



The Sentinel



The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.
Issue 9- October 2023

Chairman's Message

We are still moving forward, though not as quickly as we had hoped. All plans have been submitted to the City of Sebring for the needed building permits, but they have now asked for topographic and engineering surveys of the property. Those are in progress and should be done by the end of the month. If all goes well, we hope to pour concrete in November.

Erik Christensen and I met with Matt Buxton of Buxton & Bass Funeral Home in Okeechobee who has agreed to square away our 24 markers at no cost. This is a substantial savings and we could not be more grateful!

Raymond McIntyre and I met with Kristie Vasquez of the Sebring Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and they are working with us to provide funding for our shade sails. This should save us some \$20K. Thanks so much to the CRA!

Don has reached out to Jon Tolar of Sabre Electric who has agreed to do all the electrical work at no cost—WOW!! Put this with the free mulch coming from Scott's Miracle-Gro, free cement/block sealer from Larry Mroz of Chem-Crete, free paint and labor from Bernie Tim and Sherwin Williams, and a free topographic survey by Will Pyle!

On 21 October we participated in the Sebring Historical Society's "Pioneer Daze" expo at the Sebring fairgrounds. Many of the team were there to staff our new donated pop-up tent and table. I will also participate in several speaking engagements over the next few weeks to spread the word and generate offers of funding, materials, and labor.

Finally, our board Secretary, Sarah Carter was our winner for the Veteran of the Year,

and Don Laycock was our winner for non-veteran of the year in the Highlands County Veterans Council awards luncheon. We are proud of them both for their incredible contributions to the overall effort.

We are grateful beyond words for the support from our partners, the community, and all concerned. It's a team effort!

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Michael R. Borders
Chairman



Calendar of Events

October 2023:

Site Prep/Design On-going

October 2023:

Memorial Build Begins

November 2023:

Visitors Center Build Begins

Spring 2024:

Work Complete

Summer 2024:

Ribbon-Cutting and Grand Opening



Funding Status

Primary Source: \$250,000 State of Florida

Private Donations: \$54,304

In-Kind Donations: \$296,200

Don Laycock receiving the Non-Veteran of the Year award from the Highlands County Veterans Council as our organization's winner. Our Chairman, Mike Borders, is on the left, Don is in the middle, and Veterans Council President Glenn West is on the right.



Sarah Carter, our Veteran of the Year was unable to attend—her award is pictured below.



The Sebring Historical Society hosted the 1st Annual “Pioneer Daze” exposition at the Alan Jay Arena at the Highlands County fairgrounds on 21 October. We set up a booth to help publicize our project and progress to date. Our booth was given to us as a donation, and several of our folks staffed it during the course of the day. We did get a number of cash donations, though that was not our primary purpose - this was a great event for the community that garnered a lot of interest in our project.



Hero of the Month

Clifford Chester Sims

Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army

Jacksonville, FL



Citation

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. S/Sgt. Sims distinguished himself while serving as a squad leader with Company D. Company D was assaulting a heavily fortified enemy position concealed within a dense wooded area when it encountered strong enemy defensive fire. Once within the woodline, S/Sgt. Sims led his squad in a furious attack against an enemy force which had pinned down the 1st Platoon and threatened to overrun it. His skillful leadership provided the platoon with freedom of movement and enabled it to regain the initiative. S/Sgt. Sims was then ordered to move his squad to a position where he could provide covering fire for the company command group and to link up with the 3rd Platoon, which was under heavy enemy pressure. After moving no more than 30 meters S/Sgt. Sims noticed that a brick structure in which ammunition was stocked was on fire. Realizing the danger, S/Sgt. Sims took immediate action to move his squad from this position. Though in the process of leaving the area 2 members of his squad were injured by the subsequent explosion of the ammunition, S/Sgt. Sims' prompt actions undoubtedly prevented more serious casualties from occurring. While continuing through the dense woods amidst heavy enemy fire, S/Sgt. Sims and his squad were approaching a bunker when they heard the unmistakable noise of a concealed booby trap being triggered immediately to their front. S/Sgt. Sims warned his comrades of the danger and unhesitatingly hurled himself upon the device as it exploded, taking the full impact of the blast. In so protecting his fellow soldiers, he willingly sacrificed his life. S/Sgt. Sims' extraordinary heroism at the cost of his life is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

*Conflict: **Vietnam War***

*Location of Action: **Near Hue, Republic of Vietnam***

*Date of Action: **February 21, 1968***

*MOH Awarded Posthumously: **December 2, 1969***





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/pz001
- 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**
Highlands County Veterans Council
Woman's Club of Sebring
Publix Supermarkets Incorporated
John McClure, Esquire
APEC 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
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



• **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
Avon Park Service Club
American Legion Post 25 Auxiliary
Fort Meade Baptist Church

In-Kind Sponsors

• **Platinum Level**

Highlands County (\$50K)

• **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)

• **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. 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.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
Budget: Shelly Pettit
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 MY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. 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)