

GE Johnson Construction Company

Pikes Peak Regional Peace Officers' Memorial

Category 8: Best Building Project – General Contractor (Under \$10 Million)

Located in Colorado Springs' Memorial Park, the Pikes Peak Region Peace Officers' Memorial (PPRPOM) recognizes law enforcement officers who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their communities. The PPRPOM complements the Colorado State and National Peace Officers' Memorials, honoring those who served in El Paso and Teller counties. As of the now, 32 officers' names are etched onto the memorial, including Micah Flick, whose watch ended on Feb. 5, 2018.

With a memorial project this significant, everything from the start of the path towards the focal point, including the small details, were critical. Visitors are welcomed by a path decorated with the engraved names of supporters that leads them to the memorial. The sparkling, dark gray concrete spiraling wall has a striking blue line, representing law enforcement, flanked by a wall that displays 22 enlarged, bronze replicas of badges. Each badge is unique and represents all the jurisdictions in El Paso and Teller counties, including the police forces for each city, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and many others.

The path and memorial curl around the wall of bronze shields to a set of three flagpoles that bear the United States of America, Colorado, and PPRPOM flags, leading up to an enormous bronze statue of the Lion of Lucerne. The lion, lying on its side with a sword impaling its ribs, represents the ultimate sacrifice these protectors have made for their community. It's here by the Lion of Lucerne that you'll find the etched names of the first fallen officers included on the memorial.

Working within the confines of budget and design

The ribbon cutting, held in May of this year, was especially important to those who have been a part of the PPRPOM as this project was over a decade in the making (photos 1 and 2). Originally slated for America the Beautiful Park in 2005, the PPRPOM endured three concept renditions by the time construction began in December 2017. The budget had drastically increased due to design alterations and inflation, and it was up to everyone involved – the local law enforcement departments, Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Department, and many others – to find a way to make this memorial come to fruition. The project's momentum truly increased when Commander Martin D. Edmondson of the Colorado Springs Police Department got involved and

provided the leadership this project required.

GE Johnson Special Projects, design firm N.E.S., and subcontractors alike dedicated themselves to the success of the project. The groundbreaking was held on July 28, 2017 – well before the budget and design were finalized. This was risky, but GE Johnson Special Projects and Commander Edmondson made a commitment to get this memorial constructed, and the groundbreaking was the catalyst. With their strong subcontractor relationships, GE Johnson Special Projects stepped up to cover the difference between the project cost and fundraising yields by collecting in-kind donations from industry partners. With this, they met with the owner’s team to finalize a realistic proposal with a final project cost of \$1.6 million. This financially viable design would not have been possible without the designers, N.E.S.

“We could not sacrifice design for this important tribute to the fallen, and [N.E.S. was] able to keep it cost effective and in line with the funds that were raised for the project with an amazing visual impact,” said GE Johnson Project Manager Rachel Starr.

Attention to detail

With a stringent budget and high expectations, GE Johnson self-performed the spiraling concrete walls of the memorial (photos 3 and 4). A dark gray concrete was set with special radius forms - segmented, flat Symons® panels that were pieced together to make the curves (photo 5). Construction Director Tom Barger pioneered the idea of the sparkling detail of the memorial’s concrete by including metal shards. After the initial installation, Windsor Concrete went above and beyond, filling the walls where air bubbles showed up and rubbing the concrete until it achieved the perfect amount of smoothness. They did not settle for less than perfection.

Colorado Hardscapes installed the blue line of epoxy along the edge of the memorial wall with crushed mirror and glass, and the radius curve light was installed by Encore Electric. This blue line represents the fine line between order and anarchy, a symbol commonly used in law enforcement. The 22 enlarged, bronze badges were 3D printed in Oregon and cast in bronze in Loveland, Colorado at Art Castings of Colorado (photos 6 and 7). Landscaping, performed by Monarch Landscaping, played a large role in the aesthetics and completion of the memorial given its placement in Memorial Park.

Finally, the life-sized Lion of Lucerne statue, entitled “Fallen Lion,” was sculpted in clay by Larry Terrafranca, a local Colorado Springs artist, with intricate detail – down to each strand of hair on the lion’s mane. The bronze pieces were cast, welded together, and patinaed (photos 8 and 9). The lion sits atop a granite plinth from South Dakota. He is the focal point of the memorial – both aesthetically and symbolically. Centered in the arch of the memorial, the Lion of Lucerne represents the ultimate sacrifice of protectors and pays tribute to fallen officers that are honored at the memorial. The Lion of Lucerne dates back to the 17th century, originally created to commemorate Swiss Guards killed in the French Revolution. In the PPRPOM, the lion’s paw rests on the granite foundation in defense of the region, just as those in law enforcement at the federal, state, and local level do. His gaze is fixed on the eastern wall where 22 bronze shields identify the region’s Law Enforcement Agencies. Lying on his side with a sword impaling his ribs, he sits atop this quote: “I HAVE BEEN WHERE YOU FEAR TO BE./I HAVE SEEN WHAT YOU FEAR TO SEE./I HAVE DONE WHAT YOU FEAR TO DO./ALL THESE THINGS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU.” (Photo 10).

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which was attended by more than 100 people and broadcast by the local Fox station, Commander Edmondson stated: “I truly believe this memorial meets and exceeds the goal and expectation of the original 2005 intentions: A place of remembrance to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their community.”

Safety precautions and obstacles

With the location of the memorial in a public park, security was paramount to keep vandals at bay. Full fencing around the PPRPOM site was installed with only one access point, and additional police security was scheduled to patrol the area. Conversely, the fencing not only kept the memorial safe; it also kept the public safe from construction activities.

One of the most challenging tasks was figuring out how to transport the 562-pound Lion of Lucerne without injuring workers (or the lion, for that matter) and onto the granite plinth. This required extensive preplanning and the solution was creative. The lion was transported to the memorial with a cart, as the mode of transport needed to be nimble, given the curved design of the memorial. To lift the lion on to the plinth, a forklift was utilized.

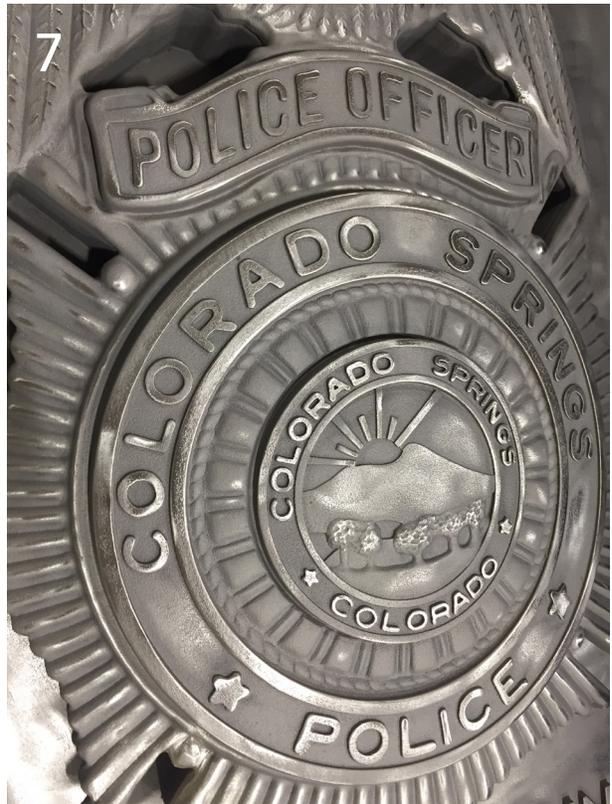
Bringing the community together – during and after the project

The Pike's Peak Region Peace Officers' Memorial provides the community with a tangible, interactive space to remember the great sacrifice officers have made to keep us safe. Supported by the Colorado Springs' Arts Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, City Council, local law enforcement agencies, and the region's citizens, it truly is a project for all of the Pikes Peak Region – and beyond. As a show of broad support, the pavers leading to the memorial bear the names of supporters of the memorial, including community members, local businesses, and loved ones of fallen officers.

The PPRPOM has already reached beyond Colorado Springs and the boundaries of Colorado. A “regular mom” in Dallas, Texas commented on the City of Colorado Springs' website: “I just wanted to let you know I am really blown away by that memorial statue. What it stands for, the quote etched in it, the haunting visual of the [slain] lion... It really takes my breath away. Please know, this memorial touched my heart and it is so WELL DONE. The image has stayed with me all day, and the quote has been written in my heart.”











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"I HAVE BEEN WHERE YOU FEAR TO BE.
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ALL THESE THINGS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU."
- ANONYMOUS -