

RMS November Update: Visiting the troops in Afghanistan

Message from Remember My Service President, Sharlene Hawkes

As I wrote up an article for "The Officer" magazine on my recent trip to Afghanistan, I found it to be an incredibly daunting task. Just 4 days, but a whole lot of stories to process...Dads and Moms, husbands and wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters...all missing their family and home as they work 18 or 20 hour days. Why was I there? Well, I wondered that myself as the C17 took a nosedive for a combat zone, corkscrew landing into Bagram! Seriously though, I went with a small group of 6 Miss America "has-beens" for the very simple reason that we wanted to say thank you, we love you, we support you, and we definitely remember all you do. I was profoundly impacted by the conversation I had with a scout sniper with Bravo Troop 3-61, SPC Ty Carter, who is a Medal of Honor nominee for his courageous actions on Oct. 3 when COP Keating was ambushed by the Taliban, killing 8 Soldiers. Ty is my new pen pal and keeps it real for me as today, I get to take my daughter to dance class, hug my little boy, and enjoy a beautiful sunset over the Great Salt Lake...all because of our great men and women wearing the uniform, standing between us and them, in harm's way. This Thanksgiving, I am especially grateful for, and mindful of, our Warriors.

Bullets

- The **31D** will not only be the first Division in the Army to document their Command and Division/Brigade/Battalion history for presentation to each Soldier, but they have also just authorized the University of Utah, through the **National Center of Veterans Studies**, to conduct a simultaneous study regarding stress/morale issues. We consider it a privilege to manage and produce this great history full of courage and sacrifice. Thank you to **Army MWR** for supporting this pilot for Army.

Changes

- We have a **new website** and we'd love your feedback: www.RememberMyService.com
- The entire **RMS process** has been streamlined with very definite phases: Collection, Build, Review and Delivery. The Collection phase (which involves the Unit Project Officers using a checklist we provide, complete with those items also requested by the Center for Military History) now takes an estimated 8 weeks (but if someone is highly motivated...it can take 2 weeks!). The Build, Review and Delivery phases (which mostly belongs to our RMS team) takes 3-4 months.
- The **hardbound journal** which encases the DVD-ROM is being revised to include specific questions that will allow the Servicemember to organize, and process, their experience. These questions are structured around the following themes: early military experiences and motivations, duty stations and deployments, understanding the impact of military service and deployment, leaving a lasting legacy, and any remaining thoughts, memories, and questions.

We wish you all a very peaceful, and grateful Thanksgiving weekend.