MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

AFTER ACTION REPORT

November 4, 2026

Missouri Veterans Cemetery – Waynesville, Missouri

Four Unclaimed Veterans:

CMSgt David Richard Napier, USAF

Cpl Anthony Mikrut, USMC

Pvt Leonard Alton Slaughter,USMC

AN John Thomas Latanowich, USN

Honoring Four Unclaimed Veterans

On Wednesday, November 4, 2026, the Missing in America Project (MIAP) conducted a funeral and interment ceremony at the Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Waynesville, Missouri, honoring four unclaimed veterans. The solemn ceremony provided these veterans with the dignity, recognition, and military honors they had earned through their service to our nation.

The event was attended by representatives from multiple branches of the United States Armed Forces, along with military and civilian personnel. Among the distinguished guests were Brigadier General Alexander Lovasz, Commanding General of Fort Leonard Wood, accompanied by his Command Sergeant Major, Keyon Cummings. Also in attendance were Don Gerspach and his wife, representing the national leadership of the Missing in America Project. A significant contingent of military and civilian personnel from Fort Leonard Wood joined community members and volunteers in paying their respects.

Transportation and Military Escort

The cremated remains of the four veterans were transported to the cemetery from Holman-Howe Funeral Home in Lebanon, Missouri, under the direction of Funeral Director Taylor D. Howe. The funeral home had been entrusted with the care of the veterans' cremains.

The procession received a dignified escort from the Patriot Guard Riders, with additional escort assistance provided by Laclede County Sheriff Matt Fredrick.

Upon arrival at the cemetery, military honor guard members representing the United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, and United States Navy respectfully transferred the urns to the committal shelter in preparation for the ceremony.

Funeral and Committal Ceremony

The ceremony opened with welcoming remarks by Daniel Poirier, Missouri State Coordinator for the Missing in America Project. He welcomed the distinguished guests, military representatives, participating organizations, volunteers, and members of the community. His remarks emphasized the importance of remembering those who served our country and ensuring that no veteran is forgotten or

The principal address was delivered by Colonel Paul Kirchhoff, U.S. Army (Retired), Director of the Missouri Veterans Commission. His remarks recognized the sacrifices made by America's veterans and the responsibility we share to ensure that every veteran receives the respect and recognition deserved.

The final salute and ceremonial bell ringing ,Last Roll Call was conducted by Senior Chief Petty Officer John L. Tieskotter, U.S. Navy Reserve (Retired). As each veteran's name was read, the ringing of the bell served as a solemn reminder that each life represented a commitment to service and sacrifice for our nation.

Military Honors and Flag Presentations

Military honors were rendered by the United States Air Force Honor Guard team from Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

The presentation of the American flag was made to Chief Master Sergeant Justin M. Tite, AETC, 368th Training Squadron, Senior Enlisted Leader, in recognition of the service and sacrifice of the veterans being honored.

Additional flags representing the United States Navy and United States Marine Corps were presented to designated members of their respective honor guard teams. In the absence of family members, these service representatives accepted the flags on behalf of the veterans, ensuring that each received the recognition and respect befitting their military service.

The ceremony concluded with closing remarks from Stacy Wilson, Director of the Missouri Veterans Cemetery, who expressed appreciation to the military representatives, participating organizations, volunteers, and all those who came together to honor these veterans.

Final Interment

Following the ceremony, the four urns were respectfully escorted to the cemetery's columbarium, where the cremated remains were placed in their final resting locations.

A Mission Fulfilled

The November 4 ceremony was a meaningful demonstration of the Missing in America Project's commitment to its mission: to locate, identify, and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans.

The presence of senior military leadership, representatives from multiple branches of the Armed Forces, state and local officials, the Patriot Guard Riders, funeral home personnel, and MIAP volunteers demonstrated the importance of this mission and the respect our nation continues to hold for those who served.

Although these four veterans had no family members present to receive their final honors, they were not alone. Their fellow veterans, military representatives, volunteers, and members of the community stood in their place to ensure they were remembered and properly laid to rest.

Their final journey was one of dignity, honor, and respect.

Because it is the right thing to do.

Respectively Submitted by:

Daniel Poirier

Missouri State Coordinator

Missing in America Project – Missouri