



# The Sentinel

The Newsletter of the Florida Medal of Honor Memorial, Inc.  
Issue 20 – September 2024



## Chairman's Message

We are very pleased at the pace of progress. Lots has happened in the last month as is evident from the pictures that follow. Jeff Fultz' team has the A/C installed (it feels great inside). That means that Duke Energy turned on the power to the building (thanks Nancy Dodd). The bathroom is tiled and fixtures are in, thanks to Griffin's Carpet Mart and Cox Plumbing. TOMO poured the last concrete!! The landscaping continues to flourish thanks to the efforts of Mark and Marie Milia. And the sod is in thanks to Duda sod farm and Kerry Howerton's sod layers and great big flatbed truck.

I want to make special mention of Coastal Canvas—not only did they put in some great shade sails out front (see picture), but also discounted \$10K from the bottom line price tag. And I will also mention Phoenix Metals of Tampa—they donated several sheets of stainless steel worth some \$4K. These will be used on the memorial and sign. Great contributions by great patriots!! I cannot say enough about the outpouring of support that we have received. Whether the support is "In-Kind" or cash, we need it to get across the finish line. And we will!!

All this means that we are on track for our grand opening on 12 December at 10:00 AM. Please mark your calendars for what promises to be a wonderful ceremony.

**Make sure to mark your calendar for December the 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM.**

Thanks to you all for your continued support and encouragement!

Sincerely,  
Michael R. Borders  
Chairman



## Calendar of Events

**October 2024:**

Construction On-going

**October 2024:**

Construction Complete

**December 12th, 2024, 10:00 AM:**

Ribbon-Cutting and Grand Opening



## Funding Status

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

**Highlands County:** \$93,000

**Sebring CRA:** \$20,000

**Duke Energy:** \$20,000

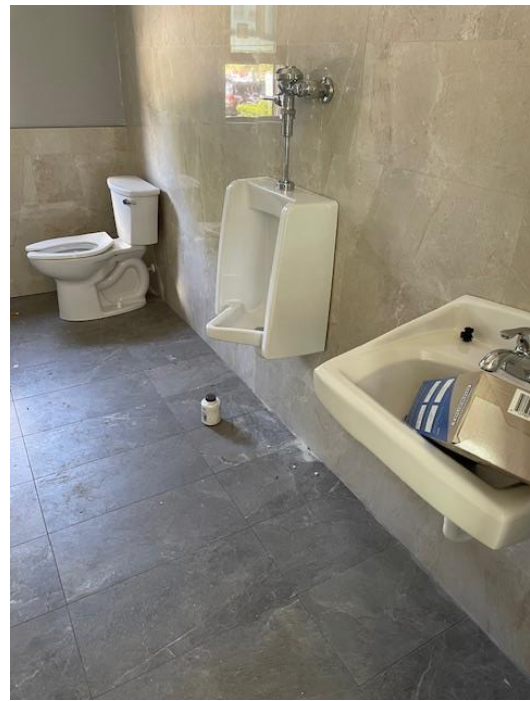
**Private Donations:** \$85,889

**In-Kind Donations:** \$382,844

These pictures show the A/C compressor and air handler, as well as bathroom tile work installation. Great support from Griffin's Carpet Mart and Jeff Fultz A/C. The tile work was specifically done by Markland Tile, and oh BTW, the A/C feels great—an occasional break from the heat and humidity!



These pictures show our ADA water fountains and the bathroom fixtures installed by Cox Plumbing. Also a great view of the Caladiums planted by Mark and Marie Milia. And FINALLY!! The last concrete pour by Jahna Concrete with the TOMO crew taking care of it.



These pictures show the shade sails on the stage installed by Coastal Canvas. Also shown is "442 S. Eucalyptus—the address of the old Girl Scout cabin. Bob Van Etveldt turns on the power for the first time—and it lit up the exit signs immediately.



These pictures show the great sod work by Kerry Howerton's team using the sod provided by Duda Sod farms. Also shown is a beautiful view of the front of the building at night, with the entry way and flood lights illuminating the caladiums and other plants.



# Emory Lawrence Bennett

Private First Class, U.S. Army

Cocoa, FL



# Citation

Pfc. Bennett, a member of company B, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action against an armed enemy of the United Nations. At approximately 0200 hours, two enemy battalions swarmed up the ridgeline in a ferocious banzai charge in an attempt to dislodge Pfc. Bennett's company from its defensive positions. Meeting the challenge, the gallant defenders delivered destructive retaliation, but the enemy pressed the assault with fanatical determination and the integrity of the perimeter was imperiled. Fully aware of the odds against him, Pfc. Bennett unhesitatingly left his foxhole, moved through withering fire, stood within full view of the enemy, and, employing his automatic rifle, poured crippling fire into the ranks of the onrushing assailants, inflicting numerous casualties. Although wounded, Pfc. Bennett gallantly maintained his one-man defense and the attack was momentarily halted. During this lull in battle, the company regrouped for counterattack, but the numerically superior foe soon infiltrated into the position. Upon orders to move back, Pfc. Bennett voluntarily remained to provide covering fire for the withdrawing elements, and, defying the enemy, continued to sweep the charging foe with devastating fire until mortally wounded. His willing self-sacrifice and intrepid actions saved the position from being overrun and enabled the company to effect an orderly withdrawal. Pfc. Bennett's unflinching courage and consummate devotion to duty reflect lasting glory on himself and the military service.

*Conflict: **Korean War***

*Location of Action: **Sobangsan, Korea***

*Date of Action: **June 24, 1951***

*MOH Awarded Posthumously: **January 16, 1952***





## **Our Mission**

To honor and preserve the legacy of Florida Medal of Honor recipients through education, leadership, and inspiring displays, ensuring their courage and sacrifice are never forgotten.

## **Our Vision**

To inspire all generations to embody the six character traits of Medal of Honor recipients, fostering a deeper appreciation and commitment to the values of courage, sacrifice, and patriotism.

## **Our Goals**

- Construct the Memorial and Visitors 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**

Additional funds and help are needed to complete the construction, outfitting, and maintenance of this unique and special facility.

### **Volunteer**

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

## **Donations**

Tax-deductible donations accepted:

- Online – [shorturl.at/pzO01](http://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

## **Our Sponsors (*Thus Far*)**

### **• Platinum Level**

The State of Florida  
City of Sebring

### **• Silver Level**

City of Sebring CRA  
Duke Energy Foundation

### **• Bronze Level**

The Borders  
The Christensens  
In Memory of Bolivar Rivera  
VFW Post 4300 Sebring  
AVVA Chapter 1097  
John and Janet Harbaugh

### **• 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  
Jim and Linda Sacco  
Pipal Realty Group (Sara Pipal)  
Doug and Patricia Tait  
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- **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  
Gayle Parker/Melissa Middleton  
Eric Martinez & Heidi Fonrondona

**In-Kind Sponsors**

- **Platinum Level**

Highlands County  
North American Fence Contractor's Assn.

- **Gold Level**

Buddy Hopson

- **Silver Level**

Andersen Windows  
Marmer Construction (est.)  
Griffin's Carpet Mart (est.)  
Quality Roofing  
Sabre Electric (est.)  
Premier Irrigation (est.)  
Jeff Fultz A/C Inc.  
Coastal Canvas

- **Bronze Level**

Crosson & Payne Tree & Land Service  
Stidham's Rentals  
Rick Perry  
Scott's Miracle Gro (est.)  
Frames and Images

- **Brass Level**

Sunset Drafting  
SGIS Surveying-Will Pyle  
Chem-Crete-Larry Mroz  
SGIS Surveying  
Richard Siver  
Red E Equipment Services  
Gadd & Associates, LLC  
Sunbelt Rentals  
Heartland Exterminating  
LOCINOX  
Heartland Crane  
K & M Site Services (est.)  
SOS Septic & Sewer (est.)  
Gettle & Associates (est.)  
Excavation Point

Phoenix Metals  
Bernie's House Painting (est.)  
Duda Sod Farms (est.)

- **Founders' Level**

Junctions-Selvin Walker  
Liberty Flagpoles  
Blue Steel Fabrication, LLC  
Central Florida Insulation  
Kerry Howerton

**How to Become a Sponsor**

As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit/ non-profit, we rely on donations and fund raising. Our staff is all volunteer. We have a full range of expenses. Donations can be 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 MOH Memorial [flmohm.org](http://flmohm.org)
- Congressional MOH Society [cmohs.org](http://cmohs.org)
- National MOH Museum [mohmuseum.org](http://mohmuseum.org)
- Medal of Honor: Stories of Courage [podcasts](http://podcasts)



**Board of Directors & Other Volunteers**

**Chairman:** Michael R. Borders

**Vice Chairman:** C. Raymond McIntyre

**Junior Vice Chairman:** Byron Oakley

**Treasurer:** Harry Marsh

**Comptroller:** Erik Christensen

**Construction Project Mgr.:** Donald Laycock

**Secretary/Asst. Const. Project Mgr.:** Judy Laycock

**Marketing:** Moddie Desselle

**Marketing:** Heather Oakley

**IT:** Shawn Nickel

**Chaplain:** Denise Williams

**Master Gardeners:** 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.**

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