



Missing in America Project

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**AFTER - ACTION REPORT
MIAP-FL CALL TO HONOR #36
SOUTH FLORIDA NATIONAL CEMETERY
LAKE WORTH, FLORIDA
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024
10:00AM**

This MIAP-FL service included the unclaimed cremains of 18 veterans from Yates Funeral Home and Cremation Services in Ft. Pierce, FL, and the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Department's Indigent Cremation Services, as follows:

- US Army – 9 veterans
- US Marine Corps. – 2 veterans
- US Navy – 4 veterans
- US Air Force – 3 veterans

The veterans served during Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, and other non-war specific periods. The longest that any of those that were interred had been unclaimed since 2010.

Paul Markonni, MIAP-FL Veteran Recovery Team Leader, coordinated the planning of this service. Other MIAP-FL team members involved in the identification of the veterans and spouses, the recovery of their cremains, securing Active-Duty military personnel for the service, and in the service, included Roberta Battis, Jim Campbell, Robert Adkins, and Kathy Church.

This service was supported by:

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

Active-duty military service participants

The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office Traffic Operations Motor Unit

The Patriot Guard Riders

Project 425

The South Florida Woodworking Guild and the Gold Coast Woodturners

American Legion Post 271, Tequesta

Wellington South Super Target Store, Lake Worth

American Legion Post 164 Honor Guard, Boynton Beach

Numerous veterans' organizations whose members were pallbearers, or flag carriers

This service, which was covered by a local television station, was done in two parts. The first part was at a cemetery columbarium area and included the escort of the cremains led by the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office Traffic Operations Motor Unit, followed by an MIAP Lead Rider, and an escort of approximately 20 motorcycles, the procession of urns, and folded flags, carried by volunteers, an Invocation, the presentation of the colors, the singing the National Anthem, the reading of the names of those being interred during this service and the ringing of the bell for the veterans, the volley, the folding of a flag by a two person US Air Force team, and the presentation of the flag to an American Legion Auxiliary member on behalf of veterans being interred with no family members present.

For the second part of the service everyone walked to the columbarium bank with the urns, and flags, carried by the volunteers. Each urn was handed to, and a final salute was given by, an active-duty member, and the urns were placed in the niches by a cemetery employee.

Eagle Scout Joshua Katz, the originator of the MIA-POW-OREE program, was not present at the service, but an MIAP volunteer placed one of his program's challenge coins for each of the interred in their niches. A final prayer was offered, Taps were again played. The service was concluded by Kathy Church, MIAP-FL State Coordinator. She thanked all who participated in this service. She asked everyone to take a moment to personally thank all active-duty military that participated in this service. Her last remark was **"We can now say YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN."**

The total time for this service from start to finish was approximately 55 minutes.

This After-Action Report was prepared by Paul Markonni.

FINAL NOTE: I received a call from a niece of one of the Air Force veterans. She was responding for the brother of this veteran that a NOK letter was sent to in New York. The brother had recently passed away. This niece and her husband were not able to attend this service to honor their uncle. I will be mailing them the Flag, shell casings and program for this service. They have already gone on FB and reviewed all the pictures from this service. KMC

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Church
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