



Paul J. Markonni

December 17, 1942 - September 17, 2025

Paul Markonni 81, Of Jupiter, Florida died unexpectedly on September 17, 2025.

Born in Chicago, Illinois December 17, 1943. In 1966 Paul graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Post graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army. In 1967 Paul earned The Commanding Generals Award for outstanding basic combat trainee. Paul then served in Vietnam and was awarded the bronze star medal for Meritorious Achievement in Ground Operations Against Hostile Forces. In January of 1967 Paul was awarded The American Spirit Honors Medal. Paul was honorably discharged January 1969.

Paul's federal career began in October 1966, with The Bureau of Drug Abuse Control. In 1971, Paul transferred to the United States Secret Service, as a special agent. Paul met his loving wife, Elaine, while working with the Secret Service, and Elaine working with DEA. They were married a glorious 44 years. After several years with the Secret Service, Paul moved on to The US Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration. His posts of duty included Indianapolis, Indiana; Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Atlanta, Georgia; Savannah, Georgia; and the Miami division of DEA. On January 2, 1998 after 31 years of federal service, Paul retired.

During his service with DEA, Paul established "The Drug Courier" profile. DEA

agents use this list of characteristics, to identify drug couriers in airports. The Drug Courier Profile was challenged in, The United States Supreme Court. The decision was made to uphold the profile allowing law enforcement agents, with reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, the right to conduct a brief investigative stop of an individual within constitutional parameters. Originating in Detroit, Michigan, and now nationwide, Paul can also be credited for establishing the first Airport Task Force.

After retiring from federal service, Paul dedicated his life, to many Veterans organizations. He gifted his time and passion to The Vietnam Veterans, and The Tequesta post of the American Legion #271. Paul was extremely passionate about the MIAP which locates, identifies and inters the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations.

Paul is survived by His wife Elaine, His sister Ava, and a large loving family. For those that wish to honor the memory of Paul, in lieu of flowers contributions can be made to the following, Vietnam Veterans of West Palm Beach <https://fovwpb.org/donations.html>, The Shihtzu Rescue Florida <https://shihtzu.rescueme.org/florida> American Legion Post #271 775 NORTH USHIGHWAY 1, Tequesta, FL, 33469 or a charity of ones choice

Live Stream link:

<https://view.oneroomstreaming.com/index.php?data=MTc1ODkwNTk4MDM4MjEzOSZvbmVyb29tLWFKbWluJmNvcHlfbGluaw==>

Cemetery Details

South Florida National Cemetery

6501 South State Road 7
Lake Worth, FL 33449

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 1. 10:00 AM (ET)

Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home
250 Center Street
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 744-2030
<https://www.taylorandmodeenflorida.com>

Interment with Military Honors

OCT 1. 1:00 PM (ET)

South Florida National Cemetery
6501 South State Road 7
Lake Worth, FL 33449

Tribute Wall

JC

“ I was very sorry to hear about the death of Paul Markonni. I was the appellate chief for the US Attorney's Office in the 1980s during the time when Paul had set up and was implementing the drug interdiction program at the airport. It was a novel idea. There was a lot of litigation over the searches, many of which I handled on appeal. The Eleventh Circuit approved the program under the guidelines followed by Agent Markonni. It was effective and fairly enforced. Paul was greatly respected by all with whom he came in contact: prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges. He was a true patriot and a good man. What a meaningful life he led. My sincere condolences to his wife and deep appreciation for his many contributions to his community and nation.
--Julie Carnes

Julie Carnes - March 06 at 05:14 PM

PR

“ Paul Markonni was my team leader in the Missing in America Project. He was a tireless advocate of those who were forgotten and left behind. I never met a more dedicated, sincere, kind man. I was proud to be a Veteran Recovery Officer under his leadership and passion for bringing honor to countless veterans who were left behind. There will never be an advocate like him. This world needed him, pure honor and dignity. His presence lit up the dark corners of countless veterans who were in crypts for decades. I will miss him, as will countless others who knew him.



Patricia Rizzo - November 13, 2025 at 06:12 PM



“ I had the honor of meeting Paul while I was working as a Legal Secretary for the Clayton County District Attorney's Office in Jonesboro, Ga. He had just formed the Atlanta Airport Task Force and wanted me to be his secretary on loan from the D.A.'s office. I worked there for several years and when he formed the Crack/Violent Crime Task Force in Atlanta, he once again asked our District Attorney Robert Keller if I could be loaned out to work as his secretary in Atlanta. He was the best to work with and he said we finished each other's sentences. He and Elaine were both so kind to me and I often visited them when they moved to Savannah and then to Florida. Rest in Peace Paul.

Debbie Waits - October 25, 2025 at 03:42 PM



“ Paul was a wonderful human being who touched the lives of many.He is sadly missed...

Vance Carter - September 29, 2025 at 09:40 AM



“ Paul was one of those "magical" agents, a magical person, and friend to everyone. Mike Grimes

Michael Grimes - September 25, 2025 at 06:22 AM

KB

“ I knew both Paul and Elaine from their days in Detroit. Both tremendous people and of course, Paul was renowned for his expertise in the airport interdiction of drug traffickers. Condolences to Elaine and the family.

RIP, Paul.

Keith Baudoin

Keith Baudoin - September 23, 2025 at 04:02 PM

SB

“ Such an amazing man and friend to the forgotten. Godspeed Paul! Thinking of the Markonni family and the pups he loved so much!

sb - September 22, 2025 at 03:56 PM

BR

“ I will miss our occasional calls and chats. Thank you for everything. I will miss you! I love you Dad!!



Brian - September 20, 2025 at 09:50 PM

RG

“ Paul was a Legend among Legends, as he pushed boundaries and created case law that provided creative opportunities to attack traffickers. Paul was admired and held in the highest regard by Federal Agents, Law Enforcement Partners, Prosecutors and defense attorneys alike. I was blessed to have worked closely with Paul in Atlanta, where I saw first hand Paul’s unparalleled knowledge of the law and DEA policy, his dedication to the job, to the truth and the respect he extended to everyone he dealt with. Being around Paul was to learn what drug enforcement was all about. I was fortunate to be Paul’s backup in Group 2, where his character and concern for the men and women in the group was proven every single day. Paul routinely completed the simple but time consuming administrative tasks normally the responsibility of the Agents, so more time could be devoted to the street, working cases and putting people in jail. There will never be another Paul Markoni....

May Paul’s family find comfort in God’s grace and promise.

Ron & Sheila Geer

Ron Geer - September 20, 2025 at 03:12 PM

DW

“ Paul and I worked together at Detroit DEA in the early 1970’s and I was his partner when he led the Detroit Metropolitan Airport DEA office. Actually, Tony Morelli was the supervisor, but Paul really ran the office and as others have said, Paul was the “Father of DEA’s Airport Interdiction program.

I have many happy memories with Paul and his wife Elaine who is a retired DEA employee who supervised Detroit DEA’s Fiscal Section and was a legend in her own right.

*Rest in Peace
Doug Wankel*

Doug Wankel - September 20, 2025 at 11:50 AM



“ I worked with Paul at the anti airport with DEA doing drug interdiction. He was a legend! I was so sorry to hear of his passing. My thoughts and prayers are with Elaine and his family.

Vicky Prattes - September 19, 2025 at 04:46 PM

WR

“ On July 11, 1996 my husband was burned in an industrial accident. He was sent to the Augusta, Ga burn center and went through numerous surgeries. Paul promptly brought together several of his co-workers to contribute many units of life saving blood for the surgeries. We will never forget how genuinely gracious and considerate Paul was.

Lynn and Gene Riggle

Walter Riggle - September 19, 2025 at 11:59 AM

AR

“ I met Paul when I came to Detroit, in 1975. He was respected by everyone he touched in the law enforcement community in Detroit. He went on to become a legend in DEA; known for his dedication and integrity. My thoughts are with Elaine in these tough times. Rest in peace, Paul.

Alan Rose - September 19, 2025 at 10:15 AM

BS

“ My thoughts and prayers for Elaine and the Markonni family. Paul was my boss, mentor and friend during my career with the DEA.

Paul is "Never to be forgotten". RIP

BRIAN Sullivan - September 19, 2025 at 08:15 AM

JM

I knew Paul when we were both rookie CID agents at Ft Gordon in 1966-67. I worked him while I was a Postal Inspector and He was a Secret Service agent in Detroit. I always hoped I would see him again. He was a good man and an outstanding federal agent. Gods speed Paul.

Jim McDonald - September 27, 2025 at 02:31 PM