



Missing in America Project

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AFTER ACTION REPORT

MIAP-FL CALL TO HONOR #28

CAPE CANAVERAL NATIONAL CEMETERY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2021 - 10:00AM

The unclaimed cremated remains interred during this service were 22 from the Kraeer Funeral Home at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens in Pompano Beach, and 2 from the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Department's Indigent Cremation Services.

This MIAP-FL service included the cremains of 17 veterans, and 7 spouses of veterans, as follows:

US Army – 11 veterans and 4 spouses

US Marine Corps. – 1 veteran

US Navy – 4 veterans and 2 spouses

US Air Force – 1 veteran and 1 spouse

The veterans served during World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam. The longest that any of those interred has been unclaimed is since 1964.

Paul Markonni, MIAP Veteran Recovery Team Leader, coordinated the planning of this service. Other MIAP-FL team members involved in the identification of the veterans and spouses, recovery of their cremains, and preparing for the service, included Elaine Markonni, Roberta Battis, Patricia Rizzo, Diane DeLorie, Jim Campbell, and Steve Spickelmier.

Due to Covid 19 concerns and the National Cemetery Administration's current policy limiting the number of individuals that can attend services at national cemeteries, this service was limited to 50 people not including funeral home employees, cemetery employees and military honors personnel. Therefore, the service was not publicized or open to the public. Participants were limited to 24 Pallbearers, MIAP-FL and other assisting volunteers.

This service was supported by:

The Director, and the staff, of the South Florida National Cemetery

Military Funeral Honors, Navy Region Southeast Active-duty
military service participants

Palm Beach Sheriff's Office Reserve/Auxiliary Unit

The South Florida Woodworking Guild and Gold Coast Woodturners

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 25, West Palm Beach

American Legion Post 271, Tequesta

American Legion Post 164, Boynton Beach

Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapter 133, Pompano Beach

Wellington South Super Target Store, Lake Worth
Numerous veterans' organizations whose members were pallbearers.

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 Sheriff's Office followed by a motorcycle escort of approximately 15 bikes: the procession of

urns carried by volunteers; an Invocation; the parading of the colors, singing the National Anthem, and posting the colors; the reading of the names of those being interred during this service and the ringing of the bell; the volley, Taps, folding of the Flag by a two person US Air Force team; and the presentation of the Flag to a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America in the absence of any family members.

For the second part of the service everyone walked to the columbarium with the urns carried by the volunteers, each urn was handed to, and a final salute was given by, an active-duty member of the branch of service in which the decedent, or the decedent's veteran spouse, served, and the urns were placed in the niches by a cemetery employee.

In addition to the cremains of the veterans and spouses that we interred during this service, the unclaimed cremains of an additional spouse of a veteran, whose husband is buried at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, FL, were also recovered. With the cooperation of the Kraeer Funeral Home at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens, the cremains of that spouse were sent to Florida National Cemetery, and she has been buried and reunited with her husband in his grave.

Eagle Scout Joshua Katz, the originator of the MIA-POW-OREE program, could not be present at the service, but one of the program's challenge coins was placed in each niche. A final prayer was offered, and the service was concluded by Kathy Church, MIAP-FL State Coordinator. She thanked all who participated in 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 45 minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Church
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