



# The Sentinel



The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.  
Issue 5 - June 2023

## Chairman's Message

As you will see in the following pages, the sometimes seemingly excruciating details of the design work necessary to construction, are, well, incredible. Don Laycock, and friend Jim Lange, have been reviewing the most minute details of the great plans we received from Don Polston of Sunset Drafting, Inc. He did the plans at no cost. Of course, there are tweaks to the plans, and that is the work Don and Jim are doing right now. But keep the faith, it won't be long until we see some activity at the work site.

Don has also been in contact with a truss supplier, Mid Florida Truss, and it looks like they are going to do the trusses at cost. We have also been in contact with Fassler Plumbing, Inc. and they will do all labor at no cost to us. And our friends at Sabre Electric continue to work their piece of the pie. Don has also worked with Anderson Windows via Home Depot for selecting the very best money can buy. Don has also been by to visit our friends at Jahna Concrete, Inc. and they are still "all in" on providing their all-important product—the very foundation of the project.

So, things are really coming together, and you will see a lot of activity in the very near future. We thank our faithful supporters for their contributions and support as we move forward. Our goal of educating our youth, while simultaneously honoring the twenty-four true American heroes remains the cardinal point on our compass—our "north." We take this obligation seriously. All we do is with a passionate patriotism and love for our country, what it stands for, and the freedoms we hold dear. Freedoms that we have thanks to the bravery and sacrifice of those who were recognized with our nation's highest award, the Medal of Honor.

We continue to seek financial support, both cash contributions and offers of in-kind support, which will help us get across the finish line. Please do what you can to get the word out as any contribution will be helpful, and we will be eternally grateful.

**Thank you.**

Sincerely,  
Michael R. Borders  
Chairman



## Calendar of Events

### **June 2023:**

Site Prep/Design On-going

### **July 2023:**

Memorial Build Begins

### **August 2023:**

Visitors Center Build Begins

### **1 March 2024:**

Work Complete

### **25 March 2024:**

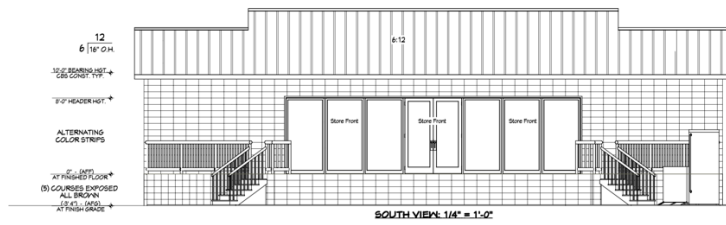
Ribbon-Cutting and Grand Opening



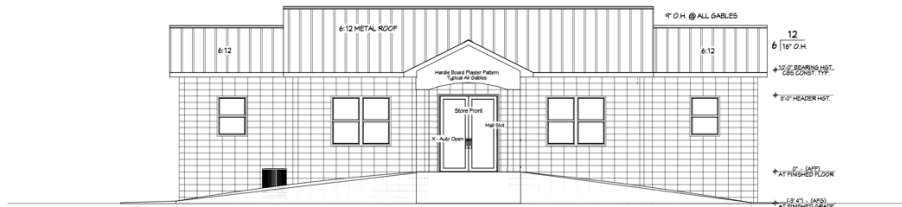
## Funding Status

**Primary Source:** \$250,000 State of Florida

**Private Donations:** \$46,200



SOUTH VIEW: 1/4" = 1'-0"



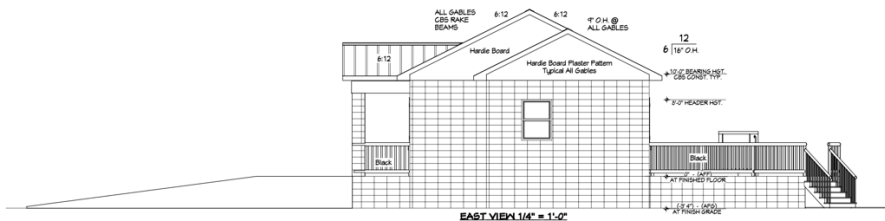
NORTH VIEW: 1/4" = 1'-0"

FLORIDA  
MEDAL OF HONOR  
VISITOR CENTER  
442 S.W. 11th Escalante Dr  
Sebring, Florida 33835

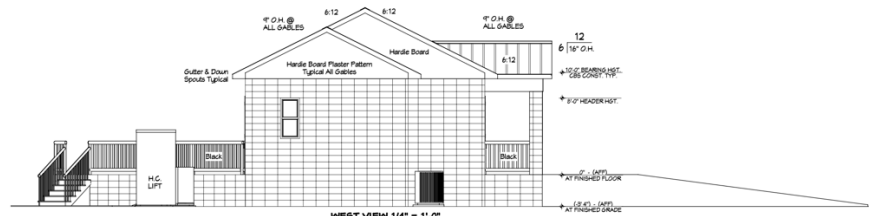


DATE: 09/01/2023  
FILE NAME: P100M  
DRAWN BY: JEFFREY HARRIS

1330 UNDER AIR  
68 ENTRY  
485 STAGE  
2944 TOTAL



EAST VIEW: 1/4" = 1'-0"



WEST VIEW: 1/4" = 1'-0"

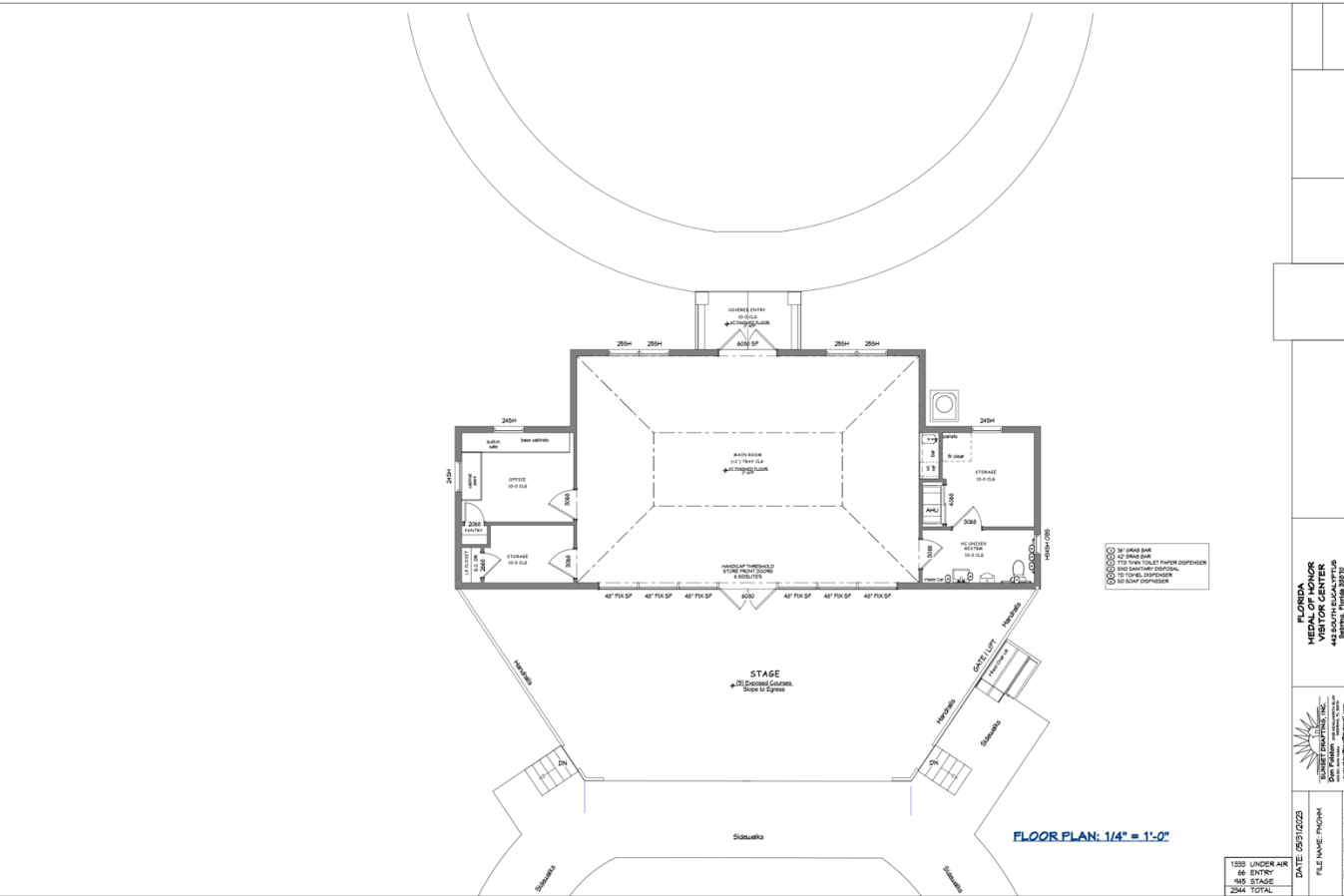
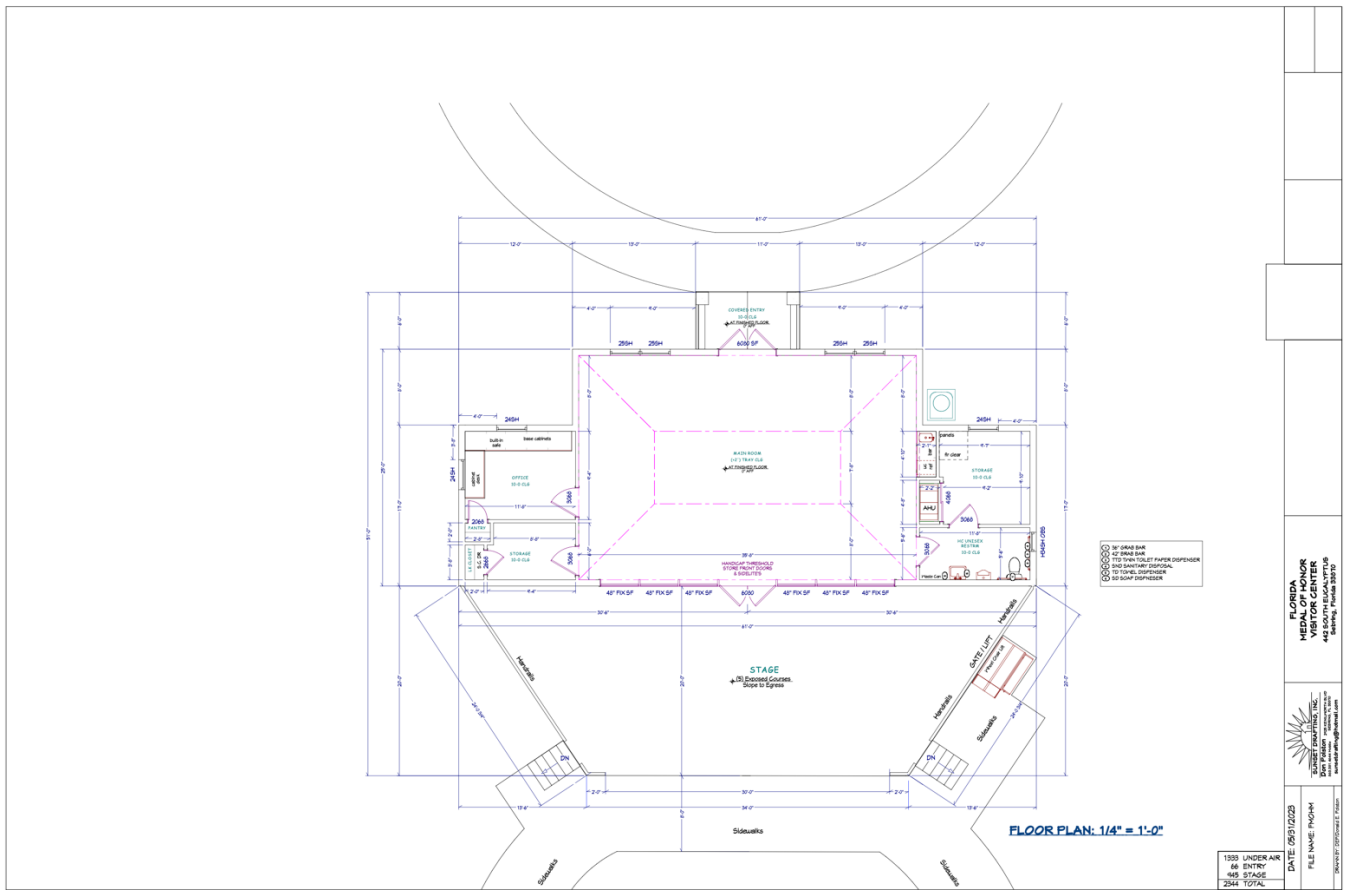
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Florida Medal of Honor Visitor Center Engineering Drawings



Florida Medal of Honor Visitor Center Engineering Drawings

## Hero of the Month

# Robert J. Miller

Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army  
Oviedo, FL



## Citation

Staff Sergeant Robert J. Miller distinguished himself by extraordinary acts of heroism while serving as the Weapons Sergeant in Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha 3312, Special Operations Task Force-33, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan during combat operations against an armed enemy in Konar Province, Afghanistan on January 25, 2008. While conducting a combat reconnaissance patrol through the Gowardesh Valley, Staff Sergeant Miller and his small element of U.S. and Afghan National Army soldiers engaged a force of 15 to 20 insurgents occupying prepared fighting positions. Staff Sergeant Miller initiated the assault by engaging the enemy positions with his vehicle's turret-mounted Mark-19 40 millimeter automatic grenade launcher while simultaneously providing detailed descriptions of the enemy positions to his command, enabling effective, accurate close air support. Following the engagement, Staff Sergeant Miller led a small squad forward to conduct a battle damage assessment. As the group neared the small, steep, narrow valley that the enemy had inhabited, a large, well-coordinated insurgent force initiated a near ambush,

assaulting from elevated positions with ample cover. Exposed and with little available cover, the patrol was totally vulnerable to enemy rocket propelled grenades and automatic weapon fire. As point man, Staff Sergeant Miller was at the front of the patrol, cut off from supporting elements, and less than 20 meters from enemy forces. Nonetheless, with total disregard for his own safety, he called for his men to quickly move back to covered positions as he charged the enemy over exposed ground and under overwhelming enemy fire in order to provide protective fire for his team. While maneuvering to engage the enemy, Staff Sergeant Miller was shot in his upper torso. Ignoring the wound, he continued to push the fight, moving to draw fire from over one hundred enemy fighters upon himself. He then again charged forward through an open area in order to allow his teammates to safely reach cover. After killing at least 10 insurgents, wounding dozens more, and repeatedly exposing himself to withering enemy fire while moving from position to position, Staff Sergeant Miller was mortally wounded by enemy fire. His extraordinary valor ultimately saved the lives of seven members of his own team and 15 Afghanistan National Army soldiers. Staff Sergeant Miller's heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty, and at the cost of his own life, are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army.

**Conflict:** *War on Terrorism (Afghanistan)*

**Location of Action:** *Konar Province, Afghanistan*

**Date of Action:** *January 25, 2008*

**MOH Awarded Posthumously:** *October 6, 2010*



**AWARDED POSTHUMOUSLY:** Yes

**PRESENTATION DATE & DETAILS:** October 6, 2010, presented by President Barack Obama to his parents

**BORN:** October 14, 1983, Harrisburg, Dauphin County, PA

**DIED:** January 25, 2008, Konar Province, Afghanistan

**BURIED:** All Faiths Memorial Park, Casselberry, FL

**CONNECTION TO FLORIDA:** Entered the service in Oviedo, Florida



### **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/pz001](http://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 - 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  
Avon Park Service Club  
American Legion Post 25 Auxiliary

## **In-Kind Sponsors**

### • **Platinum Level**

Highlands County (\$50K)

### • **Gold Level**

Buddy Hopson (\$25K)

### • **Bronze Level**

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

### • **Brass Level**

Junctions--Selvin Walker (\$500)  
Liberty Flagpoles (\$750)  
Blue Steel Fabrication, LLC (\$750)  
Sunset Drafting (\$1000)

## **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](http://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  
**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  
**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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Twitter: [FLMOHM](https://twitter.com/FLMOHM)