey; Thomas Lee McGee; J.C. Theodore Miller; Willie James Moore; Raymond Earl Ott; Jackie Lee Drury; David Keith Wyrick; Charlie C. Anthony; John Lumsden Barnes; Larry Gene Batcher; Dale Vincent Bremerman Jr.; William Edward Dillender; William Neil Flint; George Dennis Johnson; Frederick Richard Levins; Jon Hubbard Sanders; Robert Hugh Steele; David Bartlett Fitzgerald; Gerald Richard Hauswirth; Ronald Warren Duckett; Harold Bascom Durham Jr.; John William Hanscom; David Robert Houser; Arelinn Lewis Jackson; William Leroy Johnson; Ronald Francis Liscum; Charles Reuben Outlaw Jr.; James Doil Rader; David Stuart Taylor Jr.; Thomas Victor Pilson; Christopher Micha Daniels

— The names on the wall were etched in random order to not show favoritism to any county. ■

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