

## 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 4 Governors to adopt laws honoring nearly one-half million Oregon veterans who served during 5 major wars during the last 100 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 479,800 wartime veterans were accomplished by 67 signs installed on 5 major border-to-border highways totaling about 2,040 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

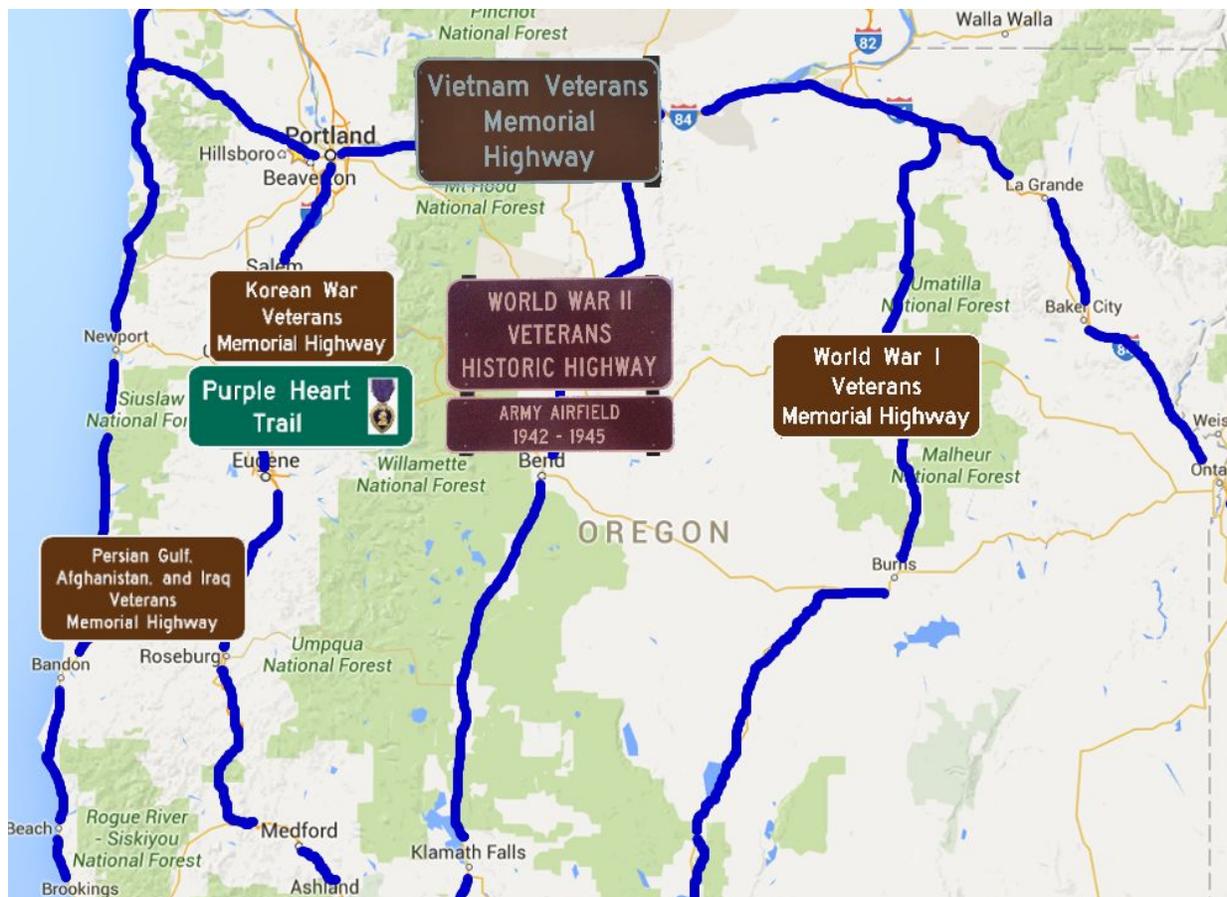
WWII Veterans Historic Highway: US Hwy 97/SR 126

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.



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 67 highway 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 67 signs throughout Oregon.

Bend Heroes Foundation requested the Oregon Legislature to honor the State's 26 Medal of Honor recipients (Civil War to Vietnam) by designating all 451 miles of US Highway 20 from Newport to the Oregon/Idaho border as the "**Oregon Medal of Honor Highway**" and designate 12 cities as "**Medal of Honor City**". The honors will be accomplished by 12 signs on US Hwy 20 and 12 markers in the cities. These Oregon honors are another "first in the nation" tribute to the 26 men who acted above and beyond the call of duty during combat and at risk of life while saving others thus receiving our nation's highest award for military valor during 8 wars (Civil War to Vietnam War) over 108 years.

The Oregon House of Representatives and Senate unanimously approved both bills which were signed on June 20. Bend Heroes Foundation is raising \$37,000 to fund the highway signs and city markers to be installed during 2017 - 2018.

Two "Oregon Medal of Honor Highway" signs were installed on US 20 between Bend and Sisters on Mr. Robert D. "Bob" Maxwell's 97<sup>th</sup> birthday, Oct. 26. A sign was installed in Newport, the western terminus of US Hwy 20 on October 30. Two more signs were installed east of Bend on Dec. 14. Bob Maxwell is our nation's oldest living Medal of Honor recipient, the only recipient living in Oregon and Director, Bend Heroes Foundation.

At 3,365 miles in length, US Hwy 20 is the longest highway in our nation crossing 12 states between Newport, OR and Boston, MA. It is possible the other 11 states (and states not on US 20) could adopt the Oregon precedent. The 12 states account for 57% of all 3,500 Medal of Honor awards since 1862 when President Lincoln signed legislation creating the Medal of Honor award.

When the "Oregon Medal of Honor Highway" signs project is complete in 2018, there will be 79 signs on 6 border to border highways totaling about 2,500 miles in length at a cost of about \$100,000. No tax payer funds have been or will be used. Photos of signs on each of the 6 highways are shown below and on Bend Heroes Foundation web site: [www.bendheroes.org](http://www.bendheroes.org)

War Veterans from anywhere in our nation who travel Oregon's 6 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. All of Oregon's Legislators, many patriotic donors and ODOT have made this 10 year project a reality.

It has been a high honor and privilege leading this legacy project saluting Oregon's war veterans.

Dick Tobiason

Chairman, Bend Heroes Foundation

LTC US Army Retired, Vietnam Veteran (1966-1967, 1972-1973) 12-17-17



WWI Veterans Memorial Highway sign  
on US Hwy 395 near Burns  
10 signs total



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



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

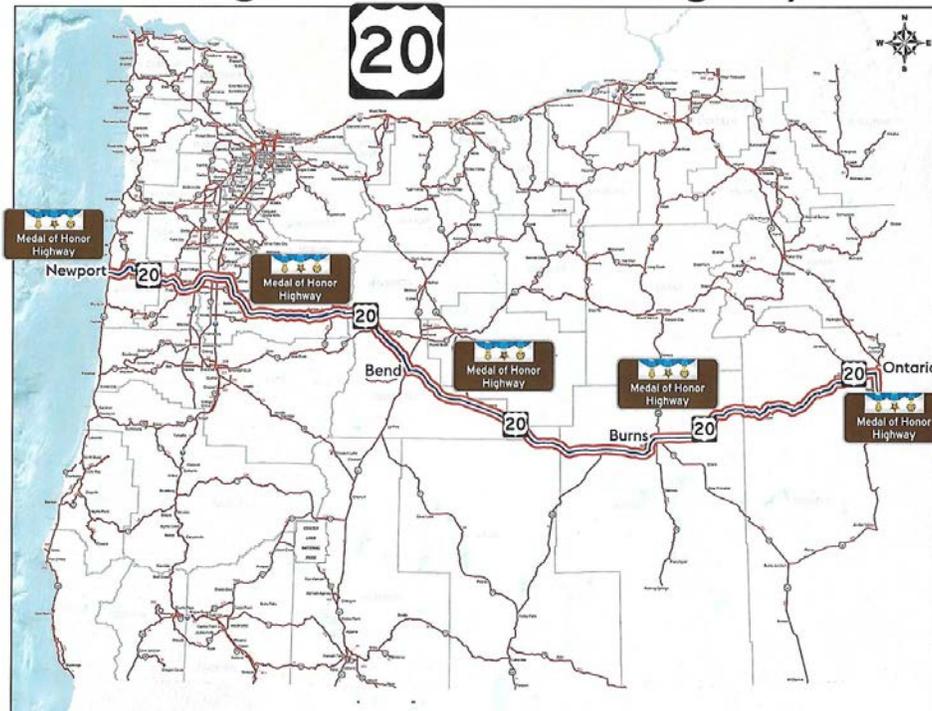


Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway  
sign on Interstate 84 near La Grande  
17 signs total



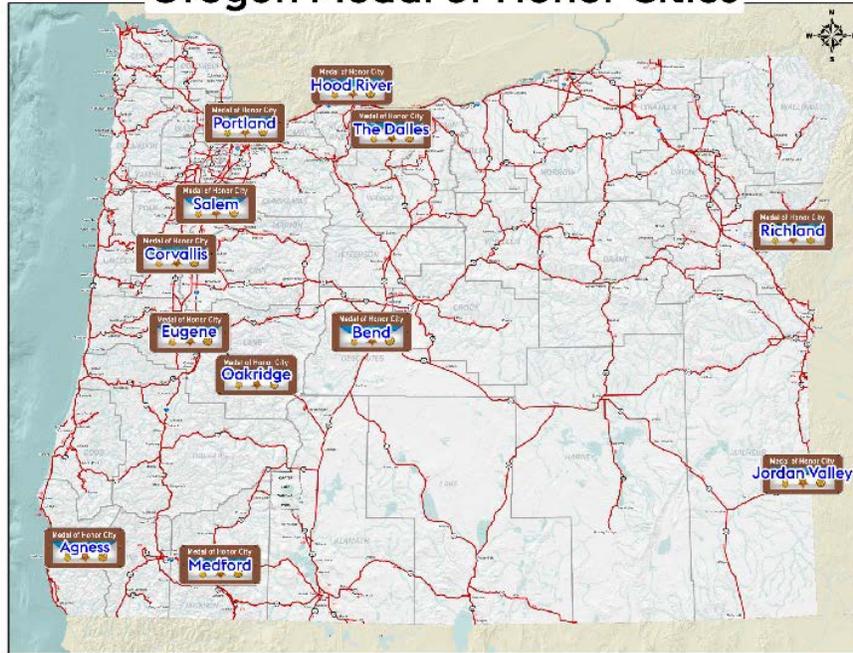
Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway  
Sign on US Hwy 101 near Warrenton  
11 signs total

## Oregon Medal of Honor Highway



451 Mile US Highway 20

## Oregon Medal of Honor Cities



Medal of Honor Cities are: Agness, Bend, Corvallis, Eugene, Hood River, Jordan Valley, Medford, Oakridge, Portland, Richland, Salem and The Dalles



First of 12 "Oregon Medal of Honor Highway" Signs to be Installed on US Hwy 20 with WWII Medal of Honor Recipient Bob Maxwell and Dick Tobiason. Sign Dedicated Oct. 26, 2017 on Mr. Maxwell's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday



Bob Maxwell and Dick Tobiason at OR Medal of Honor Highway Sign in Newport, OR Dedicated Oct. 31, 2017. Four of the 12 signs on US 20 will be in this configuration - displaying the 3 versions of the Medal of Honor medal



Bob Maxwell and Dick Tobiason at Oregon Medal of Honor Highway Sign Installed East of Bend on Dec. 14, 2017. Eight of the 12 signs on US 20 will be in this configuration – a single panel