

OREGON HONORS WARTIME VETERANS WITH SIGNS ON MAJOR HIGHWAYS

During the last ten years, the non-profit Bend Heroes Foundation has been successful in requesting the Oregon legislature and 3 Governors to adopt laws honoring nearly one-half million Oregon veterans who served during 5 major wars during the last 99 years beginning with WWI: **WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Wars**. Over 6,000 veterans from Oregon made the supreme sacrifice and another 15,000 Oregonians were wounded during those wars.

The honors to Oregon's 480,000 wartime veterans were accomplished by 67 signs each 4 ft. x 8 ft. in size installed on 5 major border-to-border highways totaling 1,730 miles in length. Each highway is more than 300 miles long and displays 10-18 signs with half facing in each direction. The 5 highways are:

WWI Veterans Memorial Highway: US Hwy 395

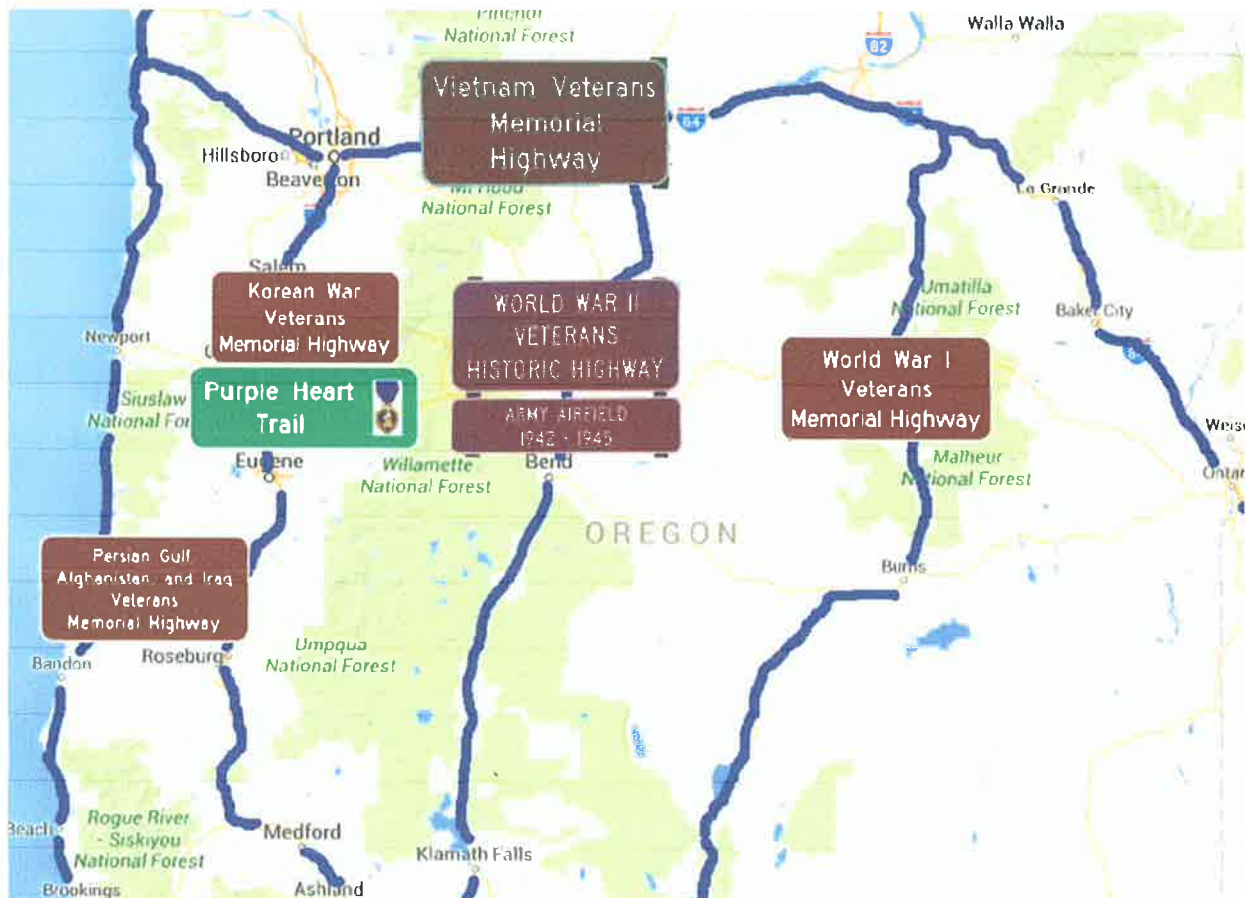
WWII Veterans Historic Highway: US Hwy 97/SR 126

Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway and Purple Heart Trail: Interstate 5

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway: Interstate 84

Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway: US Hwy 101

The highways and sign images are shown on this map of Oregon.



Almost 75% of the 331,600 veterans presently living in Oregon served during wartime. There are no WWI veterans living in our nation.

The **Purple Heart Trail** signs on Oregon's 308 mile long Interstate 5 connect California's and Washington's Purple Heart Trails on Interstate 5 thereby creating the first **Purple Heart Trail** spanning our nation in any direction. Likewise the 338 mile long border-to-border **Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway** along the beautiful Oregon coast is believed to be the first of its kind in our nation.

The signs were funded by veterans groups, Boards of County Commissions, civic organizations, a non-profit foundation and individuals. No tax payer funds were used. This project is valued at \$70,200. Bend Heroes Foundation raised the funds and paid Oregon Department of Transportation to fabricate and install the signs throughout Oregon. It was a great pleasure working with ODOT.

Approximately 84,300 veterans, or 25% of Oregon's living veterans served during 63 years of "peacetime" between the 5 wars. Peacetime and wartime veterans are also honored with **Blue Star Memorial Highway** signs on many of Oregon's major highways. There are 2 **Veterans Memorial Highways** (I-205, SR 62) in Oregon. US 26 from Portland to its junction with US 101 is the "**Sunset Highway**" honoring Oregon's 41st Infantry Division.

Photos of signs on each of the 5 highways are shown below and on Bend Heroes Foundation web site: www.bendheroes.org

Veterans from anywhere in our nation who travel Oregon's new veterans highways are honored by the new highway signs.

Bend Heroes Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Bend, Oregon. The Foundation is very pleased that the Oregon Departments of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Military Order of the Purple Heart supported the 2015 legislation (HB 2036). All of Oregon's Legislators and many patriotic donors have made this project a reality.

It has been a high honor to lead this legacy project saluting Oregon's veterans.

Dick Tobiason

Chairman, Bend Heroes Foundation

LTC US Army Retired, Vietnam Veteran (1966-1967, 1972-1973)

Member: American Legion, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Vietnam Veterans of America

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WWI Veterans Memorial Highway sign on US Hwy 395 near Burns



WWII Veterans Historic Highway sign on US Hwy 97 at intersection of Interstate 84



Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway and Purple Heart Trail signs on Interstate 5 near Tualatin



Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway sign on Interstate 84 near La Grande



Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway sign on US Hwy 101 near Warrenton