

**M**arsha Carlin joined Livingston HealthCare in 2005 as a Patient Financial Services Representative. One year later, her 20-year old son joined the Navy. “We talked a lot about it, and we talked to the recruiter,” recalls Marsha. “But I was very scared and nervous about him joining the military. I didn’t want him to do it.” Little did she know that this would be the first step in a journey that would find her helping to lead a small but active movement for military families in Park County.

“Another mother whose son had also joined the Navy asked me if I wanted to join her and three other women to do something for the Fourth of July,” Marsha explains. “She knew that I was struggling with my son leaving home and thought it might help.” In fact, Marsha was so taken with the idea that she asked the group if they should start a nonprofit organization, and the Military Families of Park County was founded. The organization became a nonprofit in 2007.

One of the primary activities of the group is maintaining the yellow ribbons at the Rotary Park near the Depot. Today, there are 60 photos and ribbons representing locals who are currently serving in the military. The group also raised funds for and erected a monument in honor of past, present, and future military service members. “We have been lucky. Local business owner Dave Waylander helped us raise funds and a local architect, print shop, and photographer donated services,” says Marsha. “All of the labor was donated. The only cost was for the seals we placed on the monument.”



## Community Activism with a Very Personal Connection

Marsha’s pride in this and the other work the group has done is very evident as she speaks about it. In addition to the monument and the ribbons, the small group also participates in the Livingston Rodeo Roundup Parade each year (winning best patriotic float three years in a row), mails Christmas cards to active local service people, and sends care packages when they can to those serving overseas. Recently, to help continue the spirit and work of the group, they joined with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

“This new partnership will really help us keep up our efforts,” Marsha says. “We will have more support and resources.” This means more support and resources for Park County’s service men and women who are overseas. Nothing could be more important to Marsha. “This is the first time I have been involved with a nonprofit, and it is so much work,” she says. “I will keep doing whatever I can to support our troops and other local families who have a family member in the military. Helping them helps me to cope with my son being in the military.”

To learn more about the Military Families of Park County and the work that they do, visit their website at [www.militaryfamiliesofparkcounty.org](http://www.militaryfamiliesofparkcounty.org).



### Manage Expenses

Do you need help managing your healthcare expenses? Livingston HealthCare has several options available for our patients. Contact a Patient Financial Services representative at 406-823-6414, and get information on short-term payment options, our patient loan program, and patient financial assistance.