

PERRY TWP MEMORIAL DAY SALUTE



**A true hero isn't measured by the size of his
strength, but by the strength of his heart.**
- Unknown

SPONSORSHIP SALUTE

2016 – HERO 5K RUN/WALK

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ORIGIN OF THE PURPLE HEART

On August 7, 1782, General George Washington established the Badge of Military Merit which was the forerunner to the Purple Heart Medal. The Badge of Military Merit was originally fashioned in the shape of a heart and cut from a purple silk sash. There are only three known recipients of the Badge of Military Merit; Sergeant Elijah Churchill, Sergeant William Brown and Sergeant Daniel Bissel. Although, Washington intended the Badge of Military Merit to be permanent; however, once the Revolutionary War ended, The Badge of Military Merit was all but forgotten.

In January, 1931, Elizabeth Will, an Army heraldic specialist was named to redesign the newly revived medal, which became known as the Purple Heart. Army regulations specified the design of the medal as an enamel heart, purple in color and showing a relief profile of George Washington.

On February 22, 1932, the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, the War Department (predecessor to the Department of Defense) announced the establishment of the Purple Heart Award by order of General Douglas MacArthur. The newly reintroduced Purple Heart was not intended primarily as an award for those wounded in action.

In December – 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt by Executive Order, proclaimed that the Purple Heart was to be awarded to persons who “are wounded in action against an enemy of the United States, or as a result

of an act of such enemy, provided such would necessitate treatment by a medical officer.” The first Purple Heart was awarded to General Douglas Mac Arthur.

The Purple Heart differs from most other decorations in that an individual is not “recommended” for the decoration; rather he or she is entitled to it upon meeting specific criteria.

In 1997, Congress passed legislation prohibiting future awards of the Purple Heart to civilians. Today, the Purple Heart is reserved for men and women in uniform. It is estimated that approximately 1.7 million Purple Hearts have been awarded. The most Purple Hearts awarded to an individual is nine; Marine Sgt. Albert Ireland holds that distinction, being awarded five Purple Hearts in World War II and four more in the Korean War.

HISTORY OF THE DOG TAG

The Civil War provided the first recorded incident of American soldiers making an effort to ensure that their identities would be known should they die on the battlefield. In 1863, prior to the Battle of Mine's Run in northern Virginia, General Meade's troops wrote their names and unit designation on paper tags and pinned them to the back of their coats. Some troops fashioned their own "ID" tags out of pieces of wood, boring a hole in one end so that they could be worn on a string around the neck.

Harper's Weekly Magazine advertised "Soldier's Pins" which could be mail ordered. Private vendors who followed troops also offered identification disks for sale just prior to battle. Entrepreneurs would set up shop on the roadside where soldiers would pass. Their machine-stamped tags were made of brass or lead with a hole and usually had (on one side) an eagle or shield and the other side had the soldier's name and unit. The fear of being listed among the unknowns was a real concern among the rank and file; however there was no official issue of ID tags (42% of the Civil War dead remain unidentified.)

President Thomas Jefferson wrote the first dog licensing law for his home state of Virginia, because his sheep were being killed by dogs. He wanted to identify the dog's owners and make them pay for the sheep they killed. By the 1850's most localities had dog licensing laws that required dogs to wear a collar with the owner's name and license number.

Eventually small wooden or metal discs were used and referred to as "dog tags" and that

name carried over to their human counterparts. In 1906, the U.S. Army recognized the

importance of a uniform identification and authorized an aluminum tag. In 1917, the Army began to issue aluminum disc on chains to all combat soldiers. The nickname "dog tags" was adopted during World War II.

It was not until the Vietnam War did the use of silencers come into practice to help disguise the noise made by the two tags. During this wartime, it also became popular to use dog tags on make-shift memorials in memory of fallen comrades.

The sole purpose of the identification tag is stated by its designation. Tags found around the neck of a casualty, and only those tags found around the neck, stay with the remains at all times. Tags found any place besides around the neck are made note of in the record of Personal Effects of Deceased Personnel and placed in an effects bag. If there is only one tag present, another is made to match the first. If the remains are unidentified, two tags marked "Unidentified" are made. One tag is interred with the individual, the other placed on a wire ring in the sequence of the temporary cemetery plot. This enables Graves's registration personnel to make positive identification of remains during disinterment procedures; when the remains are disinterred, the tag on the wire ring is removed and placed with the matching tag around the neck.

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

Senior Chief Edward C. Byers Jr. USN – SEAL

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from December 8 to 9, 2012. Chief Byers with this team sprinted to the door of the target building. Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire to clear a path for the rescue force. The first rescue assaulter was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK-47 at him. He then tackled another adult male and engaged him in hand-to-hand combat. Chief Byers heard the voice of hostage Dr. Dilip Joseph respond. Chief Byers jump atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage, Chief Byers engaged another hostile with his bare hands and restrained the hostile until a teammate could eliminate the hostile.

Senior Chief Edward C. Byers Jr. was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1979. He grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. In 1998, Senior Chief Byers attended recruit Training and Corpsman "A" School in Great Lakes, Illinois.

In 2002, Byers attended Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUD/S) training and graduated with Class 242. Byers was promoted to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer in January of 2016.

Byers has deployed overseas 11 times with nine combat tours. His personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action Ribbon (two awards) and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since April 6, 1976, the late Rear Admiral James Stockdale and Lieutenant Thomas Norris (also a SEAL) each received the decoration from President Gerald Ford.

Senior Chief Byers is married and has a daughter.

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

The Tomb of the Unknowns is a monument dedicated to American service members who have died without their remains being identified. It is also known as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, but it has never been officially named so. It is located at Arlington National Cemetery. On March 4, 1921, the U.S. Congress approved the burial of an unidentified American serviceman from World War I in the plaza of the new Memorial Amphitheater. The Tomb consists of seven pieces of marble in four levels. The Tomb was completed in April 9, 1932.

The Tomb was placed at the head of the grave of the World War I Unknown. West of this grave are the crypts of Unknowns from World War II (south) and Korea (north). Between the two lies a crypt that once contained an Unknown from Vietnam (middle); however, the remains were positively identified in 1998 and removed.

The North and South panels with 3 wreaths on each side represent the six major battles engaged in by American forces in France. On the East panel that faces Washington D.C. there are three Greek figures representing Peace, Victory, and Valor. The Western panel is inscribed with the words: "HERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD".

On Memorial Day, 1921, four unknown servicemen were exhumed from four World War I American cemeteries in France. U.S Army Sgt. Edward Younger selected the Unknown of World War I from four identical caskets at the

city hall in Chalons-en-Champagne, France on October 24, 1921.

Younger selected the World War I Unknown by placing a spray of white roses on one of the caskets. On November 11, 1921, President Harding officiated at the interment ceremonies at the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1958, two Unknowns from World War II, one from the European Theater and one from the Pacific Theater were placed in identical caskets and taken aboard the USS Canberra. Navy Corpsman 1st Class William Charette, a Medal of Honor recipient, selected the World War II Unknown. The remaining casket received a solemn burial at sea. Four unknown Americans who died in the Korean War were disinterred and Army Master Sergeant Ned Lyle made the final selection. On the morning of May 30, 1958 the two caskets were carried on caissons to Arlington National Cemetery.

U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Allan Kellogg, Jr. selected the Vietnam Unknown. On Memorial Day, May 28, 1984, the Vietnam Unknown was interned. However, on June 30, 1998, it was announced that through DNA testing the Vietnam Unknown had been identified. The slab over the crypt that once held the remains of the Vietnam Unknown has since been replaced. The original inscription of "Vietnam" has been changed to "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen" as a reminder of the commitment of the Armed Forces to the fullest possible accounting of missing service members.

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN-GUARDS

The tomb guards are soldiers of the United States Army. Since April 6, 1948 the Tomb of the Unknowns has been guarded by the 3rd Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard". It is considered one of the highest honors to serve as a Sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Fewer than 20 percent of all volunteers are accepted for training and of those only a fraction passes training to become full-fledged Tomb Guards. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Guard Identification Badge is the second least-awarded qualification badge of the United States military.

The soldier "walking the mat" does not wear rank insignia, so as not to outrank the Unknowns, whatever their ranks may have been. Tomb Guards carry M14 rifles, which are unloaded and affixed to ceremonial rifle stocks (hand-made by Tomb Guards).

There is a meticulous routine that the guard follows when watching over the graves. The Tomb Guard:

1. Marches 21 steps south down the black mat laid across the Tomb.
2. Turns and faces east, toward the Tomb, for 21 seconds.
3. Turns and faces north, changes weapon to outside shoulder, and waits 21 seconds
4. Marches 21 steps down the mat.
5. Turns and faces east for 21 seconds.
6. Turns and faces south, changes weapons to outside shoulder, and waits 21 seconds.
7. Repeats the routine until the soldier is relieved of duty at the Changing of the Guard.

The mat is replaced twice a year because of the special shoes worn by Tomb Guards. The sentinels have metal plates built into the soles and inner parts of their shoes to allow for a more rugged sole and to give the signature click of the heel during maneuvers.

The guard change is very symbolic, but conducted in accordance with Army regulations. The relief commander or assistant relief commander, along with the oncoming guard, are both required for a guard change to take place. The relief commander orders the guard being relieved to "pass on your orders" to the oncoming guard. The guard being relived will say to the oncoming guard, "Post and order(s) remain as directed." The oncoming guard's response is always, "Orders acknowledge."

Since February, 1958, fewer than 700 soldiers have completed the training and been awarded the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Guard Identification badge.

THE NAVY SEAL CREED

In times of war or uncertainty there is a special breed of warrior ready to answer our Nation's call. A common man with uncommon desire to succeed. Forged by adversity, he stands alongside America's finest special operations forces to serve his country, the American people, and protect their way of life. I am that man.

My Trident is a symbol of honor and heritage. Bestowed upon me by the heroes that have gone before, it embodies the trust of those I have sworn to protect. By wearing the Trident I accept the responsibility of my chosen profession and way of life. It is a privilege that I must earn every day.

My loyalty to Country and Team is beyond reproach. I humbly serve as a guardian to my fellow Americans always ready to defend those who are unable to defend themselves. I do not advertise the nature of my work, nor seek recognition for my actions. I voluntarily accept the inherent hazards of my profession, placing the welfare and security of others before my own.

I serve with honor on and off the battlefield. The ability to control my emotions and my actions, regardless of circumstance, sets me apart from other men. Uncompromising integrity is my standard. My character and honor are steadfast. My word is my bond.

We expect to lead and be led. In the absence of orders I will take charge, lead my teammates and accomplish the mission. I lead by example in all situations.

I will never quit. I persevere and thrive on adversity. My Nation expects me to be physically harder and mentally stronger than my enemies. If knocked down, I will get back up, every time. I will draw on every remaining ounce of strength to protect my teammates and to accomplish our mission. I am never out of the fight.

We demand discipline. We expect innovation. The lives of my teammates and the success of our mission depend on me – my technical skill, tactical proficiency, and attention to detail. My training is never complete.

We train for war and fight to win. I stand ready to bring the full spectrum of combat power to bear in order to achieve my mission and the goals established by my country. The execution of my duties will be swift and violent when required yet guided by the very principles that I serve to defend.

Brave men have fought and died building the proud tradition and feared reputation that I am bound to uphold. In the worst of conditions, the legacy of my teammates steadies my resolve and silently guides my every deed. I will not fail.