

## *What is the Ag Center Memorial Garden?*

Please visit the center courtyard here at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center. Placed there are bricks dedicated in memory, honor or support of persons, organizations and clubs.

Also donated as part of the Ag Center Memorial Garden, the American and California flags are located next to Harvest Hall. The American flag honors Raymond D. Hill, II, who lost his life in Iraq battling for freedom, while the California flag recognizes of all those in uniform from Stanislaus County who have given their lives to protect our freedom.

*Please visit these areas and read the inscriptions.*



Dedication Ceremony October 2007



Volunteers add Commemorative Bricks  
as the Memorial Garden Grows

## *How Can I Be a Part of the Memorial Garden?*

Anyone is welcome to donate a brick with their choice of inscription. The purchase price of \$76 goes towards the cost of purchasing the brick and funding the brick garden and flags into perpetuity.

An order form is included with this flyer. You may also call for more information:  
Cynthia Darmstandler, Ag Commissioner's Office  
(209) 525-4730



## *History of the Stanislaus Agricultural Center Memorial Garden*

# *Vision*

The vision for a Memorial Garden predates the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center. When the Ag Center was built, 4-H members hoped for a special place to honor the memory of those important to the youth program. Absent from the Ag Center were an American and California flag. Ray Hill, Sr. then an employee of Stanislaus County Cooperative Extension, advocated actively for a flag pole.

On October 29, 2005, Raymond D. Hill, II, lost his life in Iraq battling for freedom. Ray Hill's eldest son Raymond had been a 4-H member and leader and was employed with the Modesto Irrigation District. Ingrid Mello, who grew up in 4-H along with Raymond, approached the 4-H office with her mother, Els Blom, about establishing a memorial to Raymond. When we contacted Ray, Sr. he told us of Glenn Mount's intent to donate an American flag and pole in Raymond's memory. Glenn and Raymond were co-workers at MID.

With this new confluence of energy and purpose, the Stanislaus Agricultural Center Memorial Garden Committee came into being early in 2006. Together we expanded the vision of the garden to include all those people who have contributed to our county's agricultural legacy, and through the Mount family's generosity, it would be announced and dignified with two flag poles.

Stanislaus County Chief Executive Officer Rick Robinson met with the committee early on and articulated the County's requirement that the memorial be open and available to everyone. He asked that the memorial to Raymond Hill be expanded to include recognition of all those in uniform from Stanislaus County who have given their lives to protect our freedom. The Board of Supervisors followed up by adopting the statement that appears on the stone monument now placed at the base of the American flag.

Every person who participated in this process has enhanced the process and improved the result. With the placement of commemorative bricks, we have room and a process to add names indefinitely into the future, making this a living, growing monument. The young oak tree that grows in the middle of the Ag Center Courtyard, our very own "Liberty Tree" or "Tree of Life," with its American and California sentinels waving in the breeze, symbolizes the hope we all share for a rich and enduring agricultural community history that the names recognized here helped to build and preserve, and will perpetuate.

### *Memorial Garden Committee Members:*

Pam Atherstone  
Els Blom  
Mike Brady  
Cynthia Darmstandler  
Kirk Gustafson

Ray Hill  
Russell and Jennifer Hill  
Ingrid Mello  
Mary Mount  
Ken Willmarth



# *Legacy*