

PNC Clayton Jones Presents MOPH Medallion of Merit to Ann-Margret

By John Bircher, MOPH Public Relations

The highest award presented by the Military Order of the Purple Heart is the George Washington Medallion of Merit. It is not awarded on a regular basis, but is reserved to honor those Americans who exemplify extraordinary service to our country and its veterans. Past recipients include Bob Hope, President Lyndon Johnson, US Representative Olin Teague, Senator Robert Dole, President George HW Bush, US Representative Lane Evans, and actor James McEachin, to name but a few.



This year, the Military Order of the Purple Heart selected Actress, Singer and Dancer Ann-Margret to receive the George Washington Medallion of Merit for her selfless dedication to the morale and spirit of our nation's Armed Forces deployed around the world. During both the Vietnam and Persian Gulf Wars, Ann-Margret made countless visits to the war zone, especially during holiday periods, to entertain the troops. As Vietnam veteran Don Poss would later reflect, "the escape the Bob Hope tour provided us in expectation for days before, *and after*, helped us keep in touch with what we were there for -- God, Country, apple pie ... and *Ann-Margret!*"

Unfortunately, prior commitments made it impossible for Ann-Margret to travel to Minneapolis in August 2011 to accept the award at the MOPH National Convention. Instead, on 20 October 2011, PNC Clayton Jones went to Branson, Missouri, where she was appearing at the Andy Williams Theater, so that he could make the presentation in person.