

VFW Riders Escort Purple Heart on Its Journey Home

Sep 17, 2013

VFW Riders are escorting a Purple Heart as it makes its way home this week from St. Louis, Mo., to Dayton, Nev. Donna Gregory found the Purple Heart over 12 years ago while sifting through boxes in a closet. When she pulled out the medal with Pvt. John F. Eddington's name engraved on it, no one could tell her where it came from or why it was there. Along with the Purple Heart, Donna found a letter written to the soldier's baby daughter while he was serving in Italy. It was then that her search for the Purple Heart recipient began.

Intrigued by this discovery, Donna took the Purple Heart home with her and began researching the soldier's history. She found out where he was from, that he was married, and that he had a daughter. She also found out that Pvt. Eddington was killed in action in Italy just four months after his daughter was born. Donna was sure that his daughter, Peggy Eddington, never received the letter written by her father before his death.

After tracking the daughter's whereabouts to Nevada, Donna was unable to pin down an exact location to send the medal to. Finally, she decided to share her story through social media in hopes that someone would be able to point her in the right direction. Within a few weeks, Donna was put in contact with Peggy's grandson, who then led her to Peggy. Donna wanted to deliver the Purple Heart and letter to Peggy in person because the journey had become very personal for her by this time.

VFW Riders from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and Nevada, as well as members of the Nevada Patriot Guard have volunteered to escort Donna on the trip from St. Louis to Dayton to make the mission a success. Donna will present Peggy with her father's Purple Heart on Sept. 21 in Dayton, Nev. And a daughter will finally get to read her father's long lost letter to her.

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