

# Boulder is placed at Reservoir Park in honor of fallen Marine

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A 21,000 pound historic Portage Path boulder is relocated to Reservoir Park. Deputy Mayor Dave Lieberth holds a replica of the future plaque to be placed on the stone. The granite boulder will be dedicated with a plaque to Marine Cpl. Derek Wyatt at a later date. (Phil Masturzo/Akron Beacon Journal)

A boulder that for nearly 90 years marked an ancient American Indian walkway through Akron is now going to be used to tell future generations about a fallen Marine who loved baseball.

The boulder was placed at the city's Reservoir Park baseball field Thursday.

The park is where Marine Cpl. Derek Wyatt played when he attended East High School. The ball field was dedicated to the Marine on Sept. 11.

A new plaque will be placed on the boulder dedicating the field to the Marine and former All-City second baseman on the East High School baseball team.

Wyatt, 25, was killed in combat in Afghanistan Dec. 6, 2010, one day before his wife Kait Wyatt, a Marine veteran, gave birth to the couple's first child, Michael.

The boulder and a bronze plaque originally were placed on Perkins Park Drive, city officials believe, by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1925.

Lucco Construction Co. donated its equipment and time to move the seven-ton granite boulder and place it behind the backstop at the baseball field.

City officials said they believed that the bronze Portage Path plaque disappeared from the boulder two decades ago and the boulder needed to be moved anyway to make room for the new Grizzly Ridge exhibit coming to the Akron Zoo.

"We have solved several problems with one generous donation," said Akron deputy mayor Dave Lieberth in a news release.

Perkins Park Drive was closed to traffic and vacated by the city this year.

The Portage Path trail is marked by a series of 50 bronze sculptures placed along the trail in 2001 at a cost of half-million dollars. Included are two statues of an American Indian carrying a canoe at each end of the Portage Path.

"The relic of the last ice age is being repurposed for the best cause imaginable," Lieberth said in a news release.

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