

## Article for Diane Harper, Black Hills District President

Friendly Flower Garden Club is very proud to announce the installation of a Blue Star Memorial By-Way Marker in Lacey Civic Plaza in the city of Lacey - next to Applebee's on Sleater-Kinney Road. When we decided to take on this project, we considered several sites in Lacey, but the most obvious site was Lacey Civic Plaza, a park dedicated to honoring those who serve and have served in our Armed Forces.

We presented a proposal to Lacey City Council members, who enthusiastically endorsed our project. We began raising funds in October, including at the Black Hills District meeting. We applied for a WSFGC Project Grant and received \$700 to help purchase and install the Marker. Applebee's in Lacey sponsored a "Short Stack For A Tall Cause" fundraiser in January which was very well attended and helped us raise \$714. We ordered our Marker in January.

Staff at Lacey Parks & Recreation worked with us to determine the perfect spot for our Marker. An area surrounded by Rhododendrons with three flags (American, state, and city) in the background was selected. We raised sufficient funds to purchase a beautiful piece of marble on which to mount our Marker as well as a granite meditation bench.

Originally we planned to hold a dedication ceremony on Flag Day, June 14. Unfortunately, the factory making our Marker was closed due to the virus and we did not receive it until the end of May, too late to plan a proper ceremony. We then scheduled our dedication ceremony for Veterans Day, November 11, but were informed that it would have to be a virtual one. We did not feel that a virtual ceremony would do justice to the Marker and the men and women it honors. Our dedication ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Armed Forces Day, May 15, 2021.

Our Marker is now in place, thanks to the help provided by Parks & Rec staff who were instrumental in preparing the chosen site, getting the marble piece and bench from the quarry, and mounting our Marker on the marble. If you happen to be in Lacey, please stop by and view our Marker.