

# Collegedale breaks ground on veterans memorial park

BY BETH RUCKER  
STAFF WRITER

Collegedale held a groundbreaking ceremony Wednesday night for Veterans Memorial Park.

"I'm very excited for our community to have (the park)," Mayor Tim Johnson said.

The ceremony included the presentation of a U.S. Army Cobra helicopter that will be kept on the park grounds once construction is complete.

The copter came from Fort Drum, N.Y., home of the Army's 10th Mountain Division, Collegedale City Manager Bert Coolidge said.

The park's board of directors said they are hoping to get a U.S. Navy anchor, a tank or armored vehicle and another piece of military machinery.

County Commissioner Bill Hullander also announced a

county-funded marble bench and bronze statue will be placed in the park. The statue, of a veteran holding a flag, will be placed on the bench, he said.

Vietnam veteran Phil Garver said the park will be completed in phases. The first phase, to be complete on Memorial Day, includes the erection of flagpoles and flags from all 50 states, he said.

The next phase is scheduled to be complete by Veterans Day. Mr. Garver said he hopes the park will be complete by Memorial Day 2004.

The park was Mr. Garver's idea, and he said it has been a working plan for the past two years.

"We're really excited about putting the shovels in the ground and getting it started," he said.

*E-mail Beth Rucker at  
brucker@timesfreepress.com*