

After Action Report on Wreaths Across America for 2020

We would like to thank all of you who purchased wreaths for placement at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. This year was so different, but you did come through. I have looked over the National Wreaths Across America Website and saw our statistics for the last 3 years since we started this program as a fundraiser. In 2017 we started to receive wreath requests for "In Honor Of" our veterans. In 2018 we sold 253 wreaths, in 2019 our total was 259 and in 2020 you sponsored 343.

Laying the wreaths was a real challenge since we had so much snow and ice. On Friday, December 18th, many volunteers, which included NARFE members, family members, Legion members and Postal employees, showed up with shovels to lay the wreaths. Our challenge was finding the particular grave sites. We had about 8" of snow the day before and then rain on top which crusted and made it very difficult for us to find some of the stones. We would sometimes have to dig 5 or 6 sites before we would find the one we were looking for. It took some of our helpers 5 hours to find and lay wreaths on 20 graves. But they all said, "These men and women have sacrificed for us and so we are sacrificing for them today."

On Saturday, I was in charge of Section 9A at the Gap and was only allowed to take 20 people in with me. We met at 7 am and drove into my section. The men went to the bottom of the hill and started clearing out the graves, while some of the women stayed up top. We unloaded the wreaths out of the boxes, laid the boxes on a pile and then we started carrying wreaths down the hill to the

uncovered grave sites. We laid a total of 1,093 wreaths. When we got to the top, they then put wreaths on broom handles and brought them down to us to lay on the graves. Again on this day, I had family help, Legion and Auxiliary, Retired Postmasters and my family and friends helping. We were all tired but got them layed in 2½ hours. What a group. I'm so proud of the continuous help I get each year and they keep coming back.

The only problem this year and really most years—as of two weeks before wreath laying, we heard the Gap cemetery was only receiving 24,000 of the 45,000 wreaths needed for laying this year. But the week before Thanksgiving, Dixie and I were receiving requests and mailing them off to Maine every day.

Remember – we take orders all year long – so please don't wait till the last day to submit them to us. By purchasing a \$15 wreath, \$5 comes back to NARFE. This has been our only fundraiser in 2020 and again in 2021. You are not only helping a veteran, but NARFE too. We know we can count on you and really enjoy laying the wreaths. This is done by both our NARFE chapter and Jonestown American Legion. However, we get our refund for the wreaths NARFE sells and the Legion gets their refund for their sales.

*Doris Edris,
Chapter Secretary/Treasurer and
Wreath Chairperson*



Time is here again to place your orders for wreaths at Fort Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. Your orders should be mailed no later than November 15, 2021 so there is time for them to be made and shipped. We place wreaths on the graves Friday morning, December 17, 2021. If you have a loved one buried in this cemetery and you put the grave number on the order form, we will place it prior to the actual ceremony on Saturday, December 18, 2021.

Last year we sold 343 wreaths and had a goal of 300. This year we are hoping to reach 350. It may be snowy and cold, but it is so rewarding to be part of placing these wreaths on the graves of our men and women who gave so much for us to have our freedom. We are blessed and take so much for granted. If you would like to help, please call Dixie Gasper at 717-866-9237 or Doris Edris 717-865-9779. **We take orders all year long, don't wait and do it now.** Give us a chance to do our paper work and mail everything to Maine where they make the wreaths.

Make checks payable to: **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA** and mail to Dixie Gasper, 1300 E. Kercher Ave., Lot #80, Myerstown, PA 17067 **OR** Doris Edris, 58 Whitetail Lane, Jonestown, PA 17038.

Deadline is November 15, 2021. Any questions call 717-866-9237 or e-mail dgasper38@comcast.net

I, _____ wish to purchase _____ wreath(s) @ \$15.00 each in Memory or in Honor of a veteran who has served their country.

In Memory of _____ Grave Site at IGMR _____
(Branch, Rank & Name)

In Honor of _____ Grave Site at IGMR _____
(Branch, Rank & Name)