



ROLLING THUNDER®, INC ILLINOIS



“MISSION COMPLETE” **28 OCTOBER 2024**

CPL ERIVERTO ORTIZ

Corporal Eriverto Ortiz, 27, of Elgin, IL served with distinction as a member of Easy Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. Cpl. Ortiz was born on July 29, 1923, and raised in Batesville, TX, a small farming community. His family owned the general store, and he worked there alongside his father, after school and in the summers, before joining the United States Army in May, 1948.



MISSING: On September 22, 1950, during intense fighting near the port city of Pusan, South Korea, Ortiz went missing in action. His body could not be recovered due to the fierce fighting. There was never any evidence that he was a prisoner of war. In January 1956, with no further information the U.S. Army declared him nonrecoverable.

RECOVERY: In early 1951, the Army began recovering remains from the area and temporarily interred them at the United Nations Military Cemetery (UNMC) Pusan. One set of remains recovered during this period was designated Unknown X-32 Pusan, recovered in the vicinity of Kun'gong-ni, South Korea, near where Ortiz went missing. A tentative association was made between X-32 and Ortiz, but definitive proof could not be found, and X-32 was determined to be unidentifiable. The remains were sent to Hawaii where they were buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu

To identify Ortiz's remains, scientists from DPAA used dental and anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA analysis and historical records to officially identify his remains on 10 August 2023.

DIGNIFIED TRANSFER 24 October 2024:

Cpl Ortiz returned home on 24 OCT 2024 to a hero's welcome. Family members met the plane on the Airport tarmac for a long Overdue welcome home at Ohare Airport.

Local Police and Fire departments escorted and provided traffic control while the hearse was led by Rolling Thunder, Chapters 1 and 2 – IL supported by American Legion Riders, Latin American MC, VFW, and many patriotic groups, 15 miles from O'Hare Airport to Symonds-Madison Funeral Home, Elgin, IL



The procession was viewed by hundreds of local citizens, fire and police departments who turned out to view the procession and honor CPL Ortiz.





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Funeral Services 27, 28 October 2024:

A morning visitation for CPL Ortiz and family was held at Symonds-Madison Funeral Home.



CPL Ortiz was escorted to ST Mary's Church of Elgin for a Mass attended by his family, the public and local school children.





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INTERMENT 28 October 2024:

The funeral procession was along a 4 - mile route where local citizens, fire and police departments local schools, and the public turned out to view the funeral procession and to honor CPL Ortiz who was buried with full military honors at Bluff City Cemetery for his sacrifice in the Korean War.

Escorted by Rolling Thunder, Illinois Chapters, CPL Ortiz' remains were transferred to a caisson for his final march to graveside. An American Legion Post provided the 21-gun salute and bugler playing taps before the next of kin received the folded American flag that accompanied the remains.





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A POW/MIA Flag, flown during the Dignified Transfer, was presented to the next of kin by Ted Makarewicz and Dave Skinner on behalf of the members of Rolling Thunder, Illinois.



Despite decades of time, the ceremony brought a sense of closure to the family, comfort to his friends, warmth to his fellow Americans, and pride to his Veteran brothers and sisters.





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POW/MIA FLAG: A National POW/MIA Flag, flown during the Dignified Transfer, and subsequent escort, was presented to the next of kin and family members. The POW/MIA Flag symbolizes a “test of our metal” in supporting the on-going efforts to ensure the remaining 81,000 plus servicemen, servicewomen, and civilians, unaccounted for, are returned to our Country and to their loved ones.

MEMORIAL BRICK: A Commemorative Brick will be added to the KIA / POW / MIA section of the Veterans Memorial at Woodstock Harley-Davidson, memorializing U.S. Army CPL Ortiz.

Media Coverage

CPL Ortiz Obituary: <https://www.symondsmadison.com/obituary/CorporalEriverto-Ortiz>

Daily Herald Elgin: <https://www.dailyherald.com/20241023/news/answer-to-a-prayer-community-invited-to-honor-korean-war-mia-soldier-as-hes-laid-to-rest-in-elgi/>

CBS news Chicago: <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/video/remains-of-army-corporal-killed-in-korean-war-returned-to-family/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

CBS news San Antonio, Tx: <https://news4sanantonio.com/news/local/texas-soldiers-remains-from-korean-war-identified-returning-home-veteran-army-corporal>



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