



## Max W. Thurston

November 13, 1924 - September 29, 2023

WASHINGTON –

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Max W. Thurston, 19, of Flint, Michigan, killed during World War II, was accounted for July 7, 2023. In November 1944, Thurston was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 109th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. His regiment was engaged in fierce fighting near the town of Germeter, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest, when he was reported killed in action on Nov. 6. His body was unable to be recovered due to intense fighting against heavily reinforced German forces. As American forces began to secure the area, many casualties were nonrecoverable due to dense tangled vegetation and heavy snowfall. Following the end of the war, the American Graves Registration Command was tasked with investigating and recovering missing American personnel in Europe. They conducted several investigations in the Hürtgen area between 1946 and 1950, but were unable to identify Thurston's remains among hundreds recovered during that period. He was officially declared Killed in Action in November 1944. While studying unresolved American losses in the Hürtgen area, a DPAA historian determined that one set of unidentified remains, designated X-7476 Neville, recovered in April 1948, possibly belonged to Thurston. The remains, which had been buried in Ardennes American Cemetery, an American Battle Monuments Commission site in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium, in 1949, were disinterred in July 2021 and sent to the DPAA laboratory for identification. To

identify Thurston's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and Y-chromosome DNA (Y-STR) analysis. Thurston's name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at Netherlands American Cemetery, an American Battle Monuments Commission site in Margraten, Netherlands, along with the others still missing from World War II. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. Thurston will be buried in Holly, Michigan on Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 11:00 AM at Great Lakes National Cemetery.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPAA website at [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa) or <https://www.linkedin.com/company/defense-pow-mia-accounting-agency>.

Thurston's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt000001ETh50EAD>.

# Previous Events

## Military Honors and Burial

OCT **12**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Great Lakes National Cemetery  
4200 Belford Rd  
Holly, MI 48442-9444  
(248) 328-0386

*A procession will be led from Dryer Funeral Home to the national cemetery for Military Honors.*

# Tribute Wall

LA

“ Welcome Home Soldier - Genesee County Department of Veteran Services

Lauren - October 10, 2023 at 10:52 AM

JB

“ Welcome home Sir, Welcome home.



Jack Beeler - October 09, 2023 at 09:56 AM

SD

“ Welcome home, soldier. May you rest in eternal peace.



Steven Dorris - October 02, 2023 at 08:19 PM

FP

“ Thank you for your service Sgt. Thurston.

Frances Pelton - October 01, 2023 at 06:51 PM

LA

“ Thank you for giving the greatest sacrifice for our freedom and country. You are not forgotten.

laura - October 01, 2023 at 02:10 PM



“ Thank you for your service Sgt. Thurston.

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**gerald flewelling** - September 29, 2023 at 06:02 PM