

Spirit of Lewisville Award – 2019

Steve Davenport

On April 2, 2018, Lewisville resident Steve Davenport addressed City Council during the Citizen Forum portion of the regularly scheduled meeting. Davenport identified himself as a Vietnam War veteran and a career truck driver, whose job included driving The Wall That Heals to exhibit locations throughout the United States.

The Wall That Heals is a mobile three-quarter-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. The replica is displayed in cities across the country as a way to give veterans and others a chance to experience the memorial without making the trip to Washington.

Davenport said he wanted to work with the City to bring The Wall That Heals to Lewisville.

During the ensuing weeks, Davenport helped special events staff prepare and submit an application to be considered as a host site. He advised city staff on suitable spaces that would accommodate the exhibit and the crowds of visitors it would attract. Once the application was submitted in early June 2018, Davenport used his connections with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to encourage Lewisville's selection for the 2019 national tour.

City staff was notified on November 9, 2018, that Lewisville had been selected as a host site for The Wall That Heals as part of the 2019 tour. Sadly, staff subsequently learned that Steve Davenport had died unexpectedly just one day earlier, on November 8.

Davenport was honored in 2011 at the White House as part of the Champions for Change program, which salutes innovators, educators and builders. For more than three decades, starting in the 1980s, Steve made the annual Memorial Day pilgrimage to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. He was well known in the trucking community and veteran community for his dedication to Gold Star Mothers, Rolling Thunder, and The Wall That Heals.

By stepping forward on his own initiative to volunteer his time and expertise, Davenport helped secure the first Lewisville visit of The Wall That Heals, an event that will make a lasting impression on hundreds of veterans, school children, and other visitors to the May 2-5 display.