

Families envision memorial wall for fallen soldiers

By Frank X. Mullen Jr., Reno Gazette-Journal

Families of military members killed in the war on terror have proposed a wall memorial in Carson City to honor all Nevadans who have fallen in battle since the Civil War.

“The freedom we have today, they have given us,” said Roger Varela of Fernley, founder of Gold Star Families of Nevada Nationals Inc. “We don’t want them to ever be forgotten.”

Varela’s son, Army Pfc. Alejandro Varela, 19, died in Iraq on May 17, 2007. Varela said the idea for a memorial in Nevada’s capital came from Sgt. Brad Williams of the South Lake Tahoe Police Department.

Williams’ son, Army Pfc. Phillip Brandon Williams, 21, was killed by a sniper in Iraq while protecting other soldiers who were dismantling a roadside bomb. The Gardnerville man died Oct. 9, 2006.

“Roger and I were at the dedication of a memorial in Hawthorne six months ago and we wondered why there isn’t one in the capital,” Williams said. “It just took off from there.”

Both men stressed that the memorial is subject to the state’s approval process and isn’t a sure thing. They said plans are progressing, and several contributors have said they will donate some of the \$500,000 needed to build the wall.

Read the whole story