

10 veterans who served country in life and science in death are laid to rest in Dallas

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Suzy Robinson and her grandson Hayden Robinson touch the box containing the remains of her husband, U.S. Army veteran Jerry Robinson, at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. (Daniel Carde / Staff Photographer)

Ten military veterans were laid to rest Friday in Dallas — all serving a cause in death as they did in life.

All donated their bodies to science through [UT Southwestern Medical Center's Willied Body Program](#).

"This was what he wanted," said Amy Bissell, who buried her father, Charles Bissell, one of six Army veterans who were honored at the national cemetery on Mountain Creek Lake. "He was very adamant about it; he still wanted to help people even though he isn't here anymore."



1/4 Lydia Bissell, wife of U.S. Army veteran Charles Bissell, receives a flag during a funeral for 10 veterans Friday at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery in Dallas. (Daniel Carde / Staff Photographer)



2/4 An Air Force honor guard perform a three-volley gun salute during the funeral honors for 10 veterans at Dallas' veterans cemetery. (Daniel Carde / Staff Photographer)



3/4 Representing the fallen veterans three branches of service were representative from the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force. (Daniel Carde / Staff Photographer)



4/4 Suzy Robinson and her grandson Hayden Robinson touch the box containing the remains of her husband, U.S. Army veteran Jerry Robinson, at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. (Daniel Carde / Staff Photographer)

About 60 people — family members, military personnel and members of the Patriot Guard Riders — gathered for an intimate ceremony at Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. UT Southwestern and the National Cemetery Administration under the Veterans Affairs Department worked together to provide a proper burial for the service members at no cost to the families or the community.

Those laid to rest at Friday's memorial service served the Army, Navy and Air Force in World War II, Vietnam and beyond:

- Charles Bissell, Army
- Roy Childs, Army
- Douglas Chambers, Air Force
- Joe Price, Navy
- John Ritter, Army

- Jerry Robinson, Army
- Tommy Turner, Army
- Edward Walters, Army
- James West, Navy
- Richard Zottola, Air Force

Before the families arrived, military personnel and the Patriot Guard Riders set up American flags and practiced the precise elements of the ceremony.

Military personnel and members of the Patriot Guard Riders prepare for the funeral of 10 veterans who donated their bodies to science. [@dallasnews pic.twitter.com/A5BgoMOUen](https://www.dallasnews.com/pic.twitter.com/A5BgoMOUen)

— Sara Magalio (@sara_magalio) [October 12, 2018](#)

The Patriot Guard Riders are a nationwide organization of volunteers who attend military funerals at the request of families to pay tribute and shield the service from any potential protesters. The group is made up of veterans and nonveterans, men and women, and motorcycle enthusiasts and nonriders.

Bill "Zippy-K" Kushnir, a ride captain for the North Texas Patriot Guard Riders, arrived early to the cemetery to help his fellow members set up a flag line leading to the service location.

"We will stand in a flag line here to honor our veterans who were honorably discharged and deserve all of these honors that they have earned through their service," he said.

Even as the rain picked up Friday morning, the men and women of the Patriot Guard Riders stood unaffected along the flag line to welcome a procession of cars carrying the loved ones of the veterans.

Folding of the flag during the funeral of 10 veterans who donated their bodies to science.

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The military personnel who conducted the ceremony later presented two flags, one to each of the two widows present, as a token of their husbands' service. A third flag was presented to a member of the Patriot Guard Riders at the request of one of the veterans' families.

Bissell stood behind her mother, Lydia Bissell, as she accepted the flag for her husband. She described her father as a selfless person who would never think twice about putting the needs of others before himself, even after his death.

"He loved everybody and never tried to find fault in anybody," she said. "No matter how sick he got, if it was rainy or sunny, he was always about other people."