



The Sentinel



The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.
Issue 15 - April 2024

Chairman's Message

April was a busy month on site. The pad for the memorial star was poured, as was the sign on the corner of Commerce and S. Eucalyptus. Work began on the form for the star, concrete block was installed for the stem walls of the visitors center. We also brought in fill dirt to bring the interior of the stem walls up to the level where we would pour the concrete that will be the floor and surface of the stage area. All this due to the work of our supporters such as Jahna, Nucor, TOMO, John Elder, Buddy Hopson, and many others. See the photos later for an idea of what I mean.

Of course, putting in the fill dirt meant compaction tests (all fantastic). Putting up block and pouring concrete meant permits and inspections (all good to go). And it meant that our construction guru Don Laycock spent lots of time on site. So did Byron Oakley and Bob Van Etveldt. All this to make it happen! And we will.

In other news, and perhaps some of the most exciting news of all—the one living recipient of the Medal of Honor from the State of Florida, Mr. Robert R. Ingram, has agreed to attend our dedication ceremony scheduled for Patriot Day—11 September. He will be our keynote speaker and guest of honor. We couldn't be more thrilled with this news. I personally spoke to Mr. Ingram and he was very gracious in accepting our invitation and agreeing to our request.

This is such an exciting and important effort. Honoring the twenty-four real heroes and educating our fellow citizens, especially our youth, on the high cost of freedom is something we are proud of.

This cause is noble. We appreciate the support we are getting from all concerned. We would not be successful without the team effort. Thanks to you all!!

Sincerely,
Michael R. Borders
Chairman



Calendar of Events

May 2024:

Construction On-going

Summer 2024:

Construction Complete

September 11, 2024:

Ribbon-Cutting and Grand Opening



Funding Status

Primary Source: \$250,000 State of Florida

Highlands County: \$93,000

Sebring CRA: \$20,000

Duke Energy: \$20,000

Private Donations: \$69,021

In-Kind Donations: \$323,400

These pictures show the TOMO crew building the star form, first concrete blocks being placed, a good look at nearly completed stem walls, the poured sign and Buddy Hopson bring in fill dirt.



Hero of the Month

Baldomero López

First Lieutenant, U.S. Marine Corps
Tampa, FL



Citation

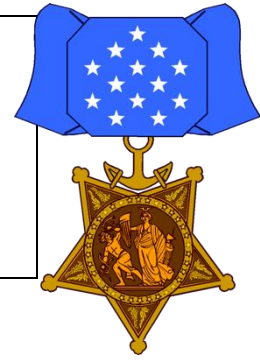
For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a marine platoon commander of Company A, in action against enemy aggressor forces. With his platoon 1st Lt. Lopez was engaged in the reduction of immediate enemy beach defenses after landing with the assault waves. Exposing himself to hostile fire, he moved forward alongside a bunker and prepared to throw a hand grenade into the next pillbox whose fire was pinning down that sector of the beach. Taken under fire by an enemy automatic weapon and hit in the right shoulder and chest as he lifted his arm to throw, he fell backward and dropped the deadly missile. After a moment, he turned and dragged his body forward in an effort to retrieve the grenade and throw it. In critical condition from pain and loss of blood, and unable to grasp the hand grenade firmly enough to hurl it, he chose to sacrifice himself rather than endanger the lives of his men and, with a sweeping motion of his wounded right arm, cradled the grenade under him and absorbed the full impact of the explosion. His exceptional courage, fortitude, and devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon 1st Lt. Lopez and the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Conflict: Korean War

Location of Action: Inchon, Korea

Date of Action: September 15, 1950

MOH Awarded Posthumously: August 30, 1951



Honors and Legacy

Several structures have been named in López's honor, including a state nursing home and a school in Seffner, Florida. A Korean War memorial at the Ed Radice Sports Complex in Tampa was opened on November 11, 2007, and dedicated to Lopez. The memorial features a rock from the beach at Incheon. A public swimming pool across from Macfarlane Park in West Tampa is named for him. The U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command named a container ship after him, the USNS *1st Lt. Baldomero Lopez* (T-AK-3010). In Bancroft Hall, the U.S. Naval Academy dormitory, a room is dedicated to him (Room No. 3021), with a display including his photo and a bronze plaque of his Medal of Honor citation. There is also the Baldomero Lopez State Veteran' nursing home in Land O'Lakes FL at 6919 Parkway Blvd.



There are three versions of the Medal of Honor. One for each of the three military departments: the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force. Army recipients get the Army version—no surprise there. The Navy version is for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Finally, the Air Force version is for the Air Force and Space Force. To date, there is one Coast Guard recipient. Some day we are sure to have a Space Force recipient, but as it is only a few years old, there are none as of now. We will have three flagpoles around the memorial displaying these three emblems.



Our Mission

To construct and maintain a perpetual memorial that honors the Florida Medal of Honor recipients and ensures that they are never forgotten.

Our Vision

To inspire current and future generations about the ideals of courage, integrity, patriotism, leadership, and sacrifice; to help them understand the meaning and price of freedom; and to encourage them to embrace their responsibility as citizens in a democracy.

Our Goals

- Construct the Memorial
- Construct and outfit the Visitor's Center
- Provide educational outreach to K-12 school systems

What We Do

Honor Florida's Heroes

Preserve the memories of the 24 Floridians who have been awarded the MOH and inspire others to build on their legacies.



Inspire Our Community

Encourage our community, young and old, to embody the ideals of the MOH (sacrifice, commitment, courage, integrity, citizenship, and patriotism).

Educate and Inform

Work with K-12 schools to promote the virtues, behaviors, and choices of everyday heroes as exemplified by the MOH awardees through thought-provoking curriculum and active learning activities.



How You Can Help

Although partially funded through a subgrant from the Florida Department of Education, additional funds are needed to complete the construction, outfitting, and maintenance of this unique and special facility.

Donations

Tax-deductible donations accepted:

- Online – shorturl.at/pzO01
- Phone – text "FLMOHM" to 44321
- Mail – See last page

Sponsorship Levels

- **Platinum** \$50,000.00 and up
- **Gold** \$25,000.00 – \$49,999.99
- **Silver** \$10,000.00 – \$24,999.99
- **Bronze** \$5,000.00 – \$9,999.99
- **Brass** \$1,000.00 – \$4,999.99
- **Founding Member** \$100.00 – \$999.99

Volunteer

- Be a museum docent
- Assist with the K-12 educational outreach program

Our Sponsors (Thus Far)

• **Platinum Level**

The State of Florida
City of Sebring
North American Fence Contractor's Assn.

• **Silver Level**

City of Sebring CRA
Duke Energy Foundation

• **Bronze Level**

The Borders
The Christensens
In Memory of Bolivar Rivera
VFW Post 4300 Sebring
Rick Perry
AVVA Chapter 1097

• **Brass Level**

Highlands County Veterans Council
Woman's Club of Sebring
Publix Supermarkets Incorporated
John McClure, Esquire
APEC Inc.
Glades Elect. Charit. Trust c/o Lee Hildreth
Quarters for a Cause c/o Staci Christmas
The Battle of the Bands Incorporated
Re/Max - Chip Boring
Therese Mendel
The Rotary Club of Highlands County
Avon Park Noon Rotary
Master Chief Petty Officer Eugene Kissner
BPOE Elks 1529, Sebring
South Central Florida Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America
Robert Brooks
Ronald Sevigny
Kevn Roberts

• **Founding Members**

Haywood Taylor
Alvin W. Pals
Moddie Desselle
Mr. & Mrs. Scardino
William Bond
Patricia Wilhelm
Brinker International
LuLaRoe Chantel Gilmore - Newly Inspired You!
Heritage Festival
Steven Albert
Avon Park Service Club
American Legion Post 25 Auxiliary
Fort Meade Baptist Church
Tanglewood Veterans Association
Lake Placid Noon Rotary Club
Dynamic Sales Associates, Inc.
Richard Uhrich and Karen Wiggins

In-Kind Sponsors

• **Platinum Level**

Highlands County (\$50K)
NAFCA

• **Gold Level**

Buddy Hopson (\$25K)

• **Silver Level**

Anderson Windows
Marmer Construction (est.)
Griffin's Carpet Mart (est.)
Quality Roofing

• **Bronze Level**

Crosson & Payne Tree & Land Service (\$2K)
Stidham's Rentals (\$5K)

• **Brass Level**

Sunset Drafting (\$1,000)
SGIS Surveying-Will Pyle (\$1,200)
Chem-Crete-Larry Mroz (\$2,458)
SGIS Surveying (\$1,200)
Richard Siver

• **Founders' Level**

Junctions-Selvin Walker (\$500)
Liberty Flagpoles (\$750)
Blue Steel Fabrication, LLC (\$750)
Central Florida Insulation (\$500)

How to Become a Sponsor

Our organization is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit/non-profit. We rely totally on donations and fund raising. Our entire staff is volunteer, with no funds expended on payroll. But we do have administrative and operational expenses that

must be paid, such as property and liability insurance, power, water, sewage, IT/telecom, maintenance costs, office supplies, etc. We need your generous support. Depending on your personal tax situation, donations are tax-deductible. Go to the "How You Can Help" section on the previous page to see how to donate or sponsor our organization and use the contact information on the last page.



Links

- The Florida Medal of Honor Memorial
www.flmohm.org
- Congressional Medal of Honor Society
<https://www.cmozs.org>
- National Medal of Honor Museum
<https://mohmuseum.org>



Board of Directors & Other Volunteers

Chairman: Michael R. Borders

Vice Chairman: C. Raymond McIntyre

Junior Vice Chairman: Byron Oakley

Treasurer: Harry Marsh

Secretary: Sarah Carter

Comptroller: Erik Christensen

Construction Project Mgr.: Donald Laycock

Asst. Const. Project Mgr.: Judy Laycock

Marketing: Moddie Desselle

Marketing: Heather Oakley

IT: Shawn Nickel

Chaplain: Denise Williams

Landscaping: Mark and Marie Milia

Engineering Consultant: Clinton Howerton

Legal Advisor: John McClure

CPA: Bruce Lybarger



The Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc. is an incorporated Florida non-profit organization. We are non-partisan, apolitical, and are a 501(c)(3), charitable, non-profit, tax-exempt organization. The FLMOHM is a 501(c)(3) / IRS EIN# 45-3798922 / State of Florida Corporation N16000001848 / My Florida Market Place 85-8017597686C-0 / vendor # F45398922001/ D-U-N-S Number 05-868-9165 / FL Tax Exempt #Registration #: CH56194 "A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling 1.800.435.7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State."



Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.

Website: www.flmohm.org

Mail: 7209 South George Boulevard
Sebring, Florida 33875

Telephone: 863.402.8292

Email: FLMOHM@gmail.org

Facebook: [FLMOHMemorial](https://www.facebook.com/FLMOHMemorial)

X: [FLMOHM](https://twitter.com/FLMOHM)