



For Immediate Release

August 7, 2025

Treasurer Stacy Garrity Returns Purple Heart Medal to Son of Vietnam War Veteran

August 7 is Purple Heart Day, honoring more than two million Veterans awarded the medal

NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA: Additional resources, including B-roll and photos will be available at pacast.com.

Annville, PA — During a ceremony at Fort Indiantown Gap, Treasurer Stacy Garrity today observed Purple Heart Day by returning a Purple Heart Medal to the son of the late Ray Alvin Morgan, a U.S. Army veteran who was wounded during the Vietnam War. She was joined by Senator Chris Gebhard (R-48) and Representative JoAnne Stehr (R-107).

The Purple Heart Medal came to Treasury as part of the 2023 unclaimed property report and has been safeguarded in Treasury's vault until today.

"It's a true honor to return this Purple Heart today to Ray Morgan's family, and it's an extra special moment to get to do this on Purple Heart Day," Treasurer Garrity said. "As a Veteran myself, every military decoration return is near and dear to my heart. This Purple Heart is a piece of Ray's story, a story that includes the bravery he demonstrated and the sacrifices he and his family made during the Vietnam War. Returning this medal is a way to express our gratitude and appreciation for Ray's service."

Private First Class Ray Morgan served from November 29, 1965, until October 19, 1967, in Company A, 4th Supply and Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division. He was wounded in Vietnam, which led to his discharge from active duty. The Purple Heart Medal was presented to him while he recovered at Valley Forge Hospital.

The Purple Heart Medal was returned to Ray's son, James Morgan. Treasury also returned a Vietnam Service Medal and National Defense Service Medal that had been awarded to Ray.

"My father's military medals were submitted to the Pennsylvania State Treasurer's Office for safekeeping and returned from a forgotten safe deposit box as part of the unclaimed property program," James Morgan, son of Ray Morgan. "These medals personify honor, sacrifice, duty of service to our country. I am honored to have his medals returned to me on National Purple Heart Day at Fort Indiantown Gap where I am also employed. Treasury's Vault Manager Lori Hetrick contacted me regarding returning my father, Ray Alvin Morgan's, Purple Heart. It was a very emotional conversation. I am grateful that our state treasurer has an unprecedented mission to return Purple Hearts and other service medals to their rightful owners or their family."

Purple Heart Day has been recognized nationally since 2014. It marks the anniversary of the creation of its predecessor, the Badge of Military Merit, created by George Washington on August 7, 1782.

The Purple Heart was recommissioned as a military award in 1932 to honor Washington's 200th birthday. While criteria have changed many times over the years, the Purple Heart is now awarded to those who are wounded or killed as a result of an enemy action.

More than two million Veterans have been awarded the Purple Heart, including more than 350,000 who fought in the Vietnam War.

Since taking office, Treasurer Garrity has returned 517 military decorations and memorabilia, including 13 Purple Hearts, 3 Bronze Stars and one Gold Star.

Treasury's vault still holds nearly 500 military decorations, including those from every branch of service and most major conflicts. Military items include medals, pins, buttons, ribbons and more. Military decorations most often come to Treasury as the contents of abandoned safe deposit boxes.

"As Pennsylvania's Treasurer, I protect our state's finances, but one of the best parts of the job isn't about the money at all, it's moments like today when I can reunite a piece of a Veteran's story with their family," said Treasurer Garrity. "I assure you; we will never stop looking for Veterans who earned the military decorations in our care or their families."

Anyone can search Treasury's database of military decorations by visiting patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property/medals.

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STACY GARRITY, STATE TREASURER

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