



Honoring Our Troops & Veterans

COZAD LOCAL 2025

Purple Hearts **Bleed Red**

LIZ ROMERO

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE FOLLOWING MAY BE PERCEIVED AS GRAPHIC; READER DISCRETION IS ADVISED.

Flat on a rooftop in Iraq, concrete rained down on Bravo Company sniper Brad Peltier and Specialist Zapata as Apache Helicopters roared overhead, unleashing Hellfire missiles so close they felt they could touch them. Then the wall in front of them exploded. Seconds later, Peltier covered the holes in his leg, feeling each beat of his heart push hot blood through his fingers.

Nine Months Earlier

When Brad Peltier received word of his deployment, he and his wife, Laura, had just welcomed their baby girl, Trinity. Knowing he would miss her early milestones, the couple recorded videos of Brad reading books and talking to her, hoping she would recognize his voice and face when he came home.

Peltier's deployment began in January 2004 in Kuwait with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, based out of Fort Cavazos, formerly Fort Hood, Texas. As a Sergeant and team leader in 1st platoon, he and his unit served as a lead element for the 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The regiment was initially deployed in April 2003, where Peltier's company was attached to the 1st Armored Division, patrolling the streets of Western Baghdad.

Before entering Iraq, Peltier and his unit spent May in the Kuwaiti desert training and planning for what lay ahead. Part of their mission involved preparing non-combat soldiers for deployment. "We ran hundreds, if not thousands, of soldiers through marksmanship and urban warfare training to help build their confidence and competence before heading into a war zone," Peltier said.

In February, it was his turn to convoy into Iraq, where he would spend the next four months. The country remained volatile, with ongoing clashes between U.S. forces and remnants of Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard, fighters comparable to special forces in the American military. Tensions also ran deep among Iraq's own factions, as tribal groups and religious sects, particularly the Shiites and Sunnis, continued to battle for power and control.

Peltier's first assignment in Iraq was in Baghdad, where his unit took over operations from the 4th Infantry Division. "Just two months before we arrived, the 4th Infantry Division had captured Saddam Hussein," he recalled. "We were stationed out of Baghdad International Airport."



Brad Peltier takes watch in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during a sand storm in Baghdad with his unit of the Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment. (Photos Courtesy of Brad Peltier)

From their base at the airport, the division carried out a wide range of missions. They gathered intelligence on high-value targets, the faces from the now-famous "deck of cards", and planned and executed raids to capture them. They provided convoy security along key routes, including Route Irish, one of the most dangerous roads in Iraq, and cleared improvised explosive devices. Their duties also extended beyond combat: working with local tribes and leaders, organizing the repair of schools, and helping restore basic infrastructure like electricity and water.

"Some of our most dangerous missions involved working alongside Special Forces," Peltier said. His division would receive intelligence on high-value targets from Special Forces, then conduct raids on compounds and residences based on that information. Peltier's platoon, and particularly his squad, earned a reputation for effectiveness, often taking on the riskiest assignments. "We would assume the risk and carry out the mission until it was deemed 'safe'. At that point, Special Forces units would sweep in and capture the high-value target," he explained. "It created a lot of

animosity. We took the casualties, and they took the credit."

The cost of those missions was high. Peltier recalled watching a fellow soldier step out of the back of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, only in time to be struck in the chest with an RPG. "Just months earlier, I remembered watching him hug his wife and kids goodbye as we boarded the bus, then he was blown in half." During another mission, as Peltier's squad breached a compound of a high-value target, another soldier took a gunshot to the eye, a scene that still haunts him, despite the soldier living.

While stationed at Baghdad International Airport, Peltier and his unit carried out missions in the infamous Sadr City. By this point in the war, Sadr City was considered one of the most dangerous areas in Iraq, with some of the heaviest and most contested fighting in the country. "We were in gunfights on a daily basis," Peltier recalled. "There were times we left the forward operating base on a mission and didn't return for days. Sometimes we came back dragging a blown-up Humvee with no wheels, missing parts after

heavy fighting with insurgents."

Another constant danger came from managing and securing a site known as the Telecom. The site was the blown-up remnants of a telecommunications center previously used by the Iraqi military, including a concrete building and a radio tower hit by a cruise missile. Insurgents made repeated attempts to take control, seeing the site as a strategic prize. Despite the constant attacks, Peltier's unit made it their base. "Eventually, we moved off the airport entirely and occupied the Telecom full-time," he said.

By June, the fighting in Baghdad had largely subsided. "In just four months, the 1-5 Cavalry was able to drive out the insurgents and help rebuild the capital," Peltier said.

July brought a new mission for Peltier and his platoon. Al Najaf had become the new center of conflict in Iraq, overrun by insurgents and under the control of Muqtada Al-Sadr, one of the country's most powerful political figures at the time. "Since all the fighting was happening in Al Najaf, that's where we were sent," Peltier explained.

Al Najaf presented a different kind of warfare. Peltier said the enemy consisted of trained and organized fighters, including mercenaries from Turkey, Syria, Iran, and elsewhere. "Many of them were highly trained, battle-hardened soldiers. Deadly soldiers."

Al Najaf is home to the world's largest cemetery, spanning more than four square miles and containing the remains of an estimated 10 million people. Some traditions even say Adam and Eve are buried there. Insurgents embedded themselves throughout the cemetery, turning it into one of the most treacherous battlefields imaginable. Unlike cemeteries in the United States, many of the graves are tower-like, some rising as high as five stories, with rounded tops reaching 10 feet. Millions of graves are stacked or built atop one another, and underground crypts and tunnel systems plunge as deep as four stories. Wealthier families construct private burial chambers that can hold up to 50 bodies, some accessible only by ladder. This created a huge challenge for the soldiers.

"My unit fought within the cemetery of Al Najaf for weeks," Peltier recalled. The fighting was relentless and back-and-forth. "We would battle for days to gain what amounted to about three city blocks, only to lose two of them the next day. There were so many casualties."

Peltier explained that several men he considered brothers never made it home, and many others



were wounded. "We lost several under my command during that fighting. One was shot through his arm, another through his neck, and another had his foot blown off. Our company medic was shot in the back under his vest. Our battalion master sniper was shot in the head."

He paused and reflected on the psychological toll. "I learned firsthand what the 'thousand-yard stare' was, seeing it in my fellow soldiers, and when I looked in the

mirror." The term, widely known since World War II, describes the psychological impact of combat or PTSD, when soldiers appear emotionally detached as the mind struggles to cope with overwhelming experiences.

By August, the fighting in Al Najaf reached a peak. Bravo Company prepared for a final push through the cemetery and into the city, loading every round and piece of gear they could carry. "I carried an M-14 sniper rifle with five magazines, a 9mm Beretta with three magazines, an M-16 with seven magazines, an M203 grenade launcher with two bandoleers of rounds, about 16 grenades, three hand grenades, two smoke canisters, an AT4 anti-tank missile, four to five MREs, and roughly three gallons of water," Peltier said. "My spotter carried a squad automatic rifle with about 500 rounds, an AT4, a radio, four to five MREs, and about three gallons of water."

"My spotter, Specialist Zapata, and I were tasked with setting up an overwatch for the main advancing unit. We were inserted into the city and took a position on the roof of a seven-story building," Peltier said. "It looked like an upper-class hotel if you used your imagination," he added. "You could picture how it must have looked before bombs and bullets beat it down."

Peltier described what he saw through his sniper scope from the rooftop overwatch as a typical city, with buildings of varying heights, roads, sidewalks, and alleyways. "Now imagine all of it damaged by explosions and gunfire, no glass in the windows, walls riddled with holes, and roofs caved in," he said.

"Insurgents were shooting at us from doorways, windows,

LEFT: A telecom site riddled with bullet holes. **BELOW:** Destruction caused by constant fighting, bombings, and gunfire to buildings and structures. **BOTTOM:** An aerial view from a helicopter showing rooftops similar to those Peltier used during overwatch missions.



and rooftops, taking cover behind whatever concrete they could find," Peltier said.

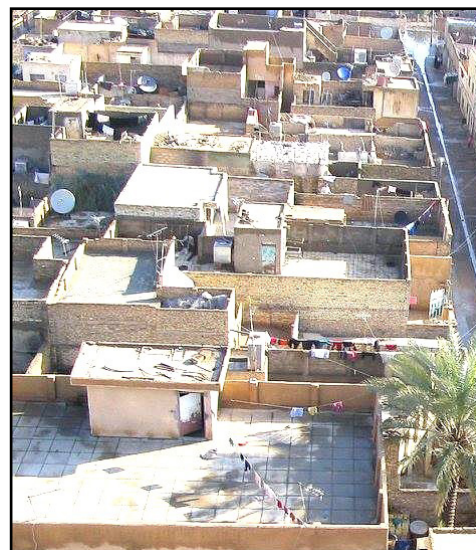
"I began laying down cover fire for the main advancing unit, sending grenade rounds through any window or doorway that might hide an enemy fighter. We engaged insurgents in buildings, on the streets, and even as they ran across roads and alleyways. After what felt like an hour, they began closing in on our position."

As an overwatch team, Peltier and Specialist Zapata had no freedom to relocate, leaving them exposed in a deadly, fixed position.

The roof they occupied had an eight-inch-thick concrete wall that offered some protection. Peltier explained that bullets weren't able to penetrate the wall. "My spotter and I began taking gunfire," he said. "Normally, you don't stick around and wait to get shot, but we couldn't move." Unlike their training, Peltier and Zapata had no option to relocate when compromised. "We stayed low as small fragments of concrete rained down from bullets striking the wall.

Eventually, the gunfire slowed, but Zapata and I decided to keep lying low a while longer."

"Then a pair of Apache helicopters started making gun runs," Peltier recalled grimly. "They came from behind, dropped Hellfire missiles, and flew directly over us as they attacked. The missiles felt close enough to touch." Following the Apaches were a Huey gunship, a Cobra gunship, and Marine aircraft, sweeping from right to left in front of their position. "It became a



cont. TO PAGE 4

from PAGE 3

constant flow of helicopter attacks, first the Apaches, then the Marines," he said.

"Above us in the clouds was a Specter gunship, or as we called it, Puff the Magic Dragon," Peltier recalled. He described watching the mass chaos unfold in front of them. Buildings were being leveled, followed by a brief, eerie silence. "Then it literally sounded like the voice of God, growling from above as the dust settled," he said. The destruction.

Peltier said that up to that point, the fighting had been terrifying, fierce, and violent, but nothing could have prepared him for what came next.

The 8-inch wall that bullets were not penetrating suddenly snapped their attention to a few feet from their position. "We heard and saw a round go through the concrete," explained Peltier. "It was like slow motion as it pierced through, downpouring the roof with concrete dust and debris. Then everything sped up really fast. The rounds continued to walk down the wall, punching through about every foot or two," Peltier breathed.

"I looked down and saw the wall in front of me explode," Peltier said. "I felt burning in my left calf and thigh, and my hands felt like they were on fire. I knew I'd been hit but didn't know how bad."

He tried to move away from the edge of the roof toward the middle of the building for cover, but his

left leg gave out, sending him to the ground. "My hands went straight to the back of my leg to cover the wounds," he said. "As my fingers pressed over the holes, I could feel my heart beating. Each beat pumped hot blood through my fingers."

In that instant, Peltier believed it was over. "I thought, 'this is it'. I won't get to see my daughter grow up. She won't know who I am or who I was. I won't get to kiss my wife or hold her close again."

Peltier described the moment as both an eternity and a blur. Zapata ran to his side, a small miracle, since he hadn't been hit. "We applied a pressure dressing over the wounds that were bleeding the most. That's when I looked at my hands. They were covered in blood and stung terribly. Looking closer, I realized most of the skin on the tops of my hands was gone, and my fingernails were mostly gone or mangled," he said. At that point, Peltier didn't know the full extent of his injuries; he only knew it was severe.

Bravo Company's medic stabilized Peltier as best he could, and then he was evacuated in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, equipped with a 25mm cannon and TOW anti-tank missiles. The vehicles can move quickly and even operate in water, but the ride is cramped and rough, especially for a critically wounded soldier.

"I don't remember much until I reached the nearest forward operating base," Peltier said. The shock and blood loss had made everything hazy.

Peltier's platoon carried the name of the Dragoons, a group of unconventional soldiers from the Civil War known for their brutal and unorthodox fighting style. "Little did I know when we deployed that our platoon would bring honor to the Dragoons of the past and live up to their reputation," he said.

After several helicopter rides, Peltier arrived at the Green Zone in Baghdad, a heavily fortified area near Baghdad International Airport used by U.S. military forces. While recovering, he received a service award

from the unit chaplain after making his way, on one leg, to deliver food to others who were unable to retrieve it themselves.

He was later sent back to headquarters, where he was expected to return to active duty. However, surgery was required again after part of his uni-

form, embedded in his leg for weeks, caused a severe infection.

A few weeks later, Peltier was flown back to Texas. "There they were, my pregnant wife and daughter waiting for me at the airport," he recalled. The sight filled him with love and relief, but medical care took priority. The smell of infection, the gangrene, and the pain from his wounds required immediate attention.

"I was shot on Aug. 23, 2004," Peltier recalled. "One round went through my left calf, another split and struck the back of my left thigh. The skin on my shins and hands was peppered, almost like a shotgun blast. I also received third-degree burns on the inside of my thigh, which caused sciatic nerve damage. To this day, I deal with sciatica and nerve pain, and half of my left leg remains numb. Shrapnel still surfaces occasionally in my legs, shins, and hands."

He added, "I suffer from nightmares and anxiety. I can't watch military movies; they often trigger panic attacks."

"With all of this, I still consider myself very blessed to be alive," Peltier said. "Not a day goes by that I don't think about Iraq and everything that happened there. And not a day goes by that I don't thank God for seeing me through and bringing me home."

Despite living with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder every single day, Brad Peltier chooses to embrace each morning. He works out, runs, and even plans to go back to attempt another Ultra Race next year, a grueling 100 miles in 48 hours, where previously he was sponsored by Wounded Warriors. He found a career that fits him perfectly, serving with the Cozad Police Department since 2015. He has walked his daughter down the aisle and watched his son, Shawn, follow in his footsteps, a gesture he calls the highest compliment a father could receive.



★★★★★
**VETERANS
DAY**
11

NOVEMBER
LEST WE FORGET
★★★★★

JM'S Gifts & SERVICE DRUG

**Thank You
for your
Service**

But none of this came without sacrifice. After being medically discharged from the Army, Peltier struggled to hold a job, and his family lost nearly everything they had built. With the support of their parents, Brad and Laura refused to give up. They chose to rebuild their lives, step by step, and day by day, after the hardships of military life.

As if he hasn't given enough, Brad continues to give in countless ways. He volunteers with the Cozad Fire Department, serves as commander of Cozad VFW Post #890, and teaches self-defense. His many certifications span leadership, law enforcement, instruction, rescue, and military training, a testament to the drive that has carried him through the darkest days.

Brad Peltier, husband, father, Purple Heart recipient, combat survivor, and Cozad police officer, powerfully shared, **"It took many psychologists before I realized that I'm normal. My memories are real—normal. My trauma is real. They're mine. I have to face them every day, but I do everything I can to keep moving forward. I am the only one who can help myself."**

If you or someone you know is struggling mentally, please text 988.

Thank you, Brad, Specialist Zapata, Bravo Company - 1st of the 5th Cavalry Regiment, and ALL servicemen and women who have, and do, serve and protect our United States of America.

Peltier's Awards & Recognitions

Purple Heart – Awarded by the President of the United States for injuries sustained during the Battle of Al Najaf

Army Commendation Medal – For bravery as a sniper during the Battle of Al Najaf

Presidential Unit Citation – For actions during the Battle of Al Najaf

Iraqi Service Expedition Medal – Expert marksmanship while operating the 25mm gun on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle

Army Achievement Medal – For service in Korea

Army Good Conduct Medal – For exemplary conduct over a three-year period

Combat Infantryman's Badge – For eight months under hostile fire

Commanding General Achievement Award (Kuwait) – Expertise while training soldiers in urban warfare

Chaplain Achievement Award – For compassion toward fellow soldiers while recovering from battle wounds

Battalion Commander Achievement Awards – Multiple recognitions:

- Personally trained over 100 soldiers in marksmanship
- Outscoring peers on an Army Knowledge Board
- Leading a team to victory during training exercises against over 100 advancing enemy soldiers
- Warrior Olympics Achievement Award – Boxing competition in the Korean Olympics
- Selected above peers as an Advanced Urbanized Marksmanship Instructor at Fort Hood

MIP Award – Presented by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) for individual officer performance in the area of minors in possession of alcohol in Nebraska

Marksmanship Award – Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center

Physical Fitness Award – Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center

Outstanding Team Award – Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center

Letters of Recognition – For volunteer work and public speaking:

- Lake Maloney and Osgood Schools, North Platte (War in Iraq)
- Sutherland School, Sutherland (Support for Troubled Youth)

Numerous other awards for excellence in leadership, law enforcement, military service, and training.

United States Army March 2000 – July 2005

Infantryman - Squad Leader, Company Training Coordinator, and Logistics

Use various computer programs including Microsoft Word, Power Point, and Excel to keep, update and track personnel records for entire company; coordinate training events for marksmanship, advanced marksmanship, urban warfare, physical fitness, hazardous materials, personal survival, and others; work with local colleges to set up continued education for soldiers; company assistant mixed martial arts instructor and company advanced marksmanship instructor.

Infantryman - Squad Leader, Sniper

Conduct surveillance and observation; area reconnaissance; patrol neighborhoods for disturbances; set up and conduct vehicle check points; search houses for contraband; conduct raids and capture insurgents; convoy security; sweep for improvised explosive devices; acted as the foreign weapons instructor for the company; responsible for health, welfare, and training of at least six soldiers; responsible for training at least six soldiers in marksmanship, tactics, personal survival, mixed martial arts and others; responsible for over one million dollars' worth of equipment.



Freedom is a gift earned through courage and sacrifice.

On Veterans Day,
we give thanks to all who have served our country with honor.

Berryman Funeral Home

This Veterans Day,
we honor all who
stood tall in service
to our country.
Your bravery and
sacrifice will never
be forgotten.



Thank you for your service.



Thank You, Veterans!

We salute all who served.

Axxent
Buildings & Doors

A Military Wife's Journey Through Every Goodbye

LIZ ROMERO

When Laura Peltier married her high school sweetheart, Brad, in 1999, she didn't realize she was also marrying into a life of constant change, long separations, and quiet strength.

Brad joined the Army in 2000, less than a year after their wedding. The decision, Laura said, came with promises of college benefits and medical coverage, and what felt like a slim chance of ever seeing combat. "What are the chances there's a war? Very slim," she remembered him saying.

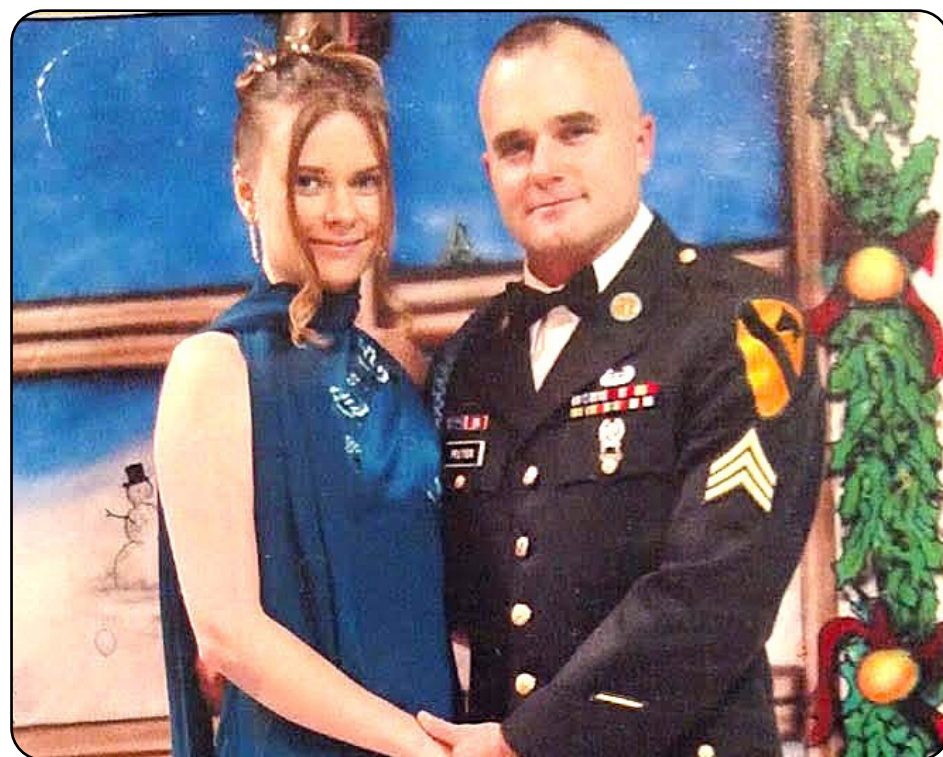
Brad was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado following training. Laura was excited to be nearby. She stayed with her parents so she could be close to Brad while saving money as he began his military career. Life felt stable for a short time, until the morning of Sept. 11, 2001.

Brad came home from PT that morning and told Laura to turn on the news. "I thought he was talking about a movie, like 'Die Hard' when he was trying to explain it," she said. "Then I realized what was really happening." He returned to base, telling her he'd see her that night, but he didn't come home that night.

"I tried not to worry," Laura said. "But the next morning he was still gone. I finally called the 24-hour guard, and they told me Brad was in an undisclosed location with no estimated return date."

Two weeks later, she finally heard from him. "He called and said, 'We're having a family day. Do you want to come?'" Laura found out he'd been just two miles away, waiting to be shipped out, but the communication was lost before it reached her. "Both of our parents went with me," she said. "And then a week later, he came home."

But not long after, Brad was deployed to Korea for a one-year rotation that ended up being 15 months, with a two week R&R home visit months into deployment. Laura was pregnant with their first child, Trinity, and the pregnancy was very



ABOVE: Laura and Brad Peltier attended the Military Ball in 2005 where achievements are announced and service members are honored. **LEFT:** Shawn Peltier (middle) stands with his dad, Brad, and mom Laura beneath the Fort Moore Infantry sign. Shawn has long looked up to his father and has chosen to follow in his footsteps as an infantry soldier, part of the army's primary ground combat force responsible for engaging and defeating the enemy at close range. **RIGHT:** The Peltier Family, Shawn, Brad, Laura, and Trinity attended the Veterans Day ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park, hosted by the Cozad VFW Post #890 where Brad currently the Commander. (Courtesy Photos by Laura Peltier)



difficult, but she didn't tell Brad when he called. "He had enough to worry about," she said. "I stayed with my parents and leaned on family."

Brad made it home for Trinity's birth but was forced to leave again six weeks later for training. "He'd send photos from training in Death Valley, California," Laura said. "In one of them, he looked so pale. Years later, I asked him why, and he told me he had been med-evacuated after suffering heat stroke." Brad had tried to shield Laura from his struggles, just as she tried to protect him from her worries at home.

Laura said the hardest part wasn't when Brad left, it was when he came home. "You change while they're gone. You have your own routine. Then they come back, and you both have to learn each other all over again." The Peltiers had to rebuild their relationship and marriage every time he returned. "Most couples grow together," she said. "Military couples grow apart and then have to learn the new versions of each other."

Brad once came home for two weeks of R&R, but Laura said that visit was one of the hardest times. "He said he almost wished he hadn't come home. To go from a war zone back to your family and then have to leave again, it's brutal."

A government shutdown in 2003 halted military paychecks, adding to stress at home. "Luckily, I had money set aside," Laura said. "But we went a month without income. I ended up selling my sofa to buy groceries."

To cope with the worry, Laura avoided seeing the news and relied on monthly updates from Brad's commander. "You learn to carry two kinds of worry," she said.

"Everyday life, and the one that never really leaves because he's in a warzone."

Support from other military families wasn't always easy to find. "The Family Readiness Group helped some," she said, "but it could feel like high school, little cliques of wives. It's not always the kind of support you need."

Then came a day she'll never forget.

"I just knew something was wrong," she said. "I couldn't shake it. So I drove 18 hours, six months pregnant with our second child, Shawn, and with a toddler, to my parents' house because I couldn't stand sitting with my thoughts." Laura called the Red Cross to let them know she was traveling, "just in case." She even told her neighbor, "If anyone comes to my door, call me."

Two days later, while visiting her grandparents, her phone rang. "It was Brad," she said. "He was casual at first, and when I asked if he was at the hospital for someone else, he calmly said, 'No, I was shot last month.'"

Brad told her he'd been shot in the leg and would be coming home soon. Miscommunication within the military left Laura in the dark for weeks. When Brad finally returned, she met him at the airport. "I could smell infection before I even saw him. He threw his crutches in the trash and walked toward me."

They went straight to the base hospital, where they waited more than three hours to be seen. "Later we found out he had gangrene," Laura said. "I learned how to do wet-dry bandages myself so he could come home."

That didn't mean things got easier. "I was in active labor and supposed to be on bed rest," she said. "But I was also taking care of Brad, who'd been shot, and our daughter, who constantly had ear infections. It felt like I was holding the whole house together."

When Brad returned home after his Iraq deployment, Trinity didn't recognize him. "She only knew him from photos and videos," Laura said. "If I told her to 'go get Daddy' she'd grab her picture book." Despite the storytime videos and pictures, young Trinity didn't understand that the man in the videos was the same person standing in front of her.

Even small things became emotional adjustments. "When he tried to parent her, or even when I made a mistake, like writing a check wrong, it was hard," Laura said. "You get so used to doing it all on your own, and then suddenly someone else has an opinion."

Despite the hardship, Laura and Brad were determined to make their marriage work. Brad still lives with the effects of PTSD, something that continues to impact their family. "A lot of marriages don't survive it," Laura said. "You have to keep making changes."



Brad didn't talk much about his experiences, but he's learned how to manage them. Running helps him, and he's been teaching Laura how to run too. "I soak up that time with him," she said. "It's his way of healing, and maybe mine too."

She remembered a time after his return when several soldiers had killed their wives, and the fear that followed. "I couldn't sleep," Laura said. "Brad reassured me that he would never hurt me and would take all precautions necessary."

Years later, when their son Shawn decided to join the Army, Laura said she was caught off guard. "I didn't think he'd actually do it," she said. "He's always been laid back. But halfway through his senior year, he told us he was joining."

Laura tried to stay supportive, even though she was nervous. "When he said he was following Brad's path, I smiled, but I was scared. I just remember thinking, 'Don't let your face show your worry,'" she said with a laugh.

Watching Shawn graduate from training was emotional for Laura. "At the Turning Blue ceremony, Brad placed the blue infantry cord on Shawn's shoulder. That's when it hit me, I'm doing this again."

Being a military mom is different from being a military wife. "It was harder when Brad was gone," Laura said. "With Shawn, it's pride mixed with worry. He's an adult now, but you still think, who's going to take care of him if he gets sick?" She said she feels comfort knowing he has food, housing, and insurance while he's learning to be independent.

Shawn's decision to enlist also helped Brad open up more about his own service. "It took seeing his son in uniform for him to start talking about it," she said. "It connected them on another level."

For Laura, being both a military wife and mom has meant living with uncertainty, adapting to change, and finding strength through it all. "It's not glamorous," she said. "It's a lot of waiting, worrying, and rebuilding. But it's also full of pride. You learn to find your way back to each other, over and over again."

Laura and Brad will soon celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

Meaning Behind the Purple Heart

LIZ ROMERO

The Purple Heart stands as one of the most respected military honors in the United States. It is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who are wounded or killed in action while serving their country. This medal represents courage, sacrifice, and a deep commitment to the nation's freedom.

The history of the Purple Heart reaches back to the American Revolution. It was first established by General George Washington in 1782 as the "Badge of Military Merit." Washington created it to recognize soldiers for their bravery and faithful service. After many years without use, the medal was revived in 1932, on the 200th anniversary of Washington's birth, and renamed the Purple Heart.

Each Purple Heart carries a personal story of sacrifice. For some, it honors a wound received on the battlefield. For others, it is awarded posthumously to families who have lost a loved one in service. Though small in size, the medal carries large emotional and national significance.

To receive a Purple Heart is not something any soldier seeks. It is an honor born from hardship and a symbol of the cost of freedom. Every recipient reminds us that liberty often comes with great personal sacrifice.

On days of remembrance, especially Veterans Day and Memorial Day, the Purple Heart serves as a powerful reminder of the bravery and resilience of America's men and women in uniform, and of a nation that will never forget their service.



The Strength Behind the Stars and Stripes



Air Force

The U.S. Air Force manages military operations in the air and space. It provides air superiority, global strike capability, intelligence, and rapid global mobility. Airmen operate fighter jets, bombers, transport aircraft, and satellites, and also handle cybersecurity and communications.



Marine Corps

The U.S. Marine Corps is known for being the nation's rapid-response force. Marines are trained to move quickly and fight on land, air, and sea. They often serve as the first troops to arrive in combat zones or crisis situations. The Marine Corps also works closely with the Navy for transport and support during missions.



Army

The U.S. Army is the oldest and largest branch of the military. It handles land-based military operations. Soldiers serve in roles that range from combat and engineering to communications, logistics, and medical support. The Army's mission is to fight and win the nation's wars through ground combat and to protect U.S. interests on land.



Navy

The U.S. Navy operates primarily at sea but also plays a vital role in air and land operations. Its mission is to maintain freedom of the seas, deter conflict, and project power across the world's oceans. Sailors serve on ships, submarines, and aircraft carriers, as well as in naval aviation and shore commands.



Coast Guard

The U.S. Coast Guard is responsible for maritime safety, security, and environmental protection. It operates under the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime and can be transferred to the Navy during wartime. Coast Guard members patrol coastlines, conduct search and rescue missions, enforce laws at sea, and respond to natural disasters.



Space Force

The U.S. Space Force, established in 2019, focuses on space operations. Its mission is to protect U.S. interests in space by managing satellites, monitoring space traffic, and ensuring the nation's ability to operate in orbit. Guardians, as Space Force members are called, support both defense and civilian space systems.



SACRIFICING WITHOUT PAUSE ON THE FRONT LINES OF A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

LIZ ROMERO

When the federal government shuts down, it affects all branches of the military, but the impact differs depending on whether a service member is active duty or civilian staff.

Active-duty members are considered essential, so they continue to work during a shutdown. They still perform missions, training, and deployments, including overseas operations. However, their paychecks can be delayed until Congress passes a budget or temporary funding measure. This means troops may have to wait weeks for their pay, which can cause financial stress for them and their families.

Civilians who work for the Department of Defense or in military support roles may be furloughed during a shutdown. This means they are sent home without pay until funding is restored. These civilians handle administrative, logistical, or technical tasks critical to operations, so a shutdown can slow down some support functions.

Essential operations, such as active deployments, combat missions, and critical maintenance, continue even during a shutdown.

Military construction and procurement projects can also be put on hold.

Government shutdowns can also affect services for veterans, including processing claims, issuing benefits, or providing access to certain programs. While healthcare at military hospitals generally continues, delays can occur in administrative functions.

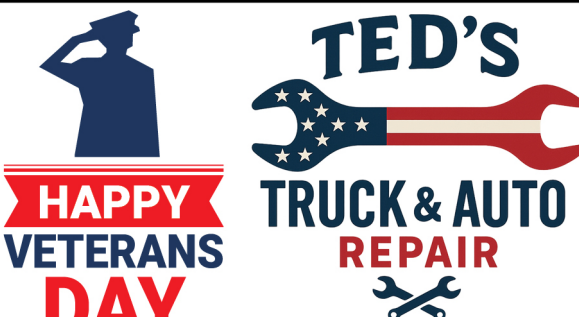
A shutdown does not stop the U.S. military from

carrying out its primary mission of defending our country. However, it can create financial stress for service members, delay support services, and disrupt long-term planning and training schedules.



Honoring the service, bravery, and sacrifice of every soldier who's defended our country this Veterans Day.

CS Cozad Services Inc.



TED'S
TRUCK & AUTO
REPAIR

HAPPY VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11th

308-784-2069

Free Veterans Day Breakfast for Veterans and their families

Date : 11/11/25
Time : 6:30 am - 9 am

Cozad Church of Christ
2117 Newell
Cozad, NE 69130

Please Allow Us to Honor You!



Veterans Day



"Thank You, Veterans!"

NAPA AUTO PARTS

Celebrating All Veterans
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



TROY'S
Tire & Auto

The Story Behind the Folded American Flag

LIZ ROMERO

When a veteran is laid to rest, one of the most recognized moments is the folding and presentation of the American flag. This tradition carries deep meaning, symbolizing respect for the service and sacrifice of those who wore the nation's uniform.

The flag, draped over the casket of a veteran, honors their service to the United States. When the ceremony begins, the flag is carefully and precisely folded 13 times. Each fold holds significance, representing values such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as well as faith, family, and sacrifice.

By the end of the folding, the flag takes on a triangular shape, resembling a tri-cornered hat worn by soldiers during the American Revolution. The stars remain visible, symbolizing the ideals for which the veteran served and the unity of the nation.

After the final fold, the flag is presented to a family member "on behalf of a grateful nation". Those few words express the nation's gratitude for the veteran's service and the family's sacrifice.

To many, that folded flag is far more than a ceremonial gesture. It becomes a lasting reminder of

honor, courage, and devotion to the United States of America. Displayed in homes, it stands as a quiet but powerful tribute to the memory of those who served, and a symbol of the freedoms they helped protect.



In Honor Of



Yancy Aden

U.S. Navy

4 years

In Memory Of

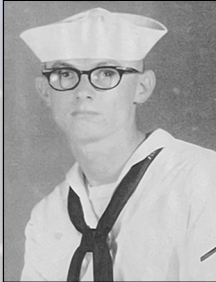


Stephen Andersen

U.S. Navy

3 years

In Honor Of



Maurice Andres

U.S. Navy

1965-1968

In Honor Of

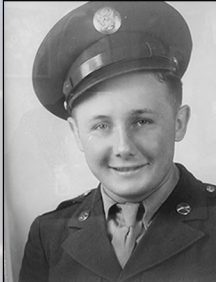


David Baack

U.S. Army

1966-1968

In Memory Of



Dale Bartlett

U.S. Army

1944-1946

In Honor Of



William Behymer

U.S. Army

1968-1978

In Memory Of



Mel Bolte
U.S. Army
National Guard
1952-1954

In Honor Of



Charles Boswell III
U.S. Army

In Memory Of



Charles Boswell Jr.
U.S. Army

In Memory Of



Charles Boswell Sr.
U.S. Army

 *In Honor Of*



Harry Brown
U.S. Army
1951-1953

In Honor Of



Gordan Boyd
U.S. Army
2 years

In Honor Of



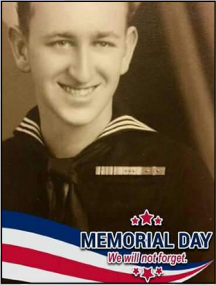
Noah Bydlon
U.S. Army
2022-2024

In Honor Of



Rodney Carlson
U.S. Navy
3 years

In Memory Of



Robert Cochrane
U.S. Navy
1943-1946

In Memory Of



Verlon 'Kit' Crick
U.S. Army
1945-1948

In Honor Of



Steven Deal, D.C.
U.S. Coast Guard
1968-1972

 *In Honor Of*



Dean Dowson
U.S. Air Force
1961-1961

In Honor Of



**Donald
Fleischmann**
U.S. Army
4 years

In Honor Of



Donald Fox
U.S. Air Force
20 years

In Honor Of



**Glenn
Franzen**
U.S. Army
7 years

In Honor Of



**James
Franzen**
U.S. National
Guard
6 years

In Honor Of



Bill Griffith
U.S. National
Guard

In Honor Of



Jim Hatcher
U.S. Army
1963-1966

In Honor Of



**Nathan
Heckenlively**
U.S. Army
2003-2009

In Honor Of



**Hunter
Holbein**
U.S. Army
4 years

In Honor Of



**Johnny
Janssen**
U.S. Army
1971-1974

In Honor Of



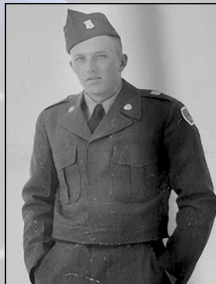
Gale Jensen
U.S. Air Force
1950-1954

In Honor Of



Hunter Keim
U.S. Army
2023-current

In Honor Of



Don Kinnan
U.S. Army
2 years

In Honor Of

**Jon
Kloepping**
U.S. Army
1971-1974

In Honor Of

**Brandon
Koch**
U.S. Army
2 years

In Memory Of

Joe Koch
U.S. Army
World War II

In Memory Of

Paul Koch
U.S. Navy
World War II

In Memory Of

**Vivian
Kocourek**
U.S. Army
3 years

In Honor Of

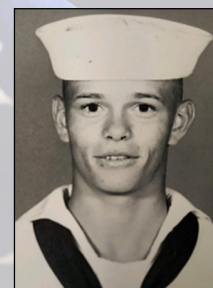
**Richard
Krushenisky**
U.S. Air Force
4 years

In Honor Of

**Roland
Lauer**
U.S. Army
2 years

In Honor Of

**Arlin (Dale)
Laughlin**
U.S. Army

In Honor Of

**Wendell
Lawhead**
U.S. Navy
1967-1969

In Memory Of

**Richard
Lindeman**
U.S. Army

In Honor Of

**Lt. Col.
Bronson
Malcom**
U.S. Air Force
18 years

In Honor Of

**Michael
Marshall**
U.S. Navy
1983-1991



In Memory Of



**Raymond
"Ray"
Marshall**
U.S. Army
National Guard
1963-1969

In Honor Of



Kade Mason
U.S. Navy
2 years

In Honor Of



David Mead
U.S. Navy
2 years

In Memory Of



Jerald Olds
U.S. Army
1965-1967



In Honor Of



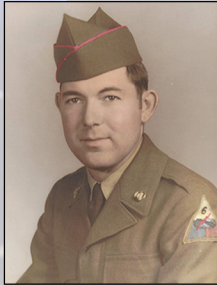
Brad Peltier
U.S. Army
4 years

In Honor Of



**Shawn
Peltier**
U.S. Army
2023 - Current

In Honor Of



**Raymond
Perlinger**
U.S. Army
1951-1953

In Memory Of



Jack Reeves
U.S. Navy
8 years

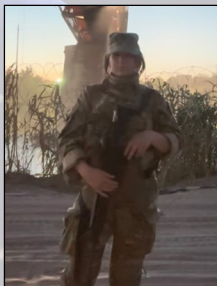
In Honor Of



Roger Rupp
U.S. National
Guard



In Honor Of



Mattie Ryker
U.S. Army
2023-current

In Honor Of



Jason Ryker
U.S. Army
8 years

In Honor Of



**Michael
Schmeeckle**
U.S. Marines
1984-1988

In Honor Of



Shane Schwarz

U.S. Army

28 years

In Honor Of



Thomas Schwarz

U.S. Air Force

2017-2023

In Honor Of



Clint Snider

U.S. Air Force

20 years

In Honor Of



Gene Stadler

U.S. Air Force

1952-1956

In Memory Of



DM Stuart

U.S. Air Force

4 years

In Memory Of



Frank Tucker

U.S. Navy

In Honor Of



Gene Ward

U.S. Marines

1952-1954

 In Honor Of



Deb Weir

U.S. Army

38 years

In Honor Of



Larry Whiting

U.S. Army

3 years

In Honor Of



August Wick

U.S. Navy

2022-Current

 In Honor Of



John Willets

U.S. Army

1970-1971

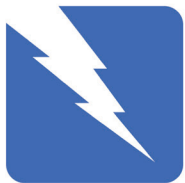
In Memory Of



Neil Young

U.S. Navy

1941-1946

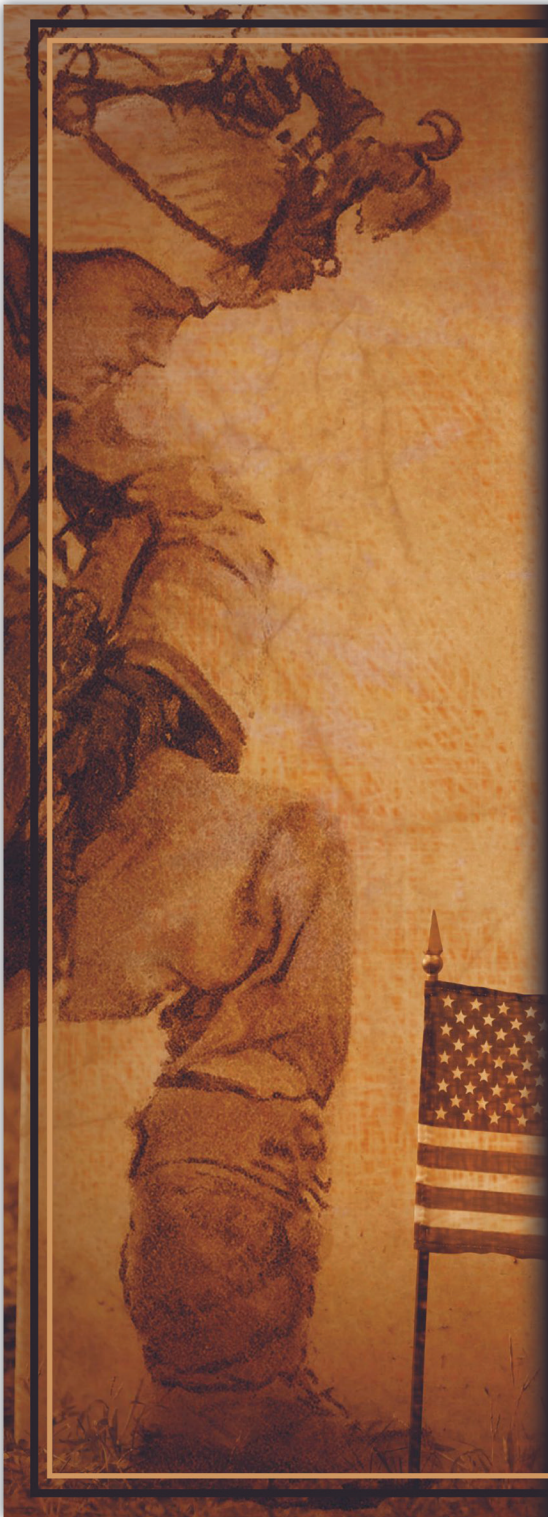


FLASH ELECTRIC



IDE FAMILY
DENTAL





A Tribute to Veterans
By Joanna Fuchs

They fought for *freedom*
and for *peace*,
On foreign shores
and skies above.
They stood with *courage*,
strength, and *grace*.
A living symbol of our *love*.
We *honor* now,
both near and far,
The *heroes* time
will not erase.
For every *veteran*,
every scar,
We thank you
for your brave embrace.