

November 29, 2010 Login | Register

Search this site | Contact Us | Site Map | Archives | RSS Feed | Mobile | [Reader Rewards](#) | [Subscribe to The Tribune!](#) | [EZ Ads](#)

SouthBendTribune.com

Discover what's in it for you



Current:
40

[Read Weather News >](#)



[Home](#) [News](#) [Sports](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [ourLives](#) [Obituaries](#) [Classifieds](#) [Jobs](#) [Cars](#) [Homes](#) [Marketplace](#)

[Weather & Traffic](#) | [Lottery](#) | [Multimedia](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Live Chats](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Photo Store](#) | [Text Alerts](#) | [Email Newsletters](#)

Search SouthBendTribune.com SearchMichiana Classifieds Archives Jobs

Email Newsletter

November 28, 2010 6:59AM

Story Toolbox

- [E-Mail](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [SBT Photo Store](#)
- [Print](#)
- [Newsletter](#)
- [Text Alerts](#)
- [RSS](#)
- [Talk about it](#)
- [Share](#)

Text Alerts: Get Local breaking news sent to your phone. [Sign up here.](#)

Last salute: Miller's Vets dedicate burial ground

By **KEVIN ALLEN**
Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND - Retired Judge Robert L. Miller Sr. was inspired two years ago to start an organization for homeless veterans to help them live with the dignity they deserve after serving in the military.

On Saturday morning, more than 100 people recognized another of Miller's successes that will ensure indigent veterans are treated with dignity when their lives end.



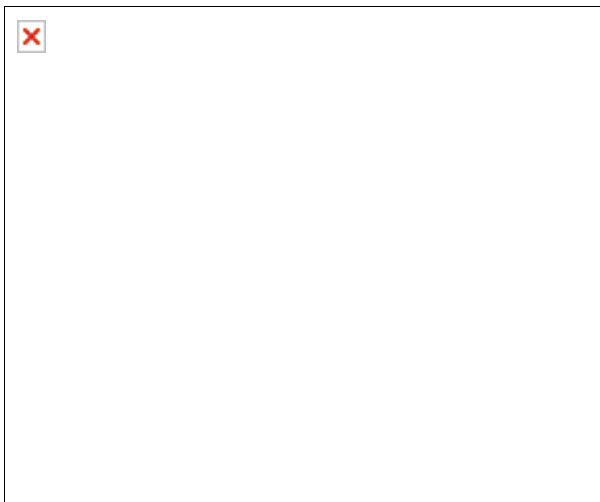
Tribune PhotoSs/BARBARA ALLISON

Members of Miller's Vets line up in formation Saturday morning for the dedication of the Garden of Peace, a section of 65 burial plots in the cemetery behind Portage Manor.

[View more photos](#)

Online Extras

The audience gathered in freezing weather under an ash-colored sky to dedicate the Miller's Vets Garden of Peace, a section of 65 plots in the cemetery behind Portage Manor that will be a final resting place for veterans who otherwise would not be given proper burials after they die.



The crowd's mood was a mix of solemnity and excitement as a monumental archway of brick, concrete and stainless steel was unveiled at the garden's entrance, revealing bronze sculptures of a lion lying with a lamb - the Miller's Vet's logo - and a bust of the judge raising his right hand in a salute.

Miller, an 89-year-old veteran of the U.S. Naval Reserves who served in World War II and the Korean War, and later became a St. Joseph Superior Court judge, said the garden is "a down payment" on what all Americans owe those who have fought for the nation's freedom.

"When you see a veteran, if he's doing well, thank him," Miller said. "If he's not, you owe him."

Miller's Vets is a division of the Center for the Homeless. The judge said more than 20 homeless veterans have participated in the organization's drill team that marches at parades, ceremonies and other events.

This latest aspect of the organization is called the Last Salute, as it provides complete funeral services with all military honors and grave markers to indigent veterans of the county.

Steve Camilleri, executive director of the center, said Miller's organization has helped homeless veterans transform their lives with a sense of belonging and relationships with each other.

"It is certainly wonderful to watch them march and see how good they look," Camilleri said, "but it's what's happening on the inside that makes all the difference."

Danny Forrest, the platoon leader that led the drill team at the dedication ceremony, is one of those who have been transformed through Miller's Vets.

Forrest, an Army veteran who served two tours in Panama, landed on his feet after being honorably discharged from the military. He found employment and bought a house.

But a series of hardships - he lost his job, his savings and his home, and then his brother was murdered - threw him into homelessness and despair.

- [Miller's Vets Garden of Peace dedication](#) 

Recent News Stories:

- [Woman who shot herself didn't get what she aimed for](#)
- [Parade of lights ushers in season](#)
- [Goshen band program competes for national grant](#)
- [Indiana reworks deer hunting rules](#)
- [Five families routed in Mishawaka fires](#)

[More News Stories](#)

Most Viewed Stories:

- [Notre Dame football: Season finish gave Irish a lot to feel good about](#)
- [1 dead, 1 injured in Mishawaka apartment fire](#)
- [Man robs South Bend dollar store, crashes while fleeing](#)
- [Irish hold off Trojans](#)
- [ND's Hansbrough cools off](#)
- [German POWs yielded humanity in Michigan orchards they picked](#)
- [Man who says he heard voice of God, revisited](#)
- [Notre Dame 20, Southern Cal 16: Individual Stats](#)

Forrest ended up sleeping under the Colfax Avenue bridge for two years, praying each night that he would die.

Finally, he went to the Center for the Homeless in December 2008 and joined Miller's Vets. Nearly two years later, he is sober, in the process of moving out of the center and will start a full-time job in a few days.

Miller said Forrest's story has a happy ending: He will not qualify for burial in the Garden of Peace because he is no longer indigent. The garden is for those veterans who, unlike Forrest, don't recover.

"Miller's Vets saved my life," Forrest said after the ceremony. "I didn't feel the pain of those losses any more. He gave me the opportunity to get Danny back, and I'm grateful for that."

[Login >>](#) [Register >>](#)

Be the first to comment on this story!

[Post Comment](#)

- You must *register* and be *logged in* to post a comment.
- We encourage your comments, but we ask that you keep them civil and appropriate. Please read our [rules of engagement](#)
- By clicking on "Post Comment" you acknowledge that you have read the Terms of Service and the comment you are posting is in compliance with such terms. Be polite. Inappropriate posts may be removed by the moderator. [Contact site Administrator](#)

- Three remain hospitalized after Indiana Toll Road crash in Elkhart County
- Notre Dame 20, Southern Cal 16: ND Lineup

The advertisement features a red-themed layout. At the top left is the 'Job Match TV' logo with a television icon. Below it, a video player interface shows the text 'CLICK TO THE RIGHT VIEW JOB VIDEOS' and playback controls. The central part of the ad contains the 'sbtjobmatch.com' logo. To the right is a vertical list of employers: Physicians Hospital, Five Star Sheets, Memorial Health, Weil-McClain, Elkhart Clinic, Service 1, and South Bend Tribune. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'View Employer Profiles' and 'View All Jobs', and a footer that reads 'POWERED BY DIGITAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS'.

Our Privacy Policy and Direct Notice To Parents

Contact the southbendtribune.com Web staff.

News coverage and editorial content provided by the South Bend Tribune unless otherwise specified.

Copyright © 1994-2010 South Bend Tribune