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Rock talk

BARRE — We don't yet have all of the details, but we do know that "Youth Triumphant," "Bobby Burns" and the immigrant Italian "Stonecutter" that stands in Dente Park can expect some company in terms of public sculpture thanks to a program funded with some of the money Charlie Semprebon left the city when he died three years ago.

While city officials sort out what to do with the rest of the Semprebon's primary bequest, organizers of the fledgling "Stone Sculpture Legacy Program" say two new public sculptures are now coming Barre's way.

Both were selected with the help of a panel of regional art experts who reviewed proposals as part of a competitive process late last week, says volunteer project organizer Sue Higby. Higby notes that neither will be as grand — at least in terms of scale — as Barre's three signature "gateway" sculptures.

According to Higby, the two newly commissioned pieces are decidedly different, though both will add to the cultural mix of a community that has an awfully long history of supporting public art.

"Barre is Vermont's original art city, so it's wonderful having the chance to commission new works for our community," says Higby.

According to Higby, one of the winning entries is a contemporary piece called "Coffee Break." Proposed by sculptor Heather M. Ritchie, the piece will recreate the image of idle stone blocks waiting to be shaped where granite workers set down their tools, lunch pails and cups of coffee for scheduled breaks.

The other, Higby says, will be a "classical figure sculpture" of Sir Isaac Barre — the man for whom the Granite City was named. Giuliano Cecchinelli Sr. will carve Barre's likeness as part of what Higby says will be a piece of the legacy project's first installment.

"My hope is that this multi-year project supported by the Semprebon Fund will build community pride and, at the same time, inspire other cities and towns to invest in new public sculptures," she says.

According to Higby, an informal reception where both artists will display models of their respective sculptures will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 25, from 6 to 7 p.m. at Studio Place Arts.