



LETTER TO THE EDITOR – September 25, 2013 Updated September 27, 2013 – Councilman John H. Holman

Community supports a joint war memorial

I read with disappointment VFW Post Commander Frank Bannister's letter to the editor ("Joint memorial ramifications will divide community", Auburn Reporter, Sept. 13).

The claimed assertion that a joint memorial will divide our community is simply bogus. The principle division is within VFW post 1741 of which he is the commander. A small minority of VFW post 1741 members support the joint memorial.

The letters and emails I have been receiving from the broader community, many of which are from Vietnam era veterans, are overwhelmingly in support of a joint memorial.

The decision about a joint memorial will not be based on a tally of letters and emails. If it were, the letters in support would carry the day. However, this decision will be made on the proposal's merits and measured by what is right, fair and just.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Most people are thermometers that record or register the temperature of majority opinion, not thermostats that transform and regulate the temperature of society."

Commander Bannister, thank you for informing me what the opinion of the majority of your membership is. That task is important; however, it is not transformational. Your reporting does not help our community grow, heal, trust or extend respect and love.

I met last week with City Council members from Arlington, Texas and Wichita, Kan. Both of these cities have joint Vietnam War memorials. They reported having difficult and contentious times over many months as they considered joint Vietnam War memorials. They decided to build joint memorials in both cities.

Neither Arlington nor Wichita has regrets. I was informed that both memorials are now well received and are places of honor and respect in their cities. They are locations for reflection and reconciliation.

– **John H. Holman, Auburn City Councilmember**