

Purple Heart presented locally

(KNZA)--The Purple Heart of a Sabetha man killed in action during World War II was presented to members of Sabetha VFW Post 7285 Monday evening.

Major Zachariah Fike, founder of Vermont-based Purple Hearts Reunited, presented the Purple Heart medal and certificate for Private Francis Long.

It was among four presentations held by the organization in Kansas and Missouri Monday through Wednesday.

Long enlisted in the U.S. Army in June 1944. He was killed in action during World War II on March 2, 1945 on Lubang Island in the Philippines.

More than three years after his death, his remains were returned to the United States and he was buried at the Sabetha Cemetery. His parents, Ray and Lela Long, are buried next to him.

Founded in 2012, Purple Hearts Reunited returns lost, stolen or misplaced medals of valor to veterans or their families in order to honor their sacrifice to the nation. In circumstances where the original recipient has died and no descendants can be located, the non-profit organization arranges to donate awards to suitable organizations.

To date, the organization has returned more than 800 lost medals.

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