

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VI Veteran Awarded Purple Heart 45 Years Later

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The Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs (V.A.) has announced the long-awaited approval and presentation of the Purple Heart Award to Virgin Islands Veteran Lee Ira “Picko” Pickering.

According to a release Veterans Affairs issued Saturday, Mr. Pickering was presented with the Purple Heart as part of a “Georgia Salutes You, Vietnam Veteran” honor/presentation ceremony on Saturday September 22 at the Fellowship Hall of the Sweet Home Missionary Baptist Church in Hiram, Georgia.

Mr. Pickering served in the Vietnam War where he was wounded in action, according to the release.

“Yes, it has been quite a long time since Mr. Pickering was injured, but I am really happy that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs was able to approve and recognize Mr. Pickering for going above and beyond in the line of duty and making this happen as we would say, while he can smell the flowers,” VA Director Patrick Farrell said.

Daughters Aida Pickering, Dionne M. Pickering, Monique Pickering and fiancé Michelle Collier are said to be proud for all the contributions of their loved one to the country.

The Purple Heart Award is bestowed to members of any branch of the United States Armed Forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and, posthumously, to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action. It is specifically a combat decoration.

Feature Image: from left to right: Hiram Mayor Teresa Philyaw; Georgia Department of Veteran Services North Region Director of Veteran Benefits Dale Bell; GA State Senator (District 35) Donzella James (seated); Mr. Pickering; Georgia Department of Veteran Services Commissioner Mike Roby; and Angie HaleSmith, Veteran Field Service Officer, GDVS - Carrollton