

Local monument company wins another prestigious award

KITCHENER - You may have heard of **Superior Memorials** from its community involvement and sponsorships with Kitchener Minor Hockey, Kitchener Minor Baseball and Kitchener Minor Soccer.

Or maybe you heard its president, John-Michael Weber, on the 570 News show "Ask the Expert" recently. This past fall Superior Memorials earned more publicity when it won the highly coveted Eugene H Faehnle Award from the American Institute of Commemorative Art (AICA). Membership in this North American association is by invitation only and there are just five Canadian companies that are members.

Last year at AICA's annual conference in New Orleans, Superior's design for the Cretiu family's memorial was chosen Best Overall for Design and Craftsmanship. The memorial was designed and personalized after learning about the family's fascinating story. The family escaped communist Romania decades ago with only the belongings in their car, one of which was a framed painting of a tree and four cardinals.

Weber notes, "This was very important to them so we designed a memorial that represents the family tree with mom and dad on one branch and the two daughters on the other branch. The memorial tapers from 10" to 8" and has bull-nosed edges to soften the look. The base also has curved ends to match the edges of the tablet, and the cardinals were hand carved. The memorial has 4 granite components in total. We thought this would capture what the family was looking for."



Weber explains that this was a team effort. Superior's in-house artist, Marilyn Kroes, and Master Carver Rob Stoker, were instrumental in drawing and presenting ideas to show the family. Stoker, who has over 40 years of stone carving experience, notes, "Over the years we have learned how to do almost anything on a monument. Technology has helped but there is still a lot of old school artistic work using hammer and chisel."

For over 90 years now, Superior Memorials has been showing what a difference expert designers can make. According to Weber, "Our artists and stone carvers are the best in the business and we pride ourselves on listening to what each family wants and then personalizing that memorial as much as possible." When you enter Superior's large, indoor showroom you will notice several industry design awards.

"Being a member of AICA has allowed us to learn from the best in North America. At these meetings we are taught how to properly scale the size of the tablet with the size of the design elements. Does the design follow the shape of the stone? Does the lettering style apply to the colour of the granite? Is there balance in the positioning of all elements of the design relative to the overall size and shape of the memorial? We need to focus on contrast and harmony, proportion and scale. These are some of the criteria that we look for when we personalize the design."

You can visit **Superior Memorial's** showroom at 528 Victoria St. N. beside Weston's Bakery, or check out the company website at www.superiormemorials.com.

