

# Mission Complete

MIAP NEWSLETTER



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## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

### VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



## Missing In America Act 2009 (House Bill 2642)

111TH CONGRESS

1ST SESSION **H. R. 2642**

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist in the identification of unclaimed and abandoned human remains to determine if any such remains are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 21, 2009

Mr. TIBERI introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist in the identification of unclaimed and abandoned human remains to determine if any such remains are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Missing in America Act of 2009".

#### SECTION 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

Congress recognizes the tireless work and dedication of the members of the Missing in America Project, in conjunction with numerous veterans service

organizations, in identifying the unclaimed remains of veterans.

#### SECTION 3. IDENTIFICATION OF UNCLAIMED AND ABANDONED HUMAN REMAINS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF UNCLAIMED OR ABANDONED HUMAN REMAINS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall cooperate with veterans service organizations to assist entities in possession of unclaimed or abandoned human remains in determining if any such remains are the remains of veterans or other individuals eligible for burial in a national cemetery.

(b) BURIAL OF UNCLAIMED OR ABANDONED HUMAN REMAINS.—If the Secretary determines that any unclaimed or abandoned human remains are the remains of a person who is eligible for burial in an open national cemetery under the control of the National Cemetery Administration under section 2402 of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary shall provide for the burial of the remains and cover the cost of the burial of the remains and the cost of preparing the remains and transporting them to the place of burial, if the Secretary determines, with respect to the remains—

(1) that there is no next of kin or other person claiming the remains; and

(2) that there are not available other sufficient resources to cover burial and funeral expenses.

(c) CREATION OF NATIONAL DATABASE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a database in which the Secretary shall enter the names of any veteran or other individual identified pursuant to subsection

(a). The Secretary shall ensure that the database is publicly accessible.

**Contact your State Representative and tell them to support this Bill - Click here**

Laws have passed in Colorado, Illinois, California, New Jersey and Missouri. There are some States that are awaiting the Governors signature. Also there are Memorandums of Understanding with the States of Connecticut, Virginia and Washington

**MIAP supports this Bill 100%, along with American Legion National Officers.**



## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

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## Remains of 2 soldiers finally laid to rest

World War Two Army Veterans Archibald Fyfe of Stratford died in 1968 at age 55, he served as an Army Technical Sergeant, Alexander Pavluk of Branford died in 1987 at age 69, he was a Private. Not much else is known about the two Connecticut soldiers except that they served honorably, Buzz Siddell can vouch for that and now both soldiers have been buried with full military honors.

"There's a celebratory element to it and a joyous element to it that these vets are brought home to rest with their brothers and sister, that's very gratifying, said Siddell who is from the Connecticut Chapter of the "Missing in America Project". Missing in America has teamed up with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Connecticut

Funeral Directors Association to identify unclaimed cremated remains of state soldiers and provide them proper burials, today was their first ceremony. Dr. Linda Schwartz the Commissioner of the Connecticut Veterans Affairs Department said, "we asked the funeral directors to give us the names of unclaimed cremains, we authenticated these two gentlemen using the database of the Department of Defense and the V.A."

Today's event while poignant, was also like solving a puzzle -- between the state, the Funeral Directors Association and the Missing in America Program, it took about a year to figure this case out and verify all the soldiers' information. "Its been a lot of work on three fronts and its just nice to see these

two men finally buried with military honors and treated with some dignity," said Shauna Molloy, the Vice President of the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association.

<http://www.fox61.com/wtic-veterans-burial-0529,0.6063556.story>

[http://www.wtnh.com/dpp/news/military/news\\_wtnh\\_conn\\_wwii\\_veterans\\_receive\\_military\\_burial\\_200905290555](http://www.wtnh.com/dpp/news/military/news_wtnh_conn_wwii_veterans_receive_military_burial_200905290555)

<http://www.wfsb.com/news/19602711/detail.html>

<http://www.courant.com/community/news/mr/hc-middletown-cemetery0530.artmay30,0.6334333.story>





### Publisher's Perspective



I drove down to Topeka, Kansas from Cedar Rapids, Iowa to be a part of the escort for the three heroes, Mays, Callahan and Dunn. I was honored to be a part of this epic journey. To be a part of history in the making was truly a great feeling. I was in the company of so many heroes there in Topeka, all of them a part of history too. They made their impact in different con-

flits but still, all are heroes. You just have to look at their faces, to see the way they walk and talk to know that they are all heroes. They don't brag about it, they don't have an air of superiority about themselves, they don't swagger, they are very subdued, and you can see that they are all proud of what they have done and are doing. They are hum-

ble men and women but they are true patriots and heroes to all of us. They have given of themselves in body and spirit for this country and are glad they did. You could not find a closer family as that of a group of Veteran Brothers and Sisters. I was proud and honored to be in their midst and want to recognize all of them and to thank them for their service to our Country. I was also very honored to meet the Buffalo Soldiers, a proud group of men and women.



# HEADLINES FROM ACROSS AMERICA

[Biking Coast to Coast to Bury 3 Brothers](#)

[Veterans' remains taken to Washington](#)

[Motorcade Carries War Vets To Arlington](#)

["Missing in America Project" Roars Through Mid-Missouri](#)

[Pilgrimage Takes Family From ARCO To Arlington](#)

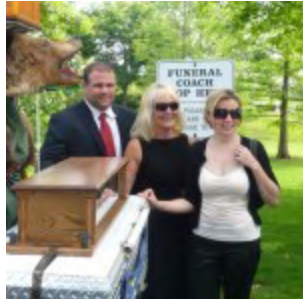
[Bikes escort vets' remains through Utah](#)

[War heroes finally on their way to proper burial](#)



They stood shoulder to shoulder in an older section of the cemetery, surrounded by the graves of veterans from wars long ago. Some came in Army dress blue uniforms. Others wore uniforms like those worn by the Buffalo Soldiers, who served in the legendary all-black Army units formed after the Civil War.

The crowd stood witness as a color guard folded the American flag and saluted when three rifle volleys pierced the air. A bugler, surrounded by the graves of other fallen heroes, played Taps.



BOB KOVACH/CNN

## Fallen service members brought cross-country to a final rest in Arlington National Cemetery



ARLINGTON, Va. -- Arlington National Cemetery serves as a final resting place for generation upon generation of American heroes. Other cemeteries like it house the remains of veterans who have served this country throughout its 233-year history.

But what happens when Soldiers from the past aren't given proper honors? Are they destined to rest forever in anonymity? Not if certain groups, like the Missing in America Project, have anything to say about.

A group whose goal is to place veterans in military cemeteries around the country, the project teamed up with the Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club to inter three veterans in the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.

They began their journey May 20, in Redding, Calif., and concluded with three separate burial services at Arlington, May 29.

Spc. James William Dunn, a combat medic who served in Vietnam and received a Silver Star, Boatswain's Mate First Class Johnnie Callahan served in World War II and Cpl. Isaiah Mays, a Medal of Honor winner, were all laid to rest after a lengthy journey to bring them to Arlington.

Mays, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his efforts in defending an Army pay station against robbers in May 1889, represented an especially significant journey.

He was buried in an Arizona hospital cemetery, a numbered brick serving as his grave marker.

"It was a wonderful experience," said Fred Salanti, executive director and founder of MIAP.

"When you're doing something good and right, the little things don't matter."

When Mays was exhumed in Arizona it was a big news story and veterans from all over came to help get the Soldier on his way to Arlington. This was the sixth attempt at getting Mays a proper military burial.

"I love history, and I'm a veteran and I wanted to pay my respects for what [Mays] did," said Officer David Hopkins of the Phoenix Police Department.

He and his partner, Officer Louis Manganiello, helped exhume Mays, and flew to Washington, D.C., for the burial service.

"It was our honor to be involved in just a small part of the process."

Throughout the more than 3,100 mile ride, riders who made the cross-country trip picked up members, dropped off members, and stopped in towns across the country to spread the stories of the three men who were on their way home.

"We kept the cremains visible in a wooden case on one of the motorcycles," said Thomas Costley, president of the National Association of Buffalo Soldiers and Troopers Motorcycle Club.

"They attracted crowds wherever we stopped, and we spread awareness about each of these men."

The group traveled approximately 400 miles a day, and had a tight schedule to keep, despite the lack of cooperation from the weather.

While the journey was long and hard, everyone who made it was glad to take part in the mission, but they acknowledged their work was far from over.

"It was very fulfilling, and I'm comforted that they are finally buried with honors," Costley said, "but we've got more work to do, there are still thousands of Soldiers left somewhere."

## Winchester to host escort to Arlington

MIAP Riders will travel through Kentucky on Interstate 64, and plan to stop in Shelbyville to pick up additional motorcyclists. Winchester will host the official Kentucky welcome. Oster said the group will gather in the Winchester Plaza parking lot for about an hour and a half to eat and gas up, starting at 1 p.m. Organizers will hold a recognition ceremony during the stop.

"We are so honored that the community here is going to find out about what is going on," Oster said. "This is a day for Winchester to be

proud."

The Missing in America Project is the combined effort of private groups and state and federal organizations to identify the unclaimed remains of American veterans.

"I'd love to see (Winchester Plaza) filled with a sea of American flags because these men are on their way home to Arlington National Cemetery on their last ride, where they will be buried with full military honors," he said.

### WAY TO GO WALTER

## Arlington from a Peace Officer's Perspective

Roger,

I am a Patrol Sergeant with the Eagle County Sheriff's Office in Colorado.

You contacted me on the afternoon of 05-23-09 while we both were trying to catch a bite to eat, we harassed each other about the time and the setting of your watch. You requested our assistance with stopping traffic at an intersection in the town of Eagle, CO. Eagle Police Department and the Sheriff's Office assisted with the closure of that intersection for the riders to stay together with their support vehicles. myself, two other deputies Scott Hendrickson, Karen Waddell and later a Vail Police Officer joined in the escort from Eagle I-70 MM 147 to the top of Vail Pass MM 180.

I wanted to thank you for the invitation to assist in this funeral escort. I am honored to have helped as is Karen and Scott from our Agency.

It is a great feeling to know that there are folks out there such as yourself dedicated in honoring those who have sacrificed so much, so we can life in this wonderful country.

I just wanted to say thank you for the invitation and wanted to tell you all to be safe and to thank you all for what you are doing for the veterans. Keep your head down & your powder dry!!!

Sgt. Bob Silva Jr.  
Special Operation Unit Sniper  
Former U.S. Army  
Eagle County Sheriff's Office  
Eagle, CO

## MESSAGE FROM FRED

All riders,

The group that I was with, Roger, Indian, Bill & Dee Dee and Rick (till the next to last day) are all back in Redding, safe and sound and profoundly impressed with the heartland of America. Our nations heart is beating strongly and we have seen its strength and breadth in support of veterans.

I cannot thank everyone enough and those that stood up and were counted on this escort, should be proud. As a team we went, we saw and we accomplished our mission successfully.

Along the way everyone in towns across the country, came forward and helped to make the whole event a wonderful, powerful, spiritual experience that none of us will forget.

I hope we didn't disappoint and that all are happy with the overall experience.

American Legion Riders Dana Moodie and Gene and Nancy Gardeners hearts were touched when they heard of the Missing in America Project, a veterans recovery program that retrieves ashes of servicemen and provides them with a military burial.

The project is a combined effort of the American Legion, other volunteer service and veteran organizations, funeral homes and state and national veterans agencies.

Moodie and the Gardners have been members of American Legion Riders for three years. They joined the organization through American Legion Post No. 13 in Yates Center.

On Memorial Day weekend they set out on their motorcycles to Limon, Colo., so they could ride back to Topeka with a group of Riders transporting the remains of three soldiers whose ashes were to be inurned in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. The ashes were those of Johnnie Franklin Callahan, who served in World War II, James William Dunn, who served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, and Isiah May, a Buffalo Soldier who served in the late 1800s.

I think one of the most touching moments for me was when we reached Topeka and the overpasses were lined with Legion Riders waving American flags, Gardner said. We wanted to honor our fellow soldiers. We wanted them to have the recognition they deserve for giving their service to our country to help preserve our freedom, Moodie said.

Moodie, who lives in Iola, served from 1973 to 1979 with the U.S. Army in the military police. Gardner, a resident of Moran, had a career in the Kansas National Guard, serving with 891st Engineer Battalion in Iola from 1978 to 2002.

The funeral escort of about 35 riders was joined along the way by Legion Riders, swelling the numbers to 70 or more bikers, Moodie said.



## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



Lawrence G. Lees, County Administrative Officer/Clerk of the Board  
Glenda K. Tracy, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board  
1450 Court Street,  
Suite 308B (530) 225-5550  
Redding, CA 96001 FAX: 225-5189

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CONTACT:

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Shasta County Board of Supervisors will recognize the Missing in America Project at the May 19, 2009 meeting.

A proclamation is to come before the Board of Supervisors to recognize "Missing in America Project – Honors at Arlington Day" for a journey to embark to Arlington National Cemetery on May 20, 2009.

The mission of the Missing in America Project (MIAP) is to locate and properly identify the unclaimed remains of American veterans. Thousands of remains have been discovered by MIAP and proper burial in cemeteries have taken place throughout the United States.

A motorcycle escort will join in the travels to Arlington National Cemetery, leaving Redding on May 20, 2009. Three highly decorated service men that were discovered languishing in pauper's graves

and on mortuary shelves will be taken to a final resting place for America's heroes.

Medal of Honor recipient and Buffalo soldier Isaiah Mays, World War II Navy veteran and Silver Star recipient Johnnie Franklin Callahan, and U.S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War and Silver Star recipient James William Dunn will be properly laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery with honor, dignity, and well-deserved respect;

Following the presentation of the proclamation, the Board of Supervisors will recess for a time of refreshments to be served in honor of all veterans who have served this country honorably.



## Letter to the MIAP



As I mentioned, Wally New is a friend who informed me of the MIAP and your Honors at Arlington run this Memorial Day.

I offer my speaking services to you and your MIAP staff/operations in the Carolinas. We live 12 miles south of Charlotte, NC in South Carolina, so travel within the two states is an easy one day trip.

Above is a picture of the pins which I will be sending Wally in the next

couple of days to present to each rider/escort leaving California. They are an enameled American Flag with a 24k gold plated angel and a banner below which says "God Bless America".

Wear these pins with honor and know that angels are watching over each of you as you make this unselfish journey to honor our fallen war heroes.

I reserve giving these pins only to Veterans and/or those involved in patriotic activities. Others to whom I have presented this pin are; President Bush, Rev. Schuller, Henry Winkler, a Medal of Honor Recipient, an Astronaut, Purple Heart

Recipients, Veterans, and widows of many Veterans. You are in good company.

Following is a copy of my message which will be sent to my email recipients, informing them of MIAP, what your mission is and your upcoming planned activities. My email list is sent to men and women in 23 states which include: 36 Veterans; 7 Veterans Wives/Widows; 60 Masons/Shriners; 11 Pastors; 12 Church Lay Speakers; and 1 Major Radio Station.

Sincerely,

Harvey C. Mayhill USAF  
1961-1965  
2873 Forest Hills Circle  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
803-980-2454



## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#), and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

It is not important who was the very first, what is important is that Memorial Day was established. Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation. It is about coming together

to honor those who gave their all.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.



In 1915, inspired by the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

We cherish too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where  
valor led,  
It seems to signal to the skies



Every American should see a poppy and instantly recognize it as a symbol for veterans and the sacrifices they have made.

*In Memory of our Honored Dead*





## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



### Arlington National Cemetery

More than 260,000 people are buried at Arlington Cemetery.

Veterans from all the nation's wars are buried in the cemetery, from the American Revolution through the Persian Gulf War and Somalia. Pre-Civil War dead were reinterred after 1900.

The Tomb of the Unknowns is guarded by the U.S. Army 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) began guarding the Tomb April 6, 1948.





## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



### MIAPBLOG.us

News and updates from the Missing in America Project

## UPCOMING MISSIONS

### Ohio MIAP Mission - June 12

Ohio will have an MIAP mission on Friday June 12 at 2:30 pm. The funeral will be held at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio.

Tammy Mathews, MIAP representative will officiate. There will be family members attending, including two sons. PGR will provide a flag line at the cemetery.

All arrangements were made by Linda Smith, MIAP National Operations Coordinator/BOD

### Montana MIAP Mission - July 10

Montana Missing In America Program / Veterans Recovery Program has located, identified and verified

two Montana veterans whose remains have been in storage in a funeral home in Ronan, MT.

The funeral will be at Ft Harrison, Helena, MT - 2:00 pm on July 10th, 2009

PFC Clayton Sandknop - US Army veteran of WWII  
Master Sergeant Paul Ploskunak (Retired after 26 years of service) - US Air Force veteran of WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

### Redding California - June 25

Northern California will have a mission Thursday June 25 at 2:00 pm. The Funeral will be held at the IGO Cemetery and will be burying 12 to 15 Veterans on that date.

### Redding California—Pending

We will be interring 25 Veterans later this year when the paperwork is completed.

### Nebraska - Pending

We have 1 confirmed Veteran that will be buried on a date yet to be determined,

## MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

Sponsored by:  
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### *Honoring those who served.*

*The rendering of Military Funeral Honors is a way to show the Nation's deep gratitude to those who, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country. This ceremonial paying of respect is the final demonstration a grateful Nation can provide to the veterans' families. This web site will provide the general public with information on Military Funeral Honors, as well as helpful links to related military and veterans issues web sites. In addition, the web site will also serve as a resource tool for our nation's funeral directors as they assist veterans' families in arranging for Military Funeral Honors.*



# MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

## VETERAN RECOVERY PROGRAM



The veterans languishing on shelves need us. They need America to step forward and ensure they are buried with honor. They need America to show their thanks for their service. Without them, we would not have the freedoms we enjoy today.



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- MIAP - Grants and Corporate Sponsors Coordinator  
**OPEN**

# MIAP Store

**STATE COORDINATORS**  
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or PINS IN BULK  
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**MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT**  
VETERANS RECOVERY PROGRAM  
NATIONAL CHAPLAIN  
WEB SITE ADMINISTRATION  
Chuck Tyler  
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Home: (530) 246-  
Cell: (530) 943-  
The Right Thing to Do

### MIAP MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the MIAP project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations; to provide honor and respect to those who have served this country, by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.

Prices  
250-\$55.00, 500-\$65.00, 1000-\$75.00  
All prices plus shipping



HONORS AT ARLINGTON  
To Honor Our Heroes  
\$2.00 each/3 for \$5.00  
Contact Digger: [digger@miap.us](mailto:digger@miap.us)

Honors At Arlington T-Shirt  
Front of T-Shirt is pictured below.  
Back has listing of sponsors.

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT  
**Honors At Arlington**  
Callahan • Dunn • Mays

New items will be added as they are approved. The store needs to be visited and more items bought. We need to spread the word about the MIAP Store to get the donations coming in so we can do more for the forgotten Heroes. If you have an idea for an item that would be good for the Organization to sell and raise money, then please submit it to the MIAP advisory council.

**If you have anything you believe should be in the newsletter send it to the publishers email address;**  
[wsuchlan@godaddy.com](mailto:wsuchlan@godaddy.com)