

A Final Tribute

Missouri VFW Post honor guard honors late veterans

May 17, 2023

Members of a VFW Post in a Kansas City, Missouri, suburb have dedicated their efforts to conducting honors for veterans who have passed away.

Members of VFW Post 10906 in Gladstone, Missouri, have spent more than two decades conducting funeral honors. Joe Lyles, the coordinator of Post 10906's honor guard, recalled that the Post's honor guard began in November 1999.

In total, Post 10906 members have conducted such honors in the thousands. Lyles said the Post has participated in an "uncountable" number of funerals.

Lyles, a retired Army veteran who started on active duty in 1954, added that Post members conducted honors at 13 funerals in April 2023 alone. It was an average month for the Post's honor guard.

"I remember a long time ago when we did 22 in one month," Lyles said.

Lyles, who served a total of 38 years in the Army and the Army Reserve, said these tributes serve to recognize the service and sacrifice veterans have made during their military service and beyond.

Rendering these final tributes, Lyles said, is not only important to the family and friends attending a veteran's funeral but also important for those in the Gladstone VFW Post Honor Guard.

"It doesn't matter who the veteran is," Lyles said, "even if they served honorably for only one day. We have conducted honors for everyone, from privates to generals."

Lyles said that the honor guard works alongside the Missouri National Guard to perform honors in the Kansas City area at the funerals of veterans. Families request for a funeral detail, and Lyles said that he and other members of the honor guard will do their best to

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fulfill the family's wishes. Lyles also said that the honor guard works with a funeral home in Kansas.

"These veterans gave a part of their life in service and defense of this country," Lyles said. "We feel that veterans deserve for us to be there for them at their final step because of their devotion to the country."