



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JML 24-126

*FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF –
U.S. ARMY PFC JOSEPH C. MURPHY*

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2024, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (“DPAA”) announced with profound reverence that U.S. Army PFC Joseph C. Murphy, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during World War II, has finally been accounted for, as of April 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, PFC Murphy was originally from Bogalusa, Louisiana, and attended the Long Avenue School. Prior to enlisting in the U.S. Army, he was employed by the Red Bird Ice Cream Company;

WHEREAS, he became a private first class in the U.S. Army during World War II, and in 1942, PFC Murphy was a member of Company 1, 31st Infantry Regiment when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands that December. His bravery, alongside that of his fellow soldiers, continued through the fierce battles that led to the surrender of the Bataan Peninsula on April 9, 1942, and of Corregidor Island on May 6, 1942;

WHEREAS, thousands of U.S. and Filipino service members were captured and interned at POW camps. PFC Murphy was among those reported captured when U.S. forces in Bataan surrendered to the Japanese. He endured the grueling 65-mile Bataan Death March, and he was then imprisoned at the Cabanatuan POW Camp #1 in Nueva Ecija Province, a place of immense suffering. The camp lacked proper food and water resources, leading to widespread starvation, malnutrition, and disease. Unfortunately, Joseph C. Murphy, 20 years old, was one of the deceased;

WHEREAS, according to prison camp and other historical records, PFC Murphy passed away on October 28, 1942, as a result of malnutrition and dysentery. He was buried among his fallen comrades in the local Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery in Common Grave 713;

WHEREAS, PFC Murphy's family members were notified of his death and given a letter from U.S. General Douglas MacArthur. He was survived by his father, four sisters, and one brother;

WHEREAS, following the war, the American Graves Registration Service ("AGRS") undertook the solemn duty of exhuming and relocating the remains from Cabanatuan to a temporary U.S. military mausoleum near Manila. In 1947, the AGRS examined the remains to identify them. Many were declared unidentifiable and laid to rest as Unknowns at the Manila American Cemetery;

WHEREAS, in April 2019, as part of the Cabanatuan Project, the DPAA undertook the painstaking task of exhuming the remains associated with Common Grave 713, sending them to the DPAA laboratory for comprehensive analysis, reflecting a commitment to honoring those who served with valor. On April 1, 2024, scientists positively identified PFC Murphy's remains;

WHEREAS, PFC Murphy's resting place was marked as Unknown for over seven decades, but the American Battle Monuments Commission ("ABMC") meticulously tended his grave. Today, his name is inscribed on the walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, and a rosette will be placed beside it to signify his long-awaited identification and return;

WHEREAS, PFC Murphy's remains are scheduled to arrive back home in Bogalusa, Louisiana, where they will be buried properly on August 3, 2024;

WHEREAS, U.S. Army PFC Joseph C. Murphy's story embodies the essence of sacrifice, valor, and unwavering dedication. His bravery and suffering remind us of the high price of freedom and the enduring spirit of our nation;

WHEREAS, he should be honored and remembered as a hero, not only in Louisiana but also across the entire nation. His legacy is etched in the annals of American history and the hearts of a grateful country; and

WHEREAS, we commemorate the indomitable spirit and enduring legacy of the U.S. Army PFC Joseph C. Murphy, affirming our solemn pledge to honor his memory and that of all who served with equal valor, with deep respect and everlasting gratitude.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JEFF LANDRY, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

Section 1: As an expression of respect and to honor U.S. Army PFC Joseph C. Murphy, the flags of the United States and the State of Louisiana shall be flown at half-staff over the State Capitol and all state buildings from sunrise until sunset on August 2, 2024.

Section 2: This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until sunset, August 2, 2024.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana on this 31st day of July, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Landry", is written over a horizontal line.

Jeff Landry
GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

ATTEST BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nancy Landry", is written over a horizontal line.

Nancy Landry
SECRETARY OF STATE