

# **BEND HEROES FOUNDATION PROJECTS**

**2010-2015**

By

**DICK TOBIASON**

**LTC US ARMY, RETIRED**

**CHAIRMAN, BEND HEROES FOUNDATION**

**December 7, 2015**

**Bend, Oregon**

Bend Heroes Foundation is a 501c3 tax exempt entity (EIN 27-207 1808)

1900 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Ste 106 #205, Bend, OR 97701 [www.bendheroes.org](http://www.bendheroes.org)

## BEND HEROES FOUNDATION PROJECTS

Bend Heroes Foundation (BHF) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Bend, Oregon with the primary mission of honoring Veterans of the Armed Services and First Responders. The following is a summary of the Foundation's major projects over the last 9 years. Attached are descriptions of other veterans' projects the author initiated.

**HONOR FLIGHT (2010-2015):** In appreciation for their service and sacrifice defeating tyranny around the globe more than 7 decades ago, the Foundation honored 505 WWII Veterans from 22 of Oregon's 36 counties with free 4 day trips to Washington, DC visiting THEIR national WWII Memorial and 10 other veterans' memorials. Bend's Honor Flight Veterans have been honored in Bend Veterans Day Parades and Bend Senior High School and Summit High School Veterans Day Assemblies. The Foundation plans to continue its **Honor Flight of Eastern Oregon** program in 2016. Program value to date: \$606,000.



**OREGON MEDAL OF HONOR EXHIBIT (2015):** The Foundation dedicated the Oregon Medal of Honor Exhibit at Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville on October 24, 2015. The exhibit honors 26 Medal of Honor recipients connected

**FOUR NEW WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAYS (2015):** Expanding on its success with the border-to-border **WWII Veterans Historic Highway** (18 signs on 325 miles of US 97/SR 126) and **Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway** (17 signs on 377 miles of Interstate 84), the Foundation drafted and requested legislation by the Oregon legislature honoring **WWI Veterans** on US 395, **Korean War Veterans** and **Purple Heart** recipients on I-5 and **Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq War Veterans** on US 101. The **Purple Heart Trail** (PHT) on Oregon's 308 mile long Interstate 5 links PHTs on California's and Washington's I-5 thereby creating the first Purple Heart Trail across America in any direction. The **Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway** is the first border-to-border highway of its kind in our nation honoring our youngest combat veterans. Veterans will raise all the funds to pay Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to fabricate and install at least 32 signs on the 4 new highways. The project is valued at about \$32,000 and completes the Foundation's vision to honor Oregon's 480,000 war veterans with prominent signage on 6 border-to-border highways in Oregon.



In a proclamation, the Oregon Legislature approved the Foundation's request to designate Oregon as a **"Purple Heart State"**.

**TIME CAPSULE DEDICATED AT US 97 & I-84, BIGGS JUNCTION (2015):** ODOT dedicated the \$23 million revised interchange on June 14 - Flag Day and the US Army birthday with a time capsule inserted in a new monument. Among other items, all documents involved with the **WWII Veterans Historic Highway** and the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway** were inserted in the time capsule bearing the signatures of State, County and local legislators and this author.



**PURPLE HEART CITY (2015):** The Foundation requested Bend City Council to issue a proclamation drafted by the Foundation designating Bend as a **Purple Heart City (PHC)**. The Foundation designed the PHC signs that were installed at Bend's 4 city limits on US 20, US 97 and Century Drive by ODOT. The Foundation raised the funds for the Bend signs and assisted Prineville, La Pine, Madras and Beaverton in proclaiming those cities as Purple Heart Cities. Project value for Bend: \$2,500.



**WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA (2007 to present):** As the Bend “Location” manager of the national **Wreaths Across America** ( WAA) program, the Foundation initiated WAA at Deschutes Memorial Gardens where 1,100 veterans have been laid to rest. Since then, the Civil Air Patrol, American Legion Auxiliary, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and Bend Heroes Foundation conduct wreath laying ceremonies at the cemetery and **Bend Heroes Memorial**. The partners raise funds for their organizations by selling wreaths provided by Worcester Wreaths of Maine. Worcester Wreaths furnished over 800,000 wreaths placed on veterans graves (including all 235,000 graves at Arlington National Cemetery) at 900 locations “Across America” last year.



**VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM (2011 TO PRESENT):** The Foundation has worked with Bend and Summit High Schools (1,600-1,700 students each) educating students on the contributions veterans have made to our nation. Each year veterans of all services and eras are honored at the schools during Veterans Day Assemblies. The Foundation also nominates veterans to be honored as “Distinguished Alumni” at Bend Senior High. Using items provided by the Foundation, Bend Senior High School has created a “Veterans Wall of Honor” featuring Robert D. “Bob” Maxwell, our nation’s “most senior” living Medal of Honor recipient, other veterans and historic events.

Other veterans' projects initiated by the author:

Proposals to the U.S. Congress and the Oregon legislature to use local health care providers under VA contract instead of distant VA Medical Centers for rural veterans,

Adding a brass plaque listing 11 Medal of Honor recipients connected with Oregon to the Oregon Medal of Honor exhibit at the state Capitol in Salem which did not include them in the original design,

**“Spirit of ’45 Day”** ceremony at Bend Heroes Memorial celebrating the end of WWII,

Memorials at Mountain View High School and Central Oregon Community College honoring 3 veterans from Bend who made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq,

Arranging for WWII Medal of Honor recipient Robert D. “Bob” Maxwell and wife Bea to meet President George W. Bush in the White House,

Award of an earned graduation diploma to Robert D. “Bob” Maxwell from Bend Senior High School,

Awards of Bend Senior High School diplomas to veterans who left school for war before graduation,

Designation of the bridge over the Deschutes River as the **“Robert D. Maxwell Veterans Memorial Bridge”**,

Creation of the **“Tale of Two Bridges”** plaque at the **General Patch** and **Robert D. Maxwell** bridges crossing the Deschutes River,

Creation of the **“Heroes of the High Desert”** Military Exhibit at Deschutes Historical Museum,

Establishing a 30 foot lighted flagpole at Bend Public Library,

Designation of **“Cal Butler Veterans Memorial Parkway”** at Roberts Field in Redmond honoring Cal Butler, Captain USAAF, WWII P-38 pilot.

Funding 2 kiosks near the **Rex T. Barber Veterans Memorial Bridge** honoring Rex Barber, Lt., USAAF, WWII P-38 pilot for shooting down Admiral Yamamoto, the architect of the Dec. 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor,

Creation of the **“Camp Rufus”** display of WWII float bridge training on the Columbia River by Army Engineers in preparation for crossing the Rhine River in Germany,



Dedication of Flagpole & Flag at Bend Public Library



Mountain View High School Honors Graduates LCPL USMC, Randy Newman & SGT US ARMY, Zachary McBride, KIA "Operation Iraqi Freedom", Iraq



Robert D. "Bob" Maxwell Graduates from Bend Senior High School, 2011



*To Bea and Bob Maxwell  
With best wishes,  
GWB*

Bob and Bea Maxwell Meet President George W. Bush in the White House



Robert D. Maxwell Veterans Memorial Bridge Sign and Maxwell/Patch Plaque





Returning Lost WWII Dog Tags from the "Oregon Maneuver" to Families



First Oregon Medal of Honor License Plate Was Issued to Bob Maxwell



Medal of Honor Recipient John Murphy's Grave Before & After Adding "MEDAL OF HONOR"