



MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SHERIFF SHAUN GOLDEN



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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 8, 2022

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A SALUTE TO ARMS & PROPER SENDOFF FOR UNCLAIMED VETS THROUGH THE MILITARY HONORS FOR FORGOTTEN VETERANS

Monmouth County: Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden continues the mission of ensuring that veterans who fought for our freedom won't be left behind. On September 8, one by one, the remains of 16 forgotten veterans and two spouses from WWII, Korea and the Cold War eras were carried out from the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office in Freehold as they began the journey to their final resting place, Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown, NJ. This momentous event, Military Honors For Forgotten Veterans, led by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office in support of the Vietnam Veterans of America New Jersey Shore Area Chapter 12, provided our veterans whose remains were never claimed with a salute to arms and a proper sendoff.

"We could never repay our veterans for the sacrifices they have made, but what we can do is never forget. It's most important that these veterans who served our country are given respect and provided a proper burial filled with dignity and honor," said Sheriff Shaun Golden.

"The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is proud to host this significant event and thank the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12 for their commitment and tireless work to ensure these forgotten veterans receive full military honors."

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The Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter 12's mission is to identify and claim those cremated remains of honorably discharged veterans and their spouses who have been abandoned and left on shelves in funeral homes. Sadly, there are countless remains of veterans throughout the United States that were never claimed. VVA Chapter 12 works with funeral homes in Monmouth and Ocean Counties to identify and provide those veterans a proper military interment for which they have earned. To date 113 veterans or spouses have been interred and 26 were returned to family by VVA Chapter 12.

"I was shocked when I first heard that veterans' cremains were abandoned on the shelves at funeral homes. I couldn't believe it and knew that we had to do something, so it has become our mission," said Ernie Diorio, Vice President of the Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter 12.

"A lot of time and energy is put into this. You need to ensure veterans are honorably discharged, obtain their death and cremation certificates, and have a funeral with full military honors, but the results are extremely rewarding."

The Military Honors for Forgotten Veterans Ceremony at the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, where many gathered, had a salute to arms and a reading of the names of the 16 veterans and two spouses. Their urns, with a flag on each one, were placed in a vehicle, which led the large procession towards the veterans' final resting place. During the procession, three stops were made to pay tribute to the forgotten veterans for their duty, sacrifice and service. Crowds gathered along the route at the Monmouth County Hall of Records, Centrastate Medical Center in Freehold Township, and, with the assistance of the Ocean County Sheriff's Office, Prospertown Lake in Jackson.

"There's an old saying that says may no veteran be left behind, we take that a step further in our chapter that says no veteran be left behind either on the battlefield or on the shelf," said Richard Gough, Chairman of the Cremains Project, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12.

Once the procession reached the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Ceremony, there was a call to order, posting of colors by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and the Manalapan Police Department's Honor Guard, a presentation of arms, a prayer to honor our veterans, a flag presentation, taps and the retiring of the colors, prior to the burial.

Also included in the service was a moment of reflection where a bouquet of flowers was presented to family members and a flower was placed on each urn, for the 16 forgotten veterans and two spouses, whose memory will live eternally, as we all remain ever mindful of the sacrifices they made.

The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and VVA Chapter 12 thanks all who supported this outstanding event including, Brigadier General William C. Doyle, Memorial Cemetery, Ocean County Sheriff's Office, Burlington County Sheriff's Office, Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners, CentraState Healthcare System, Especially for You Florist, Frank DeJianne - Covered Bridge Manalapan, Executive Undersheriff Ted Freeman, Kate Freeman, Freehold Borough PD, Freehold Twp. PD and Jackson PD.

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