

Sarasota, Florida -- Congressman Vern Buchanan presented several long-overdue military awards and decorations to the mother of a deceased Vietnam-era veteran during a small ceremony in the Congressman's Sarasota office this week. Wanda Jensen of Sarasota accepted the medals, ribbons, and citations on behalf of her son, Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Ripley, who was recognized for his military career service in the U.S. Air Force.



“We are here to celebrate your son’s life and honor him for his dedicated service,” said Buchanan. “We are sorry for your loss, and present these awards in deep appreciation of your son’s service to his country. I encourage you to display them with pride.”

“To think, I’ve waited all these years,” said Jensen. “I am so very grateful that he hasn’t been forgotten.”

Retired Colonel Norm MacLellan of Venice helped Buchanan present the following awards and decorations:

- Distinguished Flying CrossBronze Star
- Air Medal-16 oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Commendation medal
- Army Commendation medal – “V” device
- Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon
- Combat Readiness Medal
- Good Conduct Medal
- Vietnam Service Medal – 3 oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Longevity Service Award – 4 oak leaf clusters
- Air Force outstanding Unit Award
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Ripley retired from the Air Force in June of 1978 after 21 years of service. The former Sarasota veteran passed away in March of 2005 without ever receiving his awards. He was buried at Arlington National cemetery in May of 2005.