



THE HIGHGROUND RISING

Expanding the Promise
HONOR, EDUCATE AND HEAL



"I want people to experience the air at The Highground — the feeling, the people, the wind, the place. The memorial statues inspire reverence, but The Highground is more than that: You understand the peace Veterans and non-Veterans feel here, and you begin to seek it too."

Mary Haupt
La Crosse Vet Center

The Mission of The Highground Veterans Memorial Park is to Honor, Educate and Heal

The Vision of The Highground Veterans Memorial Park is three-fold:

To Honor the sacrifices of Veterans, active service men and women and their families through our memorial park, services and events.

To Educate the public about the services rendered, the hardships endured, the sacrifices made, and the human cost asked of and proudly paid for by our service men and women.

To Heal Veterans and their families by providing a park as a place for fellowship, support and reflection.



The Highground is located in pristine Central Wisconsin, approximately three miles west of Neillsville, along Highway 10, on a breathtaking campus totaling approximately 155 acres.

The Highground honors those who have been lost and pays tribute to Veterans of the past, present and future. The beautiful grounds of The Highground are maintained by a passionate and dedicated crew of more than 200 volunteers, many whom are Veterans.

Annual visitors are on the rise with 225,000 in 2019 alone. Of the approximately 7,000 visitors who are Veterans, many receive personalized support services while touring the tributes and memorials or participating in retreats and services.



Expanding The Highground for Generations

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park includes:

- More than a dozen easily-accessible Tributes
- Honor Stones throughout the Park that honor Veterans' service including Korean Stones, Legacy Stones, Persian Gulf Stones, Military Working Dog Stones, United In Service Stones and Meditation Stones
- A Museum containing over 4,000 books, a gallery for exhibits, and media and meeting rooms
- Four miles of hiking trails, pavilions for group gatherings and areas that offer visitors the opportunity to relax in a beautiful, tranquil setting



Support, Educate and Help Restore

The Highground's Vision

- Offers an opportunity to honor Veterans by educating large tour and school groups
- Connects Veterans to essential health services and providers
- Provides a Veteran-focused gathering space for events and holiday services
- Offers specialized retreats and support groups



Going Above And Beyond

The stories of Veterans are etched in minds and hearts -- some to remain hidden forever. These are stories about heroes and heartache, honor and healing – but most of all, the stories are about HOPE. Over the last 35 years, The Highground has worked to honor Veterans, remember those who have died in service to our country, educate the next generation about the importance of Veteran sacrifice and create new ways to help returning service personnel heal and become whole again.

The Time Is Now

Expansion

Today The Highground is the largest privately funded, continually-staffed Veterans memorial in the country. But the interest in The Highground is outweighing the organization's ability to respond to the demand for increased space and services.

That is why The Highground Board of Directors is seeking \$4M through The Highground Rising capital campaign. Campaign proceeds will pay off the \$450,000 mortgage, build a new \$2.5M Welcome and Visitor Center, provide \$500,000 to increase accessibility and park safety, and develop formal mental health and therapy or referral services.



A Moment of Grace

Grace comes to us in many forms. Grace came to a Vietnam Veteran through the plight of an American Bald Eagle that was injured and brought to the Antigo Raptor Rehabilitation Center in 2004 to regain its health.

After the eagle's rehabilitation, Bob Mingus, a Vietnam Veteran and former member of the 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles, was asked to participate in the eagle's release. Bob had carried many emotional burdens from his experiences in Vietnam. One was the death of Dean Bonneau, a very good friend, declared missing in action. Bob felt he should have been allowed to try to recover Dean's body. This lack of closure had weighed heavily on Bob for decades.



At the eagle's release, Bob's job was to give the bird lift as it found its wings. "In the moments before the release, the eagle seemed to know what was happening and relaxed in my arms," reflected Bob. "As I let go of the eagle and watched him fly majestically away, I felt a sense of peace I have never felt before. I was finally able to let go of some of the pain I felt from losing Dean."

This release of pain, guilt and memories in the most perfect location, is what transpires at The Highground for each Veteran — in their own way, every day.



Benefits of the Expansion

The expansion of The Highground will take the organization to the next level. Improved services and facilities for Veterans and their families will provide the following:

- Increased financial stability and long-term sustainability with the pay-off of the \$450,000 mortgage
 - Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring access to the entire Park and all tribute sites for disabled Veterans and visitors
- A new 12,000 square-foot Welcome and Visitor Center, with space for larger events, meetings, and programs, as well as mental health services
- Improved parking, allowing for safer access to all the tributes as well as the Welcome and Visitor Center

Now We Need You!

Donor Recognition

All contributions of any amount to The Highground Rising are greatly appreciated. Pledges and outright gifts will be acknowledged throughout the course of the campaign and on the campaign website unless the donor wishes to remain anonymous.

Gifts of \$1,000 or more will be permanently recognized on a Wall of Honor in the new Welcome and Visitor Center. See details in the case statement or on the website under the heading Donor Recognition & Naming Opportunities for more information.

All gifts are tax deductible and pledges may be remitted in one or several payments over time up to five years if desired. When you are asked to give, please say, "Yes, I want to support The Highground!" When you are asked to give, please give generously.

Giving Societies:	Contribution of:
Fleet	\$500,000 and more
Division	\$250,000-\$499,999
Regiment	\$100,000-\$249,999
Battalion	\$50,000-\$99,999
Company	\$25,000-\$49,999
Platoon	\$10,000-\$24,999
Squad	\$2,500-\$9,999
Fire Teams	\$1,000-\$2,499

To learn more about specific naming opportunities not listed in the brochure or for more information on how to volunteer or give, please contact:

Chris Pettis, Executive Director, director@thehighground.us
Gary Weirauch, The Highground Rising Campaign Chair, gwyro@tds.net or visit thehighground.us



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