



Missing In America Project

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**AFTER ACTION REPORT
MIAP-FL CALL TO HONOR #20
SOUTH FLORIDA NATIONAL CEMETERY
LAKE WORTH, FLORIDA
SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2019
10:00AM**

The unclaimed cremains for this service were from Dignity Memorial's Kraeer Funeral Home & Cremation Center in Pompano Beach, the Kraeer-Fairchild Funeral Home & Cremation Center and Broward Burial & Cremation in Fort Lauderdale, the Kraeer Funeral Home & Cremation Center in Coral Springs, and the Babione-Kraeer Funeral Home & Cremation Center in Boca Raton, that were in storage at the Kraeer Funeral Home at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens in Pompano Beach.

At this service MIAP-FL interred 19 veterans, and 6 spouses of veterans, which included:

- US Army – 14 veterans and 3 spouses
- US Marine Corps. – 2 veterans
- US Navy – 2 veterans and 2 spouses
- US Air Force – 1 veteran and 1 spouse

The veterans had served in WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. The longest that any of these veterans' cremains were unclaimed was since 1973.

It was a warm, sunny Saturday morning, and over 225 people attended this service. There was an approximate 40 motorcycle escort led by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office with an MIAP Lead Rider and Tail Gunner. Paul Markonni, MIAP Team Leader, coordinated this service. Other MIAP-FL team members involved in the identification of the veterans and spouses, and the service, included Elaine Markonni, Roberta Battis, Patricia Rizzo, Sharon Gilley, Pete Gilley, Diane DeLorie, and Steve Spickelmier. Certified return receipt letters were sent to family members on file, and an "Intent of Action" was published in the local newspaper as required by Kathy Church, FL St. Coordinator.

This service was supported by many local veterans' and other organizations which included:

- The Director, and the staff, of the South Florida National Cemetery
- Military Funeral Honors, Navy Region Southeast
- Active duty military service participants
- Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
- Palm Beach County Firefighters Pipes and Drums Band
- Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Honor Guard
- Palm Beach County Fire Department
- MIAP Lead Rider Michael Merriman and Tail Gunner Steve Newell
- Patriot Guard Riders
- Young Marines of the Palm Beaches Honor Guard
- Lake Worth High School Air Force JROTC Sabre Team
- The South Florida Woodworking Guild and the Gold Coast Woodturners
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 25, West Palm Beach
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1125, Boca Raton
- Valencia Reserve Veterans Club and King David Motorcycle Group

Project 425 military vehicles
American Legion Post 271, Tequesta
Wellington South Super Target Store, Lake Worth
Numerous veterans' organizations whose members were pallbearers and flag or flower carriers

This service was done in two parts. The first part was at a cemetery committal shelter and included the transportation of the cremains to the site led by the Palm Beach County Firefighters Pipes and Drums Band, the Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Honor Guard, and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Motor Unit, and followed by the motorcycle escort of approximately 40 bikes; the procession of urns, and flags and flowers, carried by volunteers; an Invocation; the parading of the colors, singing the National Anthem, and posting the colors; the reading of the names and ringing of the bell; the volley, Taps, and folding of the Flag by a two person US Army team; the presentation of the Flag to an MIAP volunteer in the absence of family members; and the singing of the song They Are Home.

For the second part of the service everyone walked to the columbarium, with the urns, flags and flowers, carried by the volunteers. Each decedent's urn was placed in a niche with a final salute by a member of the branch of service in which the decedent served. Two decedents, a veteran and his spouse, were placed in the same niche.

Eagle Scout Joshua Katz, the originator of the MIA-POW-OREE program, with other Boy Scouts, placed one of their challenge coins in each niche. A final prayer was offered and Steve Spickelmier then asked everyone to thank all of the active duty service members that participated for their service.

The service was concluded by Kathy Church, MIAP-FL State Coordinator. She thanked all who participated in, and attended, this service. Her last remark was "We can now say YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN."

Total time for this service from start to finish was approximately 1 hour.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Markonni – Team Leader
Kathy Church
MIAP – FL, State Coordinator
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