

# Veterans...continued from Page 1A

that led to their interment, the remains of these five veterans had been sitting unclaimed at various funeral homes in the Southeast.

Among these gentlemen's remains, the longest forgotten had gone unclaimed for nearly 20 years, which gets to the point of the Missing in American Project, that every veteran should be honored for his or her service.

"You served your

country in the military through a war or peacetime," said MIAP Georgia State Coordinator Dan Poirier in Canton on April 26, addressing those forgotten in death who served their country in life.

Continued Poirier: "You expected to receive a military funeral. Because of your commitment to our country, you expected no less. Instead, you reside on a shelf in a funeral home, or mortuary or storage facility."

Poirier became involved with the Missing in America Project about two years ago, after he and other members of the local chapter Knights of Columbus made their annual trip to the Georgia National Cemetery to lay wreaths on the grave markers of veterans.

Several gravestones contained the following: "MIAP - LET THEM NOT BE FORGOTTEN."

Research into the MIAP acronym led Poirier to the Missing in America Project, which was established in 2007, and after learning more about it, he joined the cause to receive training in tracking down the unclaimed remains of veterans in the North Georgia Mountains.

The interment of the five veterans last Wednesday marked the first fruits of Poirier and many others' efforts, and Poirier hopes to locate the remains of other forgotten veterans moving forward so that the project can hold similar services at least twice a year in accordance with the



Veterans and active duty servicemen attended the service. Photo/Sean Verma of MIAP



MIAP Georgia State Coordinator Dan Poirier, left, discussing the project with Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, right, and others on the morning of the service. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

project mission.

"The Missing in America Project is a national project," said Poirier last Wednesday. "Our mission is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed remains of veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. These forgotten veterans have served our country, and as such, deserve to be buried with honor and respect."

Starting out from Mountain View Funeral Home in Blairsville last Wednesday, hundreds of veterans on motorcycles or otherwise escorted the five veterans all the way from Union County to the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton in a procession stretching more than a mile.

Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, himself a Vietnam-era Veteran, led the procession through Union County with the assistance of UCSO Lt. Craig Davenport, also a veteran. Various law enforcement agencies along the way maintained the procession until the remains of the veterans reached their final resting place in Canton.

Those involved with the nonprofit Missing in America Project would like to thank the following for their involvement in facilitating the

April 26 service at the Georgia National Cemetery:

U.S. Army Funeral Honors Detail; U.S. Air Force Honors Detail; American Legion Post No. 96, Murphy, NC; American Legion Riders across North Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee; the North Georgia Honor Guard; Bagpiper Jon L. Dipert; Bugler Patrick Gallagher; Charles Long of Mountain View Funeral Home in Blairsville; Grier Ivie of Ivie Funeral Home in Murphy, NC; Susan Thomas of Low Country Cremation and Burial in Reidsville; the Georgia State Coroners Association; the Georgia

Funeral Directors Association; the director and staff of the Georgia National Cemetery; Charlie Warthling, national assistant vice president for the Missing in America Project; the Knights of Columbus Assembly No. 2563 of North Georgia; and all volunteers who made Wednesday's service possible.

Poirier and the Missing in America Project are always looking for volunteers, and for more information or for those who would like to donate to help locate and identify forgotten veterans, contact Poirier at (770) 377-2377, or via email at miaga30512@gmail.com.

## Crash

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according to GSP. Neither suffered life-threatening injuries, according to the State Patrol.

Neither driver, Paul Bradley or Fields, was injured, according to GSP. Fields' passenger, Jennifer Pirkle, 38, of Mineral Bluff, was transported by ambulance to Union General, according to GSP.

Paul and Nancy Bradley were wearing seatbelts at the time of the crash, according to GSP; Clark and Morgan were not wearing seatbelts, GSP reported.

Both Fields and Pirkle were wearing seatbelts, according to GSP.

Clark was cremated, and his remains returned to his hometown of Mobile, Alabama. Cochran Funeral Home had charge of the arrangements.

According to GSP, Paul Bradley has been charged with second-degree vehicular homicide and failure to yield to traffic at an intersection.

No additional details were available at press time.

### Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



In honor and memory of  
**K9 Deputy Bodie**

Bell ringing information  
at 706-745-5493