



NEWS RELEASE

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
Washington, D.C. 20301-2300



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise Marine Accounted For From World War II

May 8, 2026

WASHINGTON—The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced today that U.S. Marine Corps Pfc. Edgar R. Norcross, 18, of Manchester, New Hampshire, killed during World War II, was accounted for on June 12, 2025.

Norcross's family recently received their full briefing on his identification, therefore, additional details on his identification can be shared.

In the spring of 1945, Norcross was assigned to Marine Torpedo Bombing Squadron, 232 Marine Air Group 45, 4th Marine Air Wing, Air Defense Command on Ulithi in the Caroline Islands of the western Pacific Ocean. On March 16, he was the radio gunner on a TBM-3 Avenger aircraft. During a glide bombing attack on Yap Airfield, the aircraft crashed on Yap Island in what is the modern-day Federated States of Micronesia. The crew, including Norcross, did not survive the crash. The Marine Corps reported him killed in action and his remains were declared non-recoverable.

On Jan. 13, 1946, Commander Task Unit 94.3.3 from the U.S. Navy located an Avenger crash site where two crew members had been buried in a shallow grave by the Japanese. The two were exhumed, reburied in deeper graves, and marked with white crosses inscribed with "Unknown American Flier, Died in the service of his country."

American Graves Registration Service personnel returned to Yap in February 1947 for further search and recovery operations. They recovered 10 sets of remains from various locations on the island and consolidated near the town of Colonia where they were reburied. The two sets of remains from the Avenger crash were buried together in Grave 7. In May 1947, they were exhumed and sent to the AGRS Mausoleum in Manila, Philippines. One set of remains was identified. The other was designated Unknown X-398 and buried at what is now Manila American Cemetery and Memorial.

In 2011, an investigation team from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, a DPAA predecessor, spent 21 days on Yap investigating leads. They were shown a piece of an TBM Avenger wing by locals, but were not permitted to access the location where the wing was originally found. Because the original crash site was never accessible, DPAA instead reviewed the records of Unknowns from Yap and determined X-398 could possibly be Norcross. X-398 was disinterred from MACM on Dec. 11, 2020, and transferred to the DPAA Laboratory for scientific analysis.

To identify Norcross's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological and radio isotope analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the [Armed Forces](#)

[Medical Examiner System](#) used mitochondrial DNA and mitochondrial genome sequencing data analysis.

Norcross's name is recorded in the Tablets of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, along with the others who are missing from WWII. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Norcross will be buried in Boscawen, New Hampshire, on July 7, 2026.

For family and funeral information, contact the U.S. Marine Corps casualty office at 866-210-3421, option 1.

For additional information on the War Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving their country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil or on social media at www.facebook.com/dodpaa, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/dodpaa>, <https://www.instagram.com/dodpaa/>, or <https://x.com/dodpaa>.

Norcross's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt0000000XdnuEAC>.

Read Norcross's initial ID announcement here: <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/ID-Announcements/Article/4270157/marine-accounted-for-from-world-war-ii-norcross-e/>.