



The Sentinel



The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.
Issue 2 – March 2023

Chairman’s Message

Things continue apace at the corner of Commerce and S. Eucalyptus in downtown Sebring. All demolition of the old structures is complete, and site prep has begun. Over 80 tons were hauled off to the dump, and another 20 tons of concrete and other recyclable materials were taken elsewhere. Following the demolition, we needed to bring in some 20-dump truck’s worth of good dirt to fill in and properly prepare the property for the coming construction work. We were able to secure the fill dirt without having to deplete any of our funds—i.e., free. And a note about the demolition, it turned out that it was even a bigger job than we anticipated. This was due to an incredible amount of concrete under the old Girl Scout cabin, as well as the size of the trees and roots that had to go. But what would have cost us \$25K was work that was donated by Buddy Hopson out of Frostproof. You sure can’t beat that!

We spent our first money from the funding provided by the State of Florida—six flagpoles were purchased. These will display the U.S. and Florida flags, as well as the basic Medal of Honor flag (see below right), and the three service-specific Medal of Honor flags. These will be installed at the monument and next to the Visitor’s Center. Showing the flag is always important, and we will do it to both honor our nation and state, as well as fly the flags of the Medal of Honor—the purpose of our memorial!

We spent much of March fine tuning the floorplans and site layout work. It had been a long time since I had to look at the details of a set of “blue prints.” There is so much to consider in the layout of the site. In that regard, we are very fortunate to have a Board of Directors—all volunteers—with a range of incredible talents. Their dedication

to the mission and task at hand is greatly appreciated by all.

A final note, we need your financial support to complete our task. Inflation is a factor that we are all too well aware of. The funding we have will fall short of our requirements moving forward. Any contribution you make will be helpful, and we will be eternally grateful. **Thank you.**

Sincerely,
Michael R. Borders
Chairman



Calendar of Events

25 March 2022:

Deed Transfer Ceremony

29 November 2022:

Groundbreaking Ceremony

1 December 2022:

Site Prep Begins

March 2023:

Site Prep On-going

25 March 2024:

Ribbon-Cutting and Grand Opening



Funding Status

Primary Source: \$250,000 State of Florida

Private Donations: \$42,001



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 special facility.

Donations

Tax-deductible donations accepted:

- Online – shorturl.at/pzO01
- Phone – text “FLMOHM” to 44321
- Mail – See Contact Us section

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
- **Bronze Level**
The Borders
The Christensens
In Memory of Bolivar Rivera
VFW Post 4300 Sebring
- **Brass Level**
Woman's Club of Sebring
Publix Supermarkets Incorporated
John McClure, Esquire
APEC - Automated Petroleum & Energy Company, Inc.
Glades Elect. Charitable 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
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



• **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
- Kevin Roberts
- Steven Albert

In-Kind Sponsors

• **Platinum Level**

Highlands County

• **Gold Level**

Buddy Hopson

• **Bronze Level**

Crosson & Payne Tree & Land Service
Stidham’s Rentals

• **Brass Level**

Junctions--Selvin Walker
Liberty Flagpoles

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, even after the memorial and visitors center is constructed and the ribbon has been cut. We also will have to pay for property and liability insurance, power, water, sewage, IT/telecom, maintenance costs, office supplies, etc. With your generous support, we will stay the course as outlined elsewhere in this newsletter. Depending on your personal tax situation, donations are tax-deductible. So go to the “How You Can Help Us” or “Contact Us” section on the previous page to see how to donate or sponsor our organization.



Links

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

The Three Versions of the Medal of Honor



Army Air Force Navy



Board of Directors & Other Volunteers

- Chairman:** Michael R. Borders
- Vice Chairman:** C. Raymond McIntyre
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- Treasurer:** Harry Marsh
- Secretary:** Sarah Carter
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- Construction Project Mgr.:** Donald Laycock
- Asst. Const. Project Mgr.:** Judy Laycock
- Marketing:** Moddie Desselle
- Marketing:** Heather Oakley
- Budget:** Shelly Pettit
- IT:** Shawn Nickel
- Chaplain:** Denise Williams
- Landscaping:** Mark and Marie Milia
- Boy Scout Eagle Candidate:** Bobby Border
- Engineering Consultant:** Clinton Howerton
- Legal Advisor:** John McClure
- CPA:** Bruce Lybarger



Editorial Policy

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.



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Recent Events and Activities

Demolition of the Pavilion and Girl Scout Cabin March 2023



First to go is the old pavilion. The “easy” part of the job. It came down quickly.





The old Girl Scout cabin—one last look before the machines do their tricks.



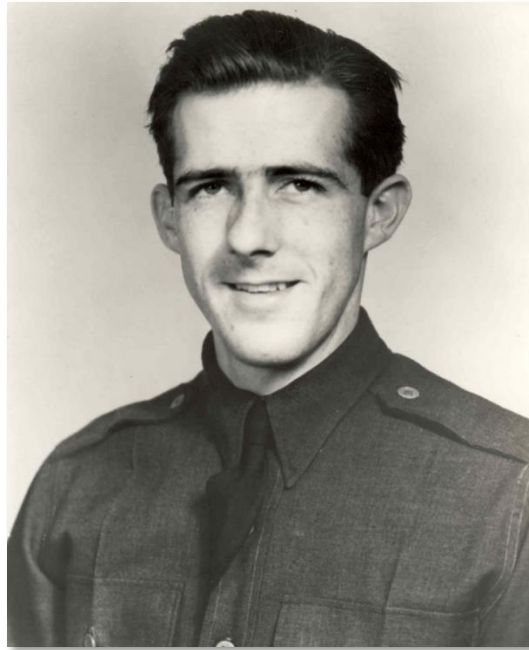


And now all is gone. It is time for site prep to begin. Next up: haul in fill dirt to ready the site.



Thomas Buchanan McGuire, Jr.

Major, U.S. Army Air Corps
Sebring, FL



Citation:

He fought with conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity over Luzon, Philippine Islands. Voluntarily, he led a squadron of 15 P-38s as top cover for heavy bombers striking Mabalacat Airdrome, where his formation was attacked by 20 aggressive Japanese fighters. In the ensuing action he repeatedly flew to the aid of embattled comrades, driving off enemy assaults while himself under attack and at times outnumbered three to one, and even after his guns jammed, continued the fight by forcing a hostile plane into his wingman's line of fire. Before he started back to his base he had shot down three Zeros. The next day he again volunteered to lead escort fighters on a mission to strongly defended Clark Field. During the resultant engagement he again exposed himself to attacks so that he might rescue a crippled bomber. In rapid succession he shot down one aircraft, parried the attack of four enemy fighters, one of which he shot down, singlehandedly engaged three more Japanese, destroying one, and then shot down still another, his 38th victory in aerial combat. On 7 January 1945, while leading a voluntary fighter sweep over Los Negros Island, he risked an extremely hazardous maneuver at low altitude in an attempt to save a fellow flyer from attack, crashed, and was reported missing in action. With gallant initiative, deep and unselfish concern for the safety of others, and heroic determination to destroy the enemy at all costs, Maj. McGuire set an inspiring example in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

*Conflict: **World War II***

*Location of Action: **Over Luzon, Philippine Islands***

*Date of Action: **December 25-26, 1944***

*MOH Awarded Posthumously: **May 8, 1946***





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