

# MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

## Veteran Recovery Program

[www.miap.us](http://www.miap.us)



**MIAP**

1st Quarter- 2011

## Newsletter

*We Will Never Forget*

Dear Mr. Salanti:

I read about your organization in the newspaper, and I want to Thank You for the work you are doing.

My brother William, who lived in Sacramento, CA died in August xxxx. I was contacted by a firm from California in November, telling me of his death. Bill has not had contact with our family for forty years. It was his choice and not something that we wanted. As you can imagine, it was a shock to hear of his death.

He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict. The people in California told us that he was buried with full military honors. I believe that we have you to thank for that.

It is sad to die alone, but comforting to know that he had a decent burial.

So again, Thank you and May God bless the work you do.

Very truly yours, Anne B.

Nothing is ever possible without a great team of people working together. Thanks to all of you it is not even conceivable to me to be mentioned in the same breath as Medal of Honor Recipients, let alone have them review our efforts and maybe vote for us to receive this honor. I am humbled and of course in tears. Fred



The Most Prestigious Civilian Award in America

Every day in this country, ordinary Americans become extraordinary. It can happen in an instance of bravery, or through a lifetime of placing others before themselves. These acts of courage and self-sacrifice would inspire us all, if only we knew about them. Now, the time has come to stand up and celebrate, in our towns and in our cities, the selfless heroism that symbolizes the American spirit. Every year, on National Medal of Honor Day, three United States citizens will be awarded the Citizen Service Before Self Honors. They will receive this award from a group of Americans whose actions have defined the word courage – the fewer than 90 living members of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

To be considered for this rare civilian honor, nominees must have made a difference in the lives of others through a singular act of extraordinary heroism, or through their continued commitment to putting others before themselves. For the American people, this is an opportunity to nominate your fellow citizens—your neighbors and your coworkers, the heroes all around you. Three remarkable citizens will be chosen to receive the Citizen Service Before Self Honors on March 25, 2011 – National Medal of Honor Day.

The site selected for this historic ceremony is the ultimate symbol of anonymous heroism – the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. All of the anonymous soldiers who have found eternal rest in the Tomb, have been presented with our nation's highest award for valor in combat, The Medal of Honor. On the east side of the Tomb is a sculpture of three Greek citizens, each representing the virtues of Peace, Victory and Valor. To show the link between anonymous heroism in and out of uniform, the Society has placed these figures on the Citizen Service Before Self Honors medals themselves.

This upcoming year, 2011, marks the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Medal of Honor. Its monumental anniversary represents 150 years of courage and sacrifice on the part of the millions of men and women who defended our freedoms in uniform.

Citizen Service Before Self Honors was previously known as Above & Beyond Citizen Honors. Despite the slight name change to better reflect the award's intentions, the prestige, selection criteria and process, and support by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society have not altered.

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## Homeless/Unclaimed Veterans Burial Service

### NYC Calverton VA National Cemetery

Saturday - January 8, 2011 at 11am

On Saturday, Jan. 8 a magnificently patriotic event was held at Calverton National Cemetery.

Twenty military veterans, who perhaps died alone and forgotten, were finally buried with full military honors at Calverton. Their remains were located in the New York City Coroner's Office and potters fields. They were forgotten and unclaimed until their brother and sister veterans came to bring them home to eternal rest beside their comrades in a national cemetery.

This national project is called Missing In America Project (MIAP). This is gaining momentum across America. The MIAP service on Jan. 8 was organized by John Caldarelli of American Legion Post 1244 and Dignity Memorial Funeral Homes.



### Upcoming missions at:

#### **Calverton National Cemetery**

**8 April at 1300**

**1 veteran will be honored**

#### **Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery**

**25 April at 1300**

**19 veterans will be honored**

**St. Louis, Missouri**

#### **Southern Arizona Veteran Memorial Cemetery**

**25 April at 1100**

**10 Veterans will be honored**

**Sierra Vista, AZ**

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### MOH Citizen Service before Self Award Winners

Marie Conley, the school crossing guard who was fatally struck in a Dorchester crosswalk while shielding a 10-year-old boy from an oncoming car three years ago, was named yesterday as the winner of one of the nation's highest honors for civilians.

Conley is one of three recipients of the Citizen Service Before Self Honors bestowed by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation in Washington, D.C.

Conley and two Pennsylvania men — Timothy Brooks of Philadelphia, who saved a woman and her three children after their tour boat sank last year, and Dr. Pascal Spino of Greensburg, who has treated poor children, often for free, over a long career in medicine — will be honored Friday during a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. The awards, aimed at recognizing unsung heroes, are presented by the fewer than 90 living Medal of Honor recipients.

Conley was run over and fatally injured outside the Mather Elementary School in Dorchester in 2008, but managed to prevent a student from walking into the path of the car. The 87-year-old driver of the car, who said he didn't see Conley even though she was wearing her florescent vest, was sentenced to probation, after Conley's family asked a judge that he be spared jail, as long as he agreed to give up his driver's license.

Michael Conley, one of Marie Conley's four grown children, said the award was bittersweet because it was posthumous, but still very much appreciated.

"My mom was a selfless person, who thought of others before herself, so it's nice that she's being honored like this," he said. "She was just a neighborhood person, a single mom who worked two jobs to raise four kids. She really cared about the kids at that school."

Two years ago, Marie Conley was posthumously given the state's highest award for civilian bravery, the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery, named for the American Airlines flight attendant who relayed critical information about the hijackers on Sept. 11, 2001.

Michael Conley said more than a dozen family members are planning to attend Friday's ceremony, which will be held next to the Tomb of the Unknowns, where General James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, will give the keynote address.

Marie Conley's son Chris is a Marine who has served several combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Kevin Cullen can be reached at [cullen@globe.com](mailto:cullen@globe.com).

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GARDEN CITY, N.Y. — Anderson Alston served as an Army master sergeant in World War II. Private Frederick Hunter was a soldier from 1968 to 1971. Myron Sanford Mabry was in the Navy from May 1960 to July 1971. All of them died recently in New York City with no one to claim their remains.

Ordinarily, they would have been quietly buried in a potter's field, their graves unmarked. Instead, they and 17 other veterans who died in recent months will receive full military honors at a mass funeral this weekend, including prayers over their flag-draped coffins, bagpipers, the playing of "Taps" and local congressmen offering condolences.

The mass service Saturday at Calverton National Cemetery on eastern Long Island — the largest of its kind in U.S. history, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs — is part of a national initiative in recent years to clear a massive backlog of unburied or unclaimed cremated remains of both veterans and non-veterans.

"Our government promised every veteran a decent burial; that doesn't include sitting on a shelf in some funeral home basement," said Fred Salanti of Redding, Calif. The retired Army major is the founder and executive director of the Missing in America Project, which strives to provide a respectful funeral for any veteran who received an honorable discharge.

Salanti estimates two or three million remains — mostly cremated ashes — are in morgues or on funeral home shelves across the country. In most communities, local government pays for the cremation of the homeless or indigent, but funeral homes that provide the service are then left storing the remains for years, sometimes for decades, he said. The organization presided over the September funeral of a Union Army Civil War veteran and his wife from Missouri, whose ashes remained unclaimed since 1923.

Salanti and his organization of about 800 volunteers have since 2006 contacted funeral homes and morgues across the country, seeking to clear the inventory of unclaimed remains. They have been sanctioned by the Department of Veterans Affairs, which contacted the group about assisting with the New York City cases, Salanti said.

The New York veterans had identification documents when they died and the group worked with the VA and other agencies to confirm their military service. Some of the men may have been homeless or poor, although others may have simply led lonely lives with little contact with their families.

On occasion, relatives who never knew a veteran died have come forward after the group has held a burial, Salanti said.

Salanti said he doesn't blame the VA for the predicament, noting some veterans have been estranged from their families and there may have been no available next of kin to contact when they died.

John Calderelli, 75, a member of Greenlawn American Legion Post 1244 and the New York representative to the Missing in America Project, will serve as master of ceremonies at Saturday's funeral. The Korean War-era veteran said he feels he is repaying a promise to his comrades who gave their lives in service to the country.

"They made a commitment," Caldarelli said. "When our veterans are abandoned and there is no family to speak for them, I will speak for them. I am their family."

Michael Picerno, director of the VA's Calverton National Cemetery, said the funeral will be the largest mass burial of unclaimed veterans in history.

"These veterans served their country and we're here to ensure they get the honor and a burial they deserve," Picerno said. "It doesn't matter who they are or what happened to them after their service."

Also working to clear the backlog of unclaimed remains is the Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial Program. The national network of funeral, cremation and cemetery service providers picks up the bill for caskets and other expenses associated with the burials. Dignity since 2000 has provided funeral services for more than 850 unclaimed veterans in 32 cities.

"At one time these men and women raised their hand and said 'I will give my life for my country,'" said Chris Marsh, Dignity's director of corporate alliances. "Regardless of what happened to these people in their lifetime, that's not for us to judge. Any veteran who received an honorable discharge should be recognized in this way."

The 11 a.m. service at Calverton will include prayers and comments from local congressmen Timothy Bishop and Steve Israel. Caldarelli said the flags on the veterans' coffins, which ordinarily are presented to the next of kin, will be distributed to representatives of some veterans groups assisting with the ceremony.

"Anytime I see a soldier who is abandoned, a sadness comes over me," said Caldarelli. "They made a commitment. We feel America should recognize them, we should respect and honor them and see they are interred properly."

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### Veterans Recovery Program

We respectfully request all Veteran Groups and individuals, to be part of Interment with Honors of indigent &/or homeless Veterans, in Arizona.

**Mission notice for burial service:**

**Date: March 29, 2011**

**Veteran: Mr. Michael Gene Tumberlin - US Army**

**Interment Location: National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona  
23029 North Cave Creek Road, Phoenix**

**Time of Memorial Service: 2:00 PM**

**Muster Location: At the cemetery**

**Please muster a minimum of 45 minutes prior to the service, so we may form a flag line. If you have portable poles/flags please bring them.**

**NOTE: His 2 sons will be attending.**

**For questions please contact: Bob Day - AZ State Coordinator - MIAP**

**Email: [hotrodtrikes@gmail.com](mailto:hotrodtrikes@gmail.com)**

**Phone: 520.742.6572**

Those of you know that Jeff "Twister" Brown was the original founder of the Patriot Guard Riders organization in the nation. It was and still is incorporated in Oklahoma under Jeff Brown. His vision and expansion of a small group of American Legion Riders and Combat Veterans Motorcycle Assn. personnel evolved into the Patriot Guard Riders.

Jeff Brown saw the need for the Patriot Guard and MIAP to work together and that is how MIAP was started. He has been a constant and loyal supporter of MIAP since our inception. Vocally and in personal donations Jeff has kept involved with MIAP.

Jeff and Bonnie Brown will be MIAP Coordinators in Oklahoma to help us move forward.

"Riding with Respect" is and will always be my motto.

Current PGR National Leadership had problems with the MIAP mission and has banned MIAP or Missing in America to be posted on the PGR National Website. This has been in place for the last 3+ years.

While we work together in areas across the United States most MIAP missions are sanitized and promoted as PGR missions due to the rules provided to the PGR Moderators.

MIAP simply wants to get our veterans interred with Honor and Respect, no matter who gets it done.

I proudly welcome "Twister" and Bonnie formally to the MIAP family.

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Former state Sen. Maurice Johannessen isn't very good at taking no for an answer.

"I don't believe (in doing) that," he said. "You just have to find a way to do it."

A 125-seat memorial chapel that's being dedicated Saturday at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery in Igo is a testament to Johannessen's resolve.

It's a good-looking chapel, too. "The chapel turned out more beautiful than I ever imagined," he said.

Johannessen, 76, had long dreamed of having the memorial chapel built, but was told years ago that it was his impossible dream because government constraints would not allow it and state or federal funding could not be used to help finance it. The cemetery was dedicated on Veterans Day 2005.

Stubborn and undeterred, Johannessen, who's also a former chief of the state Department of Veterans Affairs and still has a lot of contacts in Sacramento, was able to arrange a lease of about 2 acres of state-owned land at the cemetery upon which to build the chapel. It's on a small knoll southwest of the cemetery's administration building.

Johannessen will donate that land back to the state.

He also formed a nonprofit group — The California Veterans Assistance Group — to build the chapel, primarily with privately donated money, labor and materials, and entered into an agreement with Shasta County that provided courtesy building inspections.

Johannessen estimates the project's value at more than \$680,000, noting that about \$200,000 was collected through community donations.

Johannessen, who has pledged to make up the difference of the project's cost, said he expects to be on the hook for about \$100,000 to \$125,000. He's still hoping for more donations.

"I anticipated getting stuck with a lot more than that," he said. Still, he said, it's all been worth it. "It's been my honor," to build the chapel, he said.

But Saturday's dedication will also be a bittersweet occasion for him.

His brother, John, died Feb. 22 at Mayers Memorial Hospital Burney Annex after a long fight with Alzheimer's disease. The Army veteran was 77, and his was the first service held at the chapel.

Johannessen said there has long been a need for the chapel that will provide shelter from the cold and rain of winter and the heat of summer during outdoor services at the cemetery.

Johannessen said he's attended a number of funerals at the cemetery and it can be so cold there in winter that those reading eulogies have difficulty holding onto their written scripts.

Since the chapel's May groundbreaking, Johannessen said, it has been embraced by north state residents and especially the area's building community.

The Shasta Builders Exchange was heavily involved in the project, while the project's coordinator was general contractor Jerry Wagar of Ochoa and Shehan Inc.

"A tremendous amount of work was done by the builders exchange," said Johannessen. "They took it on as their own project."

Redding architect Terry Topolski, a 1968-69 Vietnam veteran, also donated his services to design the 2,400-square-foot chapel.

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### New veterans memorial chapel built at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery in Igo



Seventy different organizations and individuals were involved in the chapel project and recently they were feted at a luncheon in their honor, Johannessen said.

Saturday's dedication ceremony, which begins at 11 a.m., also will feature a Missing In America Project (MIAP) memorial service for 25 veterans.

The Shasta County-based project, established in 2006, works to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans.

And the Shasta County Interfaith group, as well as a representative from the Wintu Nation, will take part in the service in recognition of the nondenominational design of the memorial chapel.

The public is invited to attend the dedication ceremony and the MIAP service. The chapel will be open to the public for viewing following the MIAP service.

Johannessen said work also will continue to establish a garden area for sitting, talking and reflection.

"It's going to be very nice," said Johannessen, who also played an instrumental role in the construction of the veterans cemetery. "Everyone said that couldn't be done either."

Those who would like to donate to the chapel project should call Johannessen at 241-7500 or e-mail [kmj@calvetassistancegroup.com](mailto:kmj@calvetassistancegroup.com).

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### WELCOME NEW STATE COORDINATOR MASSACHUSETTES

Timothy W. Tapply



Tim Tapply was born and raised in rural New Hampshire. He attended college and eventually law school in New York State. However, searching for something more than a mere legal career, he found his calling in the United States Marine Corps. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in August 1999.

Upon completion of law school where he was a founding member and president of the Veteran's Remembrance Organization, Tim entered active duty. He was stationed briefly in Virginia, Rhode Island, and then San Diego, where he served a successful tour defending Marines in the courtroom.

Tim is now employed with the law firm of Brand & Associates in Wellesley, Massachusetts as a civil litigation attorney. His firm focuses on fighting insurance fraud.

Forever seeking to honor the men and women who have served and continue to serve, Tim joined the Missing In America Project to honor those who gave their hearts and souls to provide the many freedoms we enjoy today.

Tim lives in Massachusetts with his lovely wife, daughter, and faithful chocolate Labrador.

### **Subject: Theodore Grant Family**

I spoke with Mrs. Catherine Grant this morning. She will attend the service on April 25th. I told her to make sure she was at the Chapel by 12:30 pm so she could be seated. I mentioned there would probably be a big crowd. She asked if the Chapel was big, because she wants to bring about 30 family and friends. I explained it would be crowded but they were welcome.

**Background,** at the time of Grant's death he had alienated the entire family. He went and made his own final arrangements which involved no family and made her swear on a Bible she would follow his wishes. They had separated, but when he was so sick at the end she came back and cared for him. She followed his wishes and has always regretted that their family did not have a service. She feels this will help their family have something now.

That story alone should make you feel all your hard work is worthwhile Linda.

Marsha Borchardt  
Administrative Assistant

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### Mission Notice for Veteran Interment Service:

#### MIAP Veterans Recovery Program

We respectfully request all Veteran Groups and any interested individuals, to be part of Interment with Honors of Ten (10) indigent or homeless Veterans from Pima County, AZ. There will be a full escort of the cremains, with flags flying, from Tucson to Sierra Vista. All are welcome to honor these men.

Date: April 25, 2011

Time of Memorial Service: 11:00AM

Interment Location: Southern Arizona Veteran Memorial Cemetery 1300 Buffalo Soldier Trail, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

These Veterans served in the: U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy & U.S. Army

Tucson Muster Location: Adair Funeral Homes 1050 N. Dodge Blvd, 85716

NOTE: Staging across the street, The Bashful Bandit Parking lot, all vehicles.

KSU (Departure) Time: 8:30AM. If you cannot arrive until departure time, please fall in at the rear of the formation. The suburban with lights is the Tail-gunner & will fall back to let you in.

Sierra Vista Muster Location: TBA

MIAP Mission Coordinator of the day: Bob Day - U.S.N. Vietnam Era

Email: [hotrodtrikes@gmail.com](mailto:hotrodtrikes@gmail.com) Phone: 520.742.6572

Michael Francis Hanley was picked up in Humboldt County, CA where he was scheduled for a mass burial with Six other persons in one gravesite.

MIAP escorted him to the Northern California Veterans Cemetery and included him in our Memorial Building Dedication last Saturday.

The following email was received today:

I have been looking for my father for over 20 years, he and my mother divorced when i was about 6 months old, I am now 39.

I am pretty sure the information I found on your site is for him, however I have a few questions that I am hoping you can answer for me.

I was told that he was a Marine but that he never served in Vietnam but instead did burial duty in DC, where did you get the information that he served in Vietnam? Is his burial with honors because he was in the military or because he served in Vietnam? How did you find out about him being "unclaimed"? I want to be sure I "found" him so that I can try come to terms with all of this.

If this is indeed my father I would like to thank your organization for doing this, I have some peace knowing that he had a proper burial; I just wish I had found him sooner.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give me in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lee Hanley Santomauro

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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.



**Texas's First  
MIAP Memorial Service  
January 27th, 2011**

**Karl Romanchuk's cremated remains sat in storage until Missing in America Project intervened.**

**Chad Swedberg, a retired Air Force veteran from Austin who organized Romanchuk's burial is working hard to find veteran's as an MIAP volunteer.**

**MIAP - National Executive Director  
Fred Salanti : [ducpho@miap.us](mailto:ducpho@miap.us)**

**MIAP - National Operations Coordinator  
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Joe Smith : Assistant Coordinator : [jo-elinda2470@windstream.net](mailto:jo-elinda2470@windstream.net)**

**MIAP - National Financial Officer  
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**MIAP - National Secretary - Legal Action Committee  
OPEN**

**MIAP - National Chaplain - Web Administrator  
Chuck Tyler : [chucktyler@miap.us](mailto:chucktyler@miap.us)**

**MIAP - Veterans Organizations Coordinator  
Chris Brocksmith : [cgbrocksmith@cbrocksmith.com](mailto:cgbrocksmith@cbrocksmith.com)**

**MIAP - National Liaison To Funeral Directors  
Sally L. Bélanger, CFSP [sallybelanger@aol.com](mailto:sallybelanger@aol.com) [www.mefda.org](http://www.mefda.org)**

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Paul LeMasters, Esq. : [phl@rosenacker.com](mailto:phl@rosenacker.com)  
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**MIAP - Grants and Corporate Sponsors Coordinator  
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