ST. LANDRY PARISH VETERANS' MEMORIAL PROJECT by Randy Aymond

After seeing Mrs. Pat Mason-Guillory's plea for help in landscaping the St. Landry Parish Veteran's Memorial on the news, I reached out to her to get the details. After visiting the site, it was clear that I would first have to clean out all of the existing old, dead plants and prune the trees that had been neglected.

Once this was done, I reached out to Acadiana Native Plant Project (ANPP) about possibly donating some of the plants, as this would be a big job. ANPP has a program where they will collaborate with other organizations to promote the planting of native Louisiana plants by advising on the landscaping placement and helping to create a plant list. They will then decide on the amount of plants to be donated to the project.

Dona Weifenbach met me out at the veteran's memorial to develop a landscape plan and plant list. I then applied online through ANPP's website for assistance with the project. Before long, I learned my project had been approved by the ANPP Board for a $200 plant donation, based on their wholesale prices. This covered about 1/3 of the plants needed for the project, and after reaching out to family and friends on social media, I was able to raise another $900 for plants as well as mulch and fertilizer.

For the work day, Lawrence Rozas, another ANPP member came out to supervise the planting and guide the volunteers in proper practices. After 3.5 hours of work, all four garden beds were planted, mulched and watered in, just in time for Veteran's Day. We are working with Mrs. Pat Mason-Guillory with the St. Landry Parish Veteran's Memorial to build out a rotation of volunteers for regular upkeep of the new landscaping.

ANPP had a critical role in the success of this project through both their guidance and financial support to get the project off of the ground. The veterans of St. Landry Parish now have a beautiful space for reflection. As both veteran and a volunteer at ANPP myself, this project has special meaning to me, and I am grateful for ANPP's role in making it a reality.







