



The Sentinel



The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.
Issue 14 - March 2024

Chairman's Message

Where to begin? Another exciting month for our cause! The biggest news is that the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners voted 5-0 in approving a funding grant of \$93K for our project. This will put us over the finish line and allow us to do everything we need and want without having to defer any of the project to subsequent years. We are extremely grateful to the Commissioners and the County Administrative staff for their hard work and support!

Some more good funding support news to pass on as well: the Associates of the Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA) Chapter 1097 organized a raffle of a Celebrity Cruise package for a one-week cruise for two. This effort raised \$5,340 which will help us with administrative costs such as liability and builder's risk insurance—costs we are already paying. Thanks to the AVVA for their support!

In other news, and exciting news to be sure, construction proceeds with the installation of the three shade sail poles provided by Coastal Canvas. These had to go in before anything else due to the requirements of the foundations holding them. That allowed us to dig the footers for the foundation of the Visitors Center. Our friends at TOMO Construction did the concrete work for both efforts and we are now ready to build the stem walls and start putting in the concrete blocks. The blocks are coming from A-1 Block Corporation in Orlando. If you follow the work closely, you will notice that our Visitors Center will emulate and pay homage to the old Girl Scout log cabin. Stay tuned!

I also want to thank the Rotary Club of Highlands County and both Rich Uhrich and Karen Wiggins for their donations—every contribution helps!

We are so privileged to be a part of this project. Honoring our heroes and educating our citizens, especially our youth, is such a noble cause.

Sincerely,
Michael R. Borders
Chairman



Calendar of Events

April 2024:

Construction On-going

Summer 2024:

Construction Complete

Fall 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: \$63,292

In-Kind Donations: \$323,400

These pictures show digging the foundation holes for the shade sail poles provided by Coastal Canvas. The concrete was provided by Jahna Concrete, holes were dug and poured by TOMO Construction, and the Coastal Canvas folks set the three poles.



These photos show some of the work to dig the building footers, pouring the Jahna concrete by the TOMO Construction crew, and the completed pour of the footers giving a good idea of the footprint of the building.



Hero of the Month

Charles A. Varnum

Captain, U.S. Army

Pensacola, FL



Citation

While executing an order to withdraw, seeing that a continuance of the movement would expose another troop of his regiment to being cut off and surrounded, he disregarded orders to retire, placed himself in front of his men, led a charge upon the advancing Indians, regained a commanding position that had just been vacated, and thus insured a safe withdrawal of both detachments without further loss.

Conflict: Indian Campaigns

Location of Action: White Clay Creek, South Dakota

Date of Action: December 30, 1890

MOH Awarded: September 22, 1897





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."



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