



### **For Release Upon Receipt:**

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## ***Press Release***

### **Celebrated Texas Sculptor Named: Rockport's "Big Blue Crab" Coming Soon!**

Red Star Studio's Joe Barrington is the unanimous choice of Keep Aransas County Beautiful's (KACB) Blue Crab Committee as the sculptor to bring the iconic "Big Blue Crab" back to welcome residents and visitors alike to Rockport, the Crown Jewel of the Texas Rivera. Barrington's impressive art can be seen throughout Texas and the United States.

Destroyed by Hurricane Harvey, the far larger than life Big Blue Crab statue graced the entrance to Texas' only "Blue Wave" beach at Rockport for generations. It was the symbol of the friendliness of its people and their abiding concern for the aquatic environment of the Rockport-Fulton vacation spot.

"Joe is one of Texas most celebrated sculptors. His vision for bringing our Blue Crab back fit perfectly with what this community wants and needs," said John Aquilino, chair of the KACB selection committee. "Joe's a born-and-bred Texas outdoorsman and that spirit runs through his award-winning work from the life-like to the whimsical."

Made from stainless steel of substantial thickness covered in weather-impervious powder-coat colors, the Barrington-built crab promises not only to withstand future Harvey-strength storms, but also to prove visually stunning. When completed the Crab statue will rest in a meditation garden of paver bricks, each engraved to reflect the generosity of donors and the memory of loved ones present and passed.

The talents and promise of Barrington are expected to ramp up fundraising efforts to bring the Blue Crab Memorial project to completion by late 2020, early 2021 at the latest. To date, KACB has received donations and pledges to cover the first phase of the project's total cost estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$135,000 plus \$5000 to the Aransas County Navigation District for its long-term upkeep. To date, KACB has just over \$48,000 in a dedicated bank account and a \$25,000 Pledge from the Shaw Family. The Blue Crab Committee is diligently seeking funding opportunities including large family foundation and local business donations as well as sales of the memorial bricks.

"This is a community-wide effort. When completed, we intend to stage a celebration truly worthy of the spirit of Rockport, Fulton and all of Texas," promised Aquilino.

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Painting by Patti Schermerhorn