

Spring 2016

# GLOBAL RELIANCE



FALLEN HEROES REMEMBERED



18-19

**WE REMEMBER**

Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa  
 Special Agent Michael Cinco  
 Technical Sergeant Joseph Lemm  
 Special Agent Chester McBride  
 Special Agent Peter Taub  
 Special Agent Adrianna Vorderbruggen



10-11



20-21



12-13



14-15



16-17



# STRENGTH AND HONOR

DECEMBER 21, 2015, will always be remembered as one of OSI's darkest days. During counterintelligence support of force protection in Afghanistan, six of our Airmen made the ultimate sacrifice near Bagram Air Field. Just four days before the Christmas holiday, Task Force Crimson initiated a dismounted patrol into hostile and uncertain territory. During the mission, their patrol was approached by a motorcyclist carrying a hidden explosive device that was detonated – instantly killing SA Adrianna Vorderbruggen, SA Michael Cinco, SA Peter Taub, SA Chester McBride, and Security Forces Defenders TSgt. Joseph Lemm and SSgt. Louis Bonacasa.

During this devastating time, we embraced and comforted our loved ones, friends, and the families of our Fallen. On December 23, 2015, our Fallen started their trip home. During their stop at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, more than 200 OSI members and Defenders came out to pay their respects to our Fallen. Additionally, when our Fallen ultimately returned to U.S. soil, more than 100 OSI members arrived to stand watch in the pouring rain. Furthermore, I witnessed, firsthand, how America mourned with us. OSI received a flood of heartfelt tributes from around the Air Force and law enforcement community and, while attending the funerals, I was touched by the numerous groups of ordinary civil-

ians who stopped to place their hand over their heart or wave an American flag as our Fallen proceeded to their final resting places.

I truly believe that we remain a free nation because of the valor, selflessness and strength of men and women like Adrianna, Michael, Peter, Chester, Joseph and Louis. Each accepted and embodied the standards set forth in the Armed Forces Code of Conduct. They understood the risks inherent to their mission, but were still prepared to give their lives in defense of our country and way of life. Their role in Afghanistan was unique among our military. They were focused on protecting the base's inhabitants so no one else had to experience a similar tragedy. Their service and sacrifices were not made in vain; instead, they set the standard and issued us the charge to continue their mission with the same vigor, precision and determination.

Finally, I want to share a saying inspired by General George S. Patton - 'Let us not mourn for the persons who died fighting, rather let us thank God such heroes lived.' Our command will always remember the names of our Fallen with pride. As we move forward and continue facing the evil in this world, we must remember to never lose sight of those things which are good.

**-Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens**  
**AFOSI Commander**

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Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens  
OSI Commander



Pentagon  
RELEASES  
NAMES

## FALLEN HEROES IDENTIFIED

**THE DEPARTMENT OF Defense** announced today the deaths of six Airmen who were supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel. They died Dec. 21 of wounds sustained when their patrol was attacked by a suicide bomber on a motorcycle near Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan.

Among the six fatalities are four Office of Special Investigations Special Agents who died while deployed to the Expeditionary Detachment 2405, Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. They died outside Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered in the attack.

"It is with a heavy heart that I must inform you of the deadliest day in our command's history. We lost four brave Special Agents and two patriotic Security Forces members on a joint patrol outside of Bagram Field in Afghanistan, Monday, Dec.



21," said Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, OSI Commander. "The OSI family will undoubtedly rise to the occasion yet again and honor these great Americans, but for now, I ask for your thoughts and prayers to go out to the families and loved ones of the Fallen."

The OSI agents killed in the attack were:

Special Agent (Maj.) Adrianna M. Vorder-

bruggen, 36, of Plymouth, Minn. She was assigned to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, 9th Field Investigations Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Michael A. Cinco, 28, of Mercedes, Texas. He was assigned to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, 11th Field Investigations Squadron, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas.

Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Peter W. Taub, 30, of Philadelphia. He was assigned to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Detachment 816, Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D.

Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Chester J. McBride, 30, of Statesboro, Ga. He was assigned to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Detachment 405, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

The two Security Forces defenders killed were:

Technical Sgt. Joseph G. Lemm, 45, of the Bronx, New York City. He was assigned to the 105th Security Forces Squadron, Stewart Air National Guard Base, N.Y.

Staff Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa, 31, of Coram, N.Y. He was assigned to the 105th Security Forces Squadron, Stewart Air National Guard Base, N.Y.

*-AFOSI Public Affairs*

Bagram Air Field  
HONORS  
FALLEN AIRMEN

**SERVICE MEMBERS FROM** Bagram Air Field came together Dec. 23 to honor the memories of six Airmen killed in an improvised explosive device attack two days earlier.

"Today's the day I remember and honor the sacrifices our fellow Airmen made for us, our country and our freedoms," said Special Agent Heather Garver, a member of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and part of Task Force Crimson, the unit to which the six Airmen were assigned. "While we mourn the loss of our family members, and care for our injured, we must remain united. Our Fallen Heroes would want us to bounce back and press on with the mission we are here to carry out. We may be wounded, but we're not broken."

More than 200 service members representing multiple branches of service from nearly every unit on Bagram Air Field crammed into a packed clamshell tent, for a chance to grieve before getting back in the saddle to continue the mission.

"How do we honor these six heroes?" asked Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Kelley, the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing chaplain. "We honor them by pressing on with the mission. The same mission they were willing to give their lives for."

Task Force Crimson, which is primarily comprised of Air Force OSI and security forces Airmen, contributes to the joint, multinational force protection efforts for the Bagram Air Field area including outside-the-wire security

"These incredible Airmen were selflessly executing the NATO Resolute Support mission to ensure a safe and secure operating environment for all of our coalition partners,"



said Maj. Met Berisha, 455th Expeditionary Security Force Squadron commander, who works closely with Task Force Crimson Airmen. "It is with an extremely heavy heart that today we mourn the loss of these phenomenal Airmen who keep the coalition team safe while we continue to assist the people of Afghanistan."

At the conclusion of the memorial ceremony, service members in attendance paid their respects to the battlefield crosses which stood at the front of the crowd; each person taking a turn to take a knee and touch the boot or photo placed beneath the downward-turned rifle. Each person then stood and rendered a salute

"May we continue to carry the banner of freedom with the same honor and duty as our departed friends," the chaplain said. "Let us fly, fight and win ... together."

*-Capt. Bryan Bouchard, 455th AEW Public Affairs*





# DIGNIFIED TRANSFER

**THE DIGNIFIED TRANSFER** is a solemn ceremony that properly honors Fallen Heroes. On Dec. 23, Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, Air Force Office of Special Investigations Commander attended the dignified transfer of four OSI Special Agents and two Air National Guard Security Forces Defenders from the 105th Security Forces Squadron. The four OSI Special Agents who died were deployed to the Expeditionary Detachment 2405, Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan.

Approximately 200 AFOSI and Air Force Security Forces members assembled to watch the 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing team transfer six recently Fallen Heroes from a Ramstein Air Base, Germany, staging area to a waiting C-17 aircraft.

Ceremony attendees rendered one final salute and observed as the Fallen Heroes were placed onto the aircraft. Once the process was finished, Col. James Hudson, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Region 5 Commander and U.S. Air Forces in Europe leadership provided comments before the aircraft departed Germany for the United States. During transit, weather conditions forced it to divert from Dover Air Force Base, Del., to New Castle Air National Guard Base, Del.

Givens commented on the pride of the OSI family. Both the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force addressed the OSI group prior to the ceremony expressing their pride in the dedication and mission of OSI agents around the globe keeping the Air Force safe. More than 100 Special Agents from multiple OSI units were also on hand for this final leg of the Dignified Transfer.

*-AFOSI Public Affairs*

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Upon arrival in Delaware, a C-17 aircraft was greeted by the Fallen Heroes families. Senior leadership present included Secretary of Defense Ash Carter; Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James; Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force (aforementioned pictured left); Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, OSI Commander; Col. Terry L. Bullard, AFOSI Region 2 Commander; Col. Eric W. Knapp, Region 2 Vice Commander; Chief Master Sgt. Walker H. Cottingham, OSI Command Chief; and, Chief Master Sgt. Spencer W. Rogers, Region 2 Command Chief.

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**A**IRMEN FROM AFOSI's 8th Field Investigations Squadron honored their Fallen comrades during a resiliency session Jan. 8 at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. While the Fallen were not stationed in Colorado, many agents there knew the Airmen killed in action or previously worked with them, said Special Agent Stacey Polu, 8th FIS Flight Chief. OSI special agents from Peterson and Schriever AFBs shared stories and resiliency techniques in an open forum. "The goal was to have the squadron come together and talk about what was on all of our minds," Polu said. "Leadership told stories about their past experiences and what helped them personally get through tough situations, which put things in perspective for some of the younger agents." After traumatic events, there are many ways to cope with stress and loss, said Staff Sgt. Jeannie Hackett, Disaster Mental Health NCOIC at Schriever. Airmen learned about healthy benefits of talking to one another for comfort and ensuring their wingmen know resources are available to them. "During the first 56 years after its inception, OSI lost two agents in the line of duty. In the last eleven years, OSI has lost eleven agents, one professional staff member, and two defenders," said Lt. Col. Laurinda Reifsteck, 8th FIS commander. "Because of the intense mission we execute, we are all impacted when we lose a member of the OSI family. It's important to take time out to honor our Fallen Airmen, reflect on our own resiliency and be there to support each other."

*-Senior Airman Rose Gudex, 21st Space Wing Public Affairs*

**MORE THAN 650** people overflowed the United States Marine Memorial Chapel, Quantico, Va., Jan. 7 to mourn the loss and remember the lives of the six Airmen killed by a suicide bomber near Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Dec. 21.

The four Air Force Office of Special Investigations Special Agents and two Security Forces Defenders were fatally wounded when their joint patrol was attacked by a bomber riding a motorcycle.

Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, OSI Commander, called it, "our command's darkest day."

During the memorial service, each of the Fallen were eulogized by Givens for their bravery, patriotism and selfless sacrifice in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

"What gives someone the courage to leave the confines of a defended base, travel into uncertain territory, understanding terrorists like the Taliban are lurking and dismount their armored vehicles to engage the population in order to find those terrorists whose intentions are killing Americans?" the general asked the chapel gathering.

**“MANY WARRIORS HAVE SAID OVER TIME THAT WHAT IS DONE IN LIFE, ECHOES IN ETERNITY. THEIR SERVICE WILL ECHO IN ETERNITY.”**

**-Brig. Gen. Keith Givens**  
AFOSI Commander



Givens said the answer lies in the Armed Forces Code of Conduct. Its first Article states, "I am an American fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense."

"To live under this code it takes a special person, a

special American," the commander said. "They lived under this code accepting their life was worth sacrificing for others . . . there is no greater calling."

The OSI agents killed in the attack were: Special Agent Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen, 36; Special Agent Michael A. Cinco, 28; Spe-

**GLOBAL LAW-ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS**  
Words of condolence and gestures of support to families of Fallen AFOSI Special Agents were immediate. Here, Australian, Federal Law Enforcement Officer Association Foundation, and Coast Guard Investigative Service representatives pay respects Jan. 7, 2016.



**14**

The total number of AFOSI Fallen Heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the 67-year history of the command.

cial Agent Peter W. Taub, 30; and, Special Agent Chester J. McBride, 30.

The agents will be permanently remembered in the Headquarters OSI Hall of Heroes at Quantico. The total number of OSI Fallen Heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in the 67-year history of the command is now 14.

The two Security Forces Defenders killed in the attack were Tech. Sgt. Joseph G. Lemm, 45; and, Staff Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa, 31. The pair served alongside the Special Agents at Bagram, supporting missions "outside-the-wire."

For their ultimate sacrifice, Lemm and Bonacasa were named Honorary OSI Special Agents by OSI senior leadership. This is the first time active-duty or Air National Guard Security Forces Defenders have been given this title. They will also have, respectively, permanent tributes in the OSI Hall of Heroes.

Among the many distinguished visitors attending the memorial, Givens introduced one, in particular, for special recognition.

"Three other team members were significantly wounded in action [on Dec. 21]. They came home and are still with us," he said. "One of those wounded heroes is with us today - Special Agent John Jackson."

Jackson received a standing ovation.

The Marine Memorial Chapel service was part of the healing process for OSI headquarters personnel. Many knew the Fallen. One of its members, Mr. (Special Agent Retired) Richard Miller, delivered highlights from each Fallen Hero's military career.

Givens concluded the eulogy by saying each Fallen Hero, "lived a life that mattered. Many warriors have said over time what is done in life, echoes in eternity. Their service will echo in eternity."

*-Wayne Amann, AFOSI Public Affairs*

# FALLEN HERO



Special Agent Michael A. Cinco

**FAMILY AND FRIENDS** of Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Michael A. Cinco remembered him as irrepressibly happy and quick to lighten the mood with a joke. Dozens turned out for a candlelight vigil at the Veterans War Memorial in Cinco's hometown of Mercedes, Texas, to honor him and 47 other Rio Grande Valley veterans killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. His parents choked back emotion as they gazed upon a wooden cross bearing his name. "He was such a great person," said Angie Reyna, his sister-in-law. "If anybody was mad or upset he'd find a way to make them laugh." Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said, "In my mind, he is an American hero. We ask all Texans to keep his family in their thoughts and prayers." A 2005 Mercedes High School graduate, Cinco married his high school sweetheart. He enlisted shortly after graduating from high school. Cinco played in the school

band and was also a football player, but was best known as an avid skateboarder; his classmates gathered at a local skate park to remember their friend. "It's a sad day, not only here but for the country as we lost another of our loved ones," said Henry Hinojosa, mayor of Mercedes. Cinco deployed to Afghanistan in October. He had completed at least one other tour in Afghanistan, his family said. Responding to news of his death, childhood friends took to Facebook, urging others to line the town's streets for his services and a final salute. "A true hero of ours has gone to be with the Lord and we need your help giving him a last goodbye. Let's line the streets up in Mercedes and give Michael Cinco a salute for his service and duty. He deserves this and much more. He fought for our freedom and this is the least we could do."

- Aaron Nelsen



**J**UST DAYS AFTER the tragedy, those who knew Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Michael A. Cinco were talking about him. "He never got into trouble," said Rick Reyes, SA Cinco's high school principal. "He was a good kid in school. He had a low profile. He was one of those kids that did everything right and never got into trouble. I have to say my heart goes out to the family and his wife, Veronica," Reyes said. "He was putting his life on the line like other military people. It's because of them that we have our freedom." Friends turned to Facebook to mourn the loss of the Rio Grande Valley's latest casualty of war. Ashley Nicole of Mercedes, Texas, couldn't find the right words to honor SA Cinco. Instead, she created a graphic design of Michael in his military uniform with angel wings and titled it HERO, husband, son, brother, friend and leader in his memory. The community of Mercedes gathered to celebrate the life of Staff Sgt. Cinco as mourners struggled to find the right words to describe him. "He could lighten a room very well. If you had a rough day, he'd come in and just get you in a good mood. He will be



missed," reminisced Col. Bryan Keeling, U.S. Air Force. "On behalf of our community, I wanted to offer our condolences to the Cinco family, his wife, his mother and father. We cannot thank them enough for the service that Michael Cinco did for our country," Congressman Filemon Vela said. Cinco's wife, Veronica, did not speak to the crowd but Cinco's sister in law, Angie Reyna, shared several great memories of SA Cinco. "But it was never enough to just put work into his car. He would even have Vero out there as his assistant holding the flashlight to get that last bolt screwed in right," she said. Congressman Ruben Hinojosa said he was honored for an invitation to the memorial ceremony. "It was one that I will never forget. In the 20 years that I have been in congress, there have been close to 100 soldiers, American soldiers that have lost their lives in the last 13 years since we've been at war starting with Iraq and then in Afghanistan. It is indeed an honor to be here to be able to show our respect and to express our condolences," Representative Hinojosa said.

-Amy Martinez, R Garcia



SA Cinco funeral message delivered by Chap. (Capt.) Richard Boyd at JBSA-Randolph Chapel

"When faced with death, there is comfort. Not within ourselves, but in our Lord Jesus Christ. So Jesus says to every one of us in this room today: "Do not despair. I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me, though he may die in the body yet he will live! Do you believe this?" Will you please pray with me?"



# FALLEN HERO



**Special Agent Chester J. McBride**

A RIVER OF emotion flowed through Georgia Southern University as one of Statesboro's hometown heroes, Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Chester J. McBride, was laid to rest. SA McBride, it was learned during the memorial service, actually shielded the linguist assigned to his patrol when the bomb went off, saving the linguist's life as he absorbed the worst of the blast. Friends and speakers from all parts of McBride's too-short, but well-lived life offered praise. After the posting of colors and an invocation, Angela Hunter, who said McBride was "like a son to me," read passages from the Bible, including John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Travis McBride spoke reverently about his cousin. "Our bonds were as close as if we were brothers. Chester was selfless, always looking out for whoever he was associated with." The son

of Chester R. McBride and Annie L. McBride, SA McBride received a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice, cum laude, from Savannah State University, a CCAF associate's degree and a master's of public administration from Valdosta State University. Christy Page, SA McBride's first-grade teacher, recited a poem: "Everyone wanted to be Chester's friend; because his heart was so big, he let everyone in." Jenny Purvis Miller, Statesboro H.S. Class of 2003 rep said "To know Chester was to love him. He fought for all of us here and we are humbled by that." Brig. Gen. Keith Givens, AFOSI Commander, recognized McBride for his dedication and service to country. "What I see in Statesboro today is what is right in America. Today, we honor someone who led the life of an American patriot, an American hero."

*-Holli Deal Saxon*



**S**PECIAL AGENT (STAFF SGT.) Chester J. McBride was the starting defense back on the 2001 Statesboro High School (Ga.) state championship football team. One of his coaches, Steve Pennington, said that McBride stopped by his office when he was home on leave in October. "He shared a lot of things that he had learned since his days at Statesboro (Ga.) High School and you could see a lot of the confidence that he was exuding, so I asked him if he wouldn't mind speaking with the football team," Pennington said. "He made it a point the day he was leaving to come address our players. And that was a very special moment. And more so under these circumstances." A parade was held in Statesboro to honor Air Force Staff Sgt. Chester J. McBride. People lined the streets for miles to welcome home the Statesboro native. "Somebody who's willing to do what our military does, we have to support them in any way we possibly can," said Jeff Tysinger, a veteran. As the procession drove through, people waved flags and wiped away tears to honor McBride. "We just feel it's very important for us to come together and



show our respect and support for the family," said Statesboro resident Angela Barnes. "I knew his father," Jeffery Lewis said. Lewis's nephew used to play sports with McBride. "He called me the other day and said he was a great friend of his, a great young man, and he's going to miss him," Lewis said. Those who didn't know the family, just came to pay their respects. "What we have takes sacrifice, and we all need to pitch in and do what we can. The community has been unbelievable, and I'm just thankful that they recognize what the men and women are doing in the armed services," Tysinger said. "We take our kids to see heroes on television like Captain America or Iron Man or the Incredible Hulk, but today we have the opportunity to show them what a real American hero is," Barnes said. Fellow Airmen Nick Wedlow played football with SA McBride on the Statesboro High state championship team in 2001. "Chester was a role model in everything he did, from his football days to academics to the Air Force. He excelled at everything," said Staff Sgt. Wedlow.

*-Leada Gore, T. Simkovic, D. Cannady*

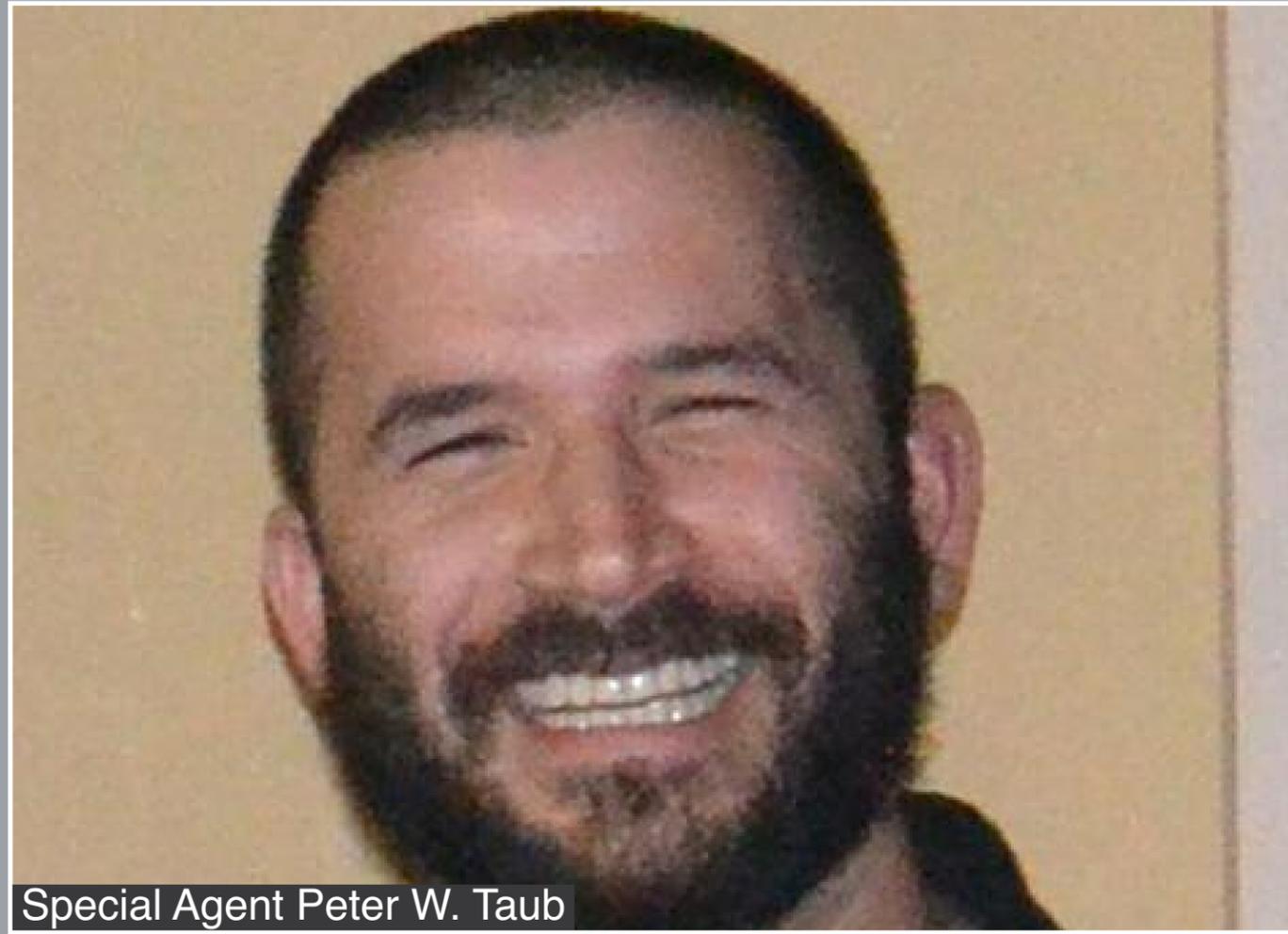


SA McBride's funeral message delivered by Pastor Donald Chavers, Jr., at Georgia Southern University

"The woman called the florist, showed him the dead flower; the florist looked over a fence and said, 'Oh, there's your flower! You planted it here, but it also came up there as beautiful as it's always been.' All I'm trying to tell you is, you planted him here, but he's coming up in the hearts of his nieces and nephews and grandbabies and grandmas, your friends, your neighbors, these soldiers. He's coming up in the hearts of everybody!"



# FALLEN HERO



Special Agent Peter W. Taub

THE ELLSWORTH AIR Force Base, S.D., community honored the life of Special Agent (Staff Sgt.) Peter W. Taub, AFOSI, Detachment 816, who made the ultimate sacrifice. Ellsworth's base leadership, chaplains and fellow Airmen gathered with Taub's family and friends to pay tribute to the agent and his service. "May we learn from Pete's example to be better people and better Airmen as we seek to live lives that would positively impact our world and community," said Chap. (Maj.) David Knight. SA Taub's coworkers shared words about his impact during their time together, including Special Agent Andre Franklin, AFOSI Det. 816 investigator and Taub's supervisor, who highlighted his enthusiasm for the job, contagious smile and his love for his family. "He was a standup guy," said Special Agent Irney Parton, AFOSI Det. 816 investigator. "He made me laugh, he made us all laugh,

but he also stood up for me - he was a great guy." Taub enlisted in the Air Force in 2007. After completing basic and technical training, he was assigned to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, as an F-15 Eagle load crew team member. In July 2011, he was assigned to Ellsworth AFB as a B-1 bomber load crew team member. In 2013, Taub retrained into AFOSI where he was assigned to Det. 816 and then deployed. Taub served with enthusiasm and honor throughout his career, added Special Agent Christopher Joers, AFOSI Det. 816 commander. His dedication and commitment earned him a Bronze Star Medal, a Purple Heart Medal and an Air Force Combat Action Medal, all awarded posthumously, in addition to other awards and recognition throughout his Air Force career.

*-Airman 1st Class James Miller, 28th BW, Public Affairs*



SPECIAL AGENT (STAFF SGT.) Peter W. Taub, 30, was originally of Wyncote in Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, Pa. SA Taub, an Air Force investigator and staff sergeant, leaves behind his pregnant 28-year-old wife, Christina, and 3-year-old daughter, Penelope. "This is going to leave a lasting effect on my sister, her child and unborn child, who will never know the man Pete was, a great person who always made people laugh and who always had a smile on his face," said Christina's brother, Sandor Paar. "He was funny, hilarious, always joking around. He loved his daughter and he loved Christina." Taub was in the military for eight years and recently re-enlisted. He and Christina had been in Japan, where he was stationed, before relocating to South Dakota several years ago. SA Taub, 30, had hopes of joining his family in the restaurant business after leaving the military, said his mother, Arlene Wagner. Wagner and Taub's brother, Jonathan, a chef, run a downtown Washington D.C., sandwich shop. "He and his brother had plans for a farm and raising herbs and different things for expanding the restaurant



or new concepts — lots of things that are not going to happen," Wagner said. According to his father, Joel Taub, SA Taub found direction and purpose in his Air Force service. Congressional Representative Brendan Boyle (PA-13) released a statement. "Staff Sgt. Taub was a truly dedicated Airman and public servant. We are grateful to him for giving the ultimate sacrifice in service of our nation. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, daughter, family and fellow service members at this most difficult time. Cheltenham School District spokeswoman Susan O'Grady wrote in a statement issued the afternoon of Dec. 23: "Peter Taub's service to our country is a point of pride for Cheltenham School District and the surrounding community. The District paid tribute to his life and career contributions as an active serviceman on January 12, 2016, as part of our monthly School Board Meeting. In the meantime, we keep Staff Sergeant Taub's family and friends in our hearts and minds as they mourn their loss and begin the process of healing."

*-Christina Tatu*



SA Taub's funeral message was delivered by Rev. Susan Ruggles, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran

"So how can we find God's glory in the painful reminders of dangerous places? I will be bold and quote Lt. Col. David Kelly who said, "How do we honor these six heroes? We honor them by pressing on with the mission. The same mission they were willing to give their lives for."



# FALLEN HERO



**Special Agent Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen**

**SPECIAL AGENT (MAJ.)** Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen, born in Bogota, Colombia, excelled in many facets of life. She was captain of a state championship soccer and national collegiate championship rugby teams, an ice-hockey team and also played oboe in a symphony orchestra. Major Vorderbruggen graduated from the Air Force Academy, was recruited into AFOSI and earned a master's degree in forensic science from George Washington University. She was deployed to Afghanistan as an OSI Detachment Commander. She often expressed the joy and honor of her job. She loved life itself and found humor in all things. Her great qualities included her selflessness, her complete comfort with everyone and never acknowledging her achievements. She heard a homily once — the theme was “accept them as they are” — a message she carried all of her life. After visiting and

having dinner with Adrianna in Afghanistan, a few weeks before her death, General Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Chairman, Joint Chiefs, was impressed with her leadership and the camaraderie of troops under her command. Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, OSI Commander, spoke of her leadership dedication to the troops she served. Each morning, before a patrol left the compound, they would huddle in prayer for safety and resolve. God was part of her daily routine. She was a champion of fairness her entire life often speaking out, in her own quiet way, for those who couldn't. Adrianna was humble and took life as it came to her, accepting challenges as gifts and opportunities to grow. There was no task delegated to her that she feared or sidestepped. Adrianna leaves behind her spouse, Heather, and their 4-year-old son, Jacob.

*-Chap. (Capt.) Joseph Hoang, Joint Base Andrews, Md.*



**SPECIAL AGENT (MAJ.)** Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen was accorded full military honors during her interment at Arlington National Cemetery as 150 mourners paid respects to the Fallen Hero. After a funeral service at the Memorial Chapel, Fort Myers, Va., the motorcade drove to the cemetery where the Airman was honored with a missing-man formation flyover by three Air Force F-15 fighter aircraft, a 21-gun salute by the Air Force Honor Guard and the presentation of American flags to SA Vorderbruggen's immediate family members by AFOSI Commander Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens. “She’s a hero and I hope she’s a hero to all of us, not just to me,” said her older brother, Christopher Vorderbruggen. “She intentionally would go on these patrols with her men because she wanted to show them that she would do what she was asking them to do. She inspired us all I think by just being herself and being proud to be who she was.” The ceremony continued at The Women in Military Service For America Memorial auditorium at the Ceremonial Entrance to Arlington Memorial Cemetery. SA Vorderbruggen's patriotism and



bravery are now a part of that legacy. “What they were doing was righteous,” said SA (Lt. Col.) Pamela Alley, Vorderbruggen's commander at the 9th Field Investigations Squadron, Eglin AFB, Fla., when recounting how Vorderbruggen led her deployed foot patrol team into harm's way. “We are fighting an enemy who is ruthless and she was leading from the front which is where every commander should be.” Givens' remarks to the overflow auditorium audience gave some historical context to Vorderbruggen's passing. “Seventy years to the day Adrianna died, another great American died, General George S. Patton. Not too many of his quotes are repeatable in public but one really does answer the question about are we here to mourn or to honor an American hero?” Givens said. “Let me not mourn the person who died fighting, rather let me thank God such a hero had lived.” Adrianna's father, Joseph Vorderbruggen, captured the spirit of his daughter. “Two days before she died Adrianna told me, ‘I love what I'm doing. I'm making a difference for the people I'm serving.’”

*-Wayne Amann, AFOSI Public Affairs*



*SA Vorderbruggen's funeral message was delivered by Chap. (Capt.) Joseph Hoang at Arlington Cemetery*

“She was the most steadfast person I had ever met and people gravitated to her through her warmth, her humor and her uniqueness. She was comfortable in who she was and, once you met her, you knew you were with someone extraordinary. She loved her family, often noting the important role everyone played in her life.”



# FALLEN HERO



**Staff Sergeant Louis M. Bonacasa**

STAFF SGT. LOUIS M. Bonacasa was honored “for saving the lives of other Airmen at the cost of his own. He selflessly gave his life in defense of our country and is a true American hero,” said Maj. Alta Caputo, commander of the 105th Base Defense Squadron. Bonacasa enlisted in the Air Force in 2002 and transitioned to the New York Air National Guard’s 106th Security Forces Squadron, at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in 2008. He joined the 105th Base Defense Squadron, Stewart ANGB, N.Y., in 2010. “The tragic loss of six Airmen casts a dark shadow over our Air Force,” said Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James. “Our deepest sympathies go out to the family of this brave American who died in service to this vital mission,” wrote Defense Secretary Ash Carter. “In our command’s 67-year history, we have selected less than 60 Honorary OSI Special Agents. None of

those have been active-duty Security Forces or Air National Guard members,” said Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens, OSI Commander. “That has changed. Staff Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa, a “Brother-in-Arms,” has been made an Honorary AFOSI Special Agent,” Givens said. “It was our five-year anniversary and we decided to renew our vows in Las Vegas, and finally have the wedding we never had,” wrote Deborah “Dee” Bonacasa. “We had the time of our lives celebrating our love with family and friends. A year later, our own little family of two became three. Thank you for showing me that true love is the greatest gift on earth. And through our love, you have given me special memories that I will treasure forever. You’re always on my mind and in my heart. I love you until the end of time.”

*-Oriana Pawlyk*



STAFF SGT. LOUIS Bonacasa, 30, originally from Coram, N.Y., was deployed to Afghanistan from Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh, N.Y., and its 105th Base Defense Squadron. “Leading a team of passionate defenders, they took on the most challenging mission for themselves and epitomized the concept of leading from the front, a concept that has distinct risks that they both acknowledged and embraced,” said Col. Timothy Labarge, 105th Airlift Wing commander. “[His] example and sacrifice will never be forgotten as we do our part, on behalf of a grateful nation, to thank and memorialize [him] in perpetuity.” Staff Sgt. Bonacasa’s mother, Diana, said she remembers the day her son came to her and told her he wanted to be a soldier. “He graduated high school in 2002, he was only 17, and he said, ‘Mom, I want to join the Marines,’” Diana Bonacasa said. “I said, ‘No, if you’re going into the service you’re going into the Air Force. I wanted him to go to college.’” His mother said he enlisted right after graduation. Family said Louis Bonacasa completed four tours in hostile territory. Diana Bonacasa said her son learned



after arriving home from one of his last tours that a friend who had replaced him had been killed. She said he wasn’t the same after that, and believes that’s why he volunteered for another tour — the tour from which he would not come home. “This time he left, it felt different,” Diana Bonacasa said. “What gives me a little peace is that he died as a soldier, doing something that he wanted to do.” New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered state flags flown at half-staff in Bonacasa’s honor. “On behalf of all New Yorkers, I extend my deepest sympathies to the family, friends and fellow servicemen of Staff Sgt. Bonacasa. We join his loved ones in honoring his valor, leadership and service to this great nation. His sacrifice will be remembered with gratitude.” OSI Commander Brig. Gen. Keith M. Givens said “[This] heroe served alongside our Special Agents at Bagram and represents the Tactical Security Element professionals who have teamed up with OSI on our “outside-the-wire” missions for the past five-plus years. He is a true Defenders and true teammate.”

*-Marc Santia, K. Creag, S. Hollander*



SA Bonacasa’s funeral message was delivered by Chap (Maj.) John Torres, Jr., New York Air National Guard

“Help us as we attempt by faith to accept our grief at the passing of Staff Sgt. Louis Michael “Bones” Bonacasa. In this moment, Lord, we confess an astonishing mix of pain and pride; our pain, the burden of our sorrow, lays heavy while our pride in the light of Louie’s valor soars high. We still see his smile, if only in pictures now, a smile that lights up the room like no other.”



# FALLEN HERO



Technical Sergeant Joseph G. Lemm

TECHNICAL SGT. JOSEPH G. Lemm's war began 15 years ago in New York City -- on a day that started warm and clear and ended with smoke and fire, with mangled steel and lost lives. Joseph Lemm was a rookie NYPD cop then, and he was in the war from the start, sifting through the smoldering debris in the heartbreaking search for survivors. Ground Zero burned for 100 days. And for so many, it still burns. It burns inside those who were there, and those who have dedicated themselves to fighting this war -- people like Joe. Three times, this war took him thousands of miles away from his family, and the city and country he so dearly loved. And now it has taken him farther than miles. It has taken him to a new post in eternity. For Air Force Technical Sgt. Joseph Lemm, his war is ended. It is not ended for his fellow Airmen, nor for the other servicemen and women overseas, and

not for his brothers and sisters in the New York City Police Department -- including our 1,100 reservists, with more than 130 serving on active duty at this time. In his hometown of Beemer, Neb., Joe stood out. He's remembered as a dedicated, hard-working, driven young man who loved football and his family. Joe could have used his many talents in any number of ways but, as a teenager, he made a choice that would come to define him. He chose selflessness. He chose sacrifice. He chose to serve. Joe enlisted in the USAF -- repaying a debt to his nation that all of us owe, but so few actually ever clear. We say farewell to a hero of our time, and a hero for all ages, a patriot who centered his life on protecting others. We honor an Airman, a NYPD detective, a husband, father, son, brother and, for so many, a friend.

-NYPD Commissioner William J. Bratton



TECHNICAL SGT. JOSEPH G. Lemm's funeral drew hundreds to the pews of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Midtown Manhattan yet amid the mourning, a note of optimism was inserted into the funeral Mass, reminding those who knew the detective that they had encountered someone who was remarkable. Detective Lemm, 45, was someone "given every gift but length of years," the Rev. Christopher W. Monturo of St. Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic Church said from the pulpit. As we grieve, we have pride as well in knowing that Joe was uncommonly successful at everything he did, whether serving 16 years and making nearly 600 arrests in the NYPD or serving three tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan in the 105th Airlift Wing's Base Defense Squadron, he embodied honor to the end. At the 50th Precinct station house in the Knightsbridge section of the Bronx, an American flag was lowered to half-staff, along with flags across the city. Flags were also lowered in the Westchester County neighborhood where Lemm lived. He also was mourned in Beemer, the small Nebraska town where he grew up.



Barber Fred Riguzzi cut Lemm's hair for years and described him as a quiet, kind family man who usually kept his hair short. "Being he was in the military, he liked it short around the edges, little longer on top and parted in the middle." His easygoing personality allowed him to slip easily between rural Nebraska and the big city, where he started off selling shoes," said Cheryl Johnson, Lemm's fourth-grade teacher. "He put people around him at ease. He could talk to anybody. Despite his hulking size, he always had a hug for people. If you needed help with the lawn, he was there." Midtown Manhattan bustled with New Year's tourists swarming at Rockefeller Center not even a block from the service. Yet, after the Mass had ended, a stretch of Fifth Avenue in front of St. Patrick's was so quiet that bystanders could hear the shuffle of dress shoes on the church's stone steps. And as Detective Lemm's coffin was carried into the overcast afternoon, thousands of his colleagues dressed in uniforms of the NYPD and the USAF silently lined the avenue, standing at attention.

- Rick Rojas, J. Torres, Jr.



Tech. Sgt. Lemm's funeral message was delivered by Rev. Christopher Monturo, St. Anthony of Padua

"We can come together not in sorrow and despair, but in hope and even joy, a joy that no one can take from us. He loved fishing. He loved basketball. He loved the Nebraska Cornhuskers. He loved you, his wife, his children, his friends and family. Every sentence began with 'he loved.' And in the end, isn't that all that matters?"



# FALLEN HEROES



SA (Maj.) Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen

"Our consolation is we know she wanted to be there, she believed in and loved her work, and she was doing important work on behalf of the Afghans and our nation. She has always been my hero, never more so than now."

*-Heather Lamb*

"Wishing you peace and support in your time of mourning. Thank you for your service and sacrifice."

*-Qing Tian*

"She will be missed by everyone. Her family should be so proud of the officer and leader she became. RIP!"

*-Mary Willis*

"I remember Adrianna as Chris' little sister. Such a beautiful soul who kept up with her brothers, took charge and was not about to let anyone get left out."

*-Molly Thole Zimmer*

"My prayers and condolences to the family and friends of American hero, Staff Sgt. Chester McBride. Thank you for your love of this country and your service."

*-Celia Tamker*

"He always challenged me, reminding me of my strength. I overcame injuries with his encouragement, motivation and friendship. If I want to give up, I can hear him say "keep going." Rest in peace, Chester McBride. My hero."

*-Deidra Taylor*



SA (Staff Sgt.) Chester J. McBride

"He was the closest thing to perfect for me. He had so many plans. Nothing else is going to be the same without him."

*-La'Trell Zeigler*

"Played football together at Moody. One of the fastest guys I had ever seen on the football field. Always smiling. Just a very special human being. Good hearted. He is truly missed. But, I carry him with me everywhere I go."

*-Kerry Smith*

"He was the nicest guy and very laid back and funny. Our legal office, OSI and our First Sergeants liked to play sports against each other and the OSI got along so well. They are such a great group."

*-Alison Villarruel*

"He was such a great person. If anybody was mad or upset, he'd find a way to make them laugh."

*-Angie Reyna*

"You touched so many people throughout your lifetime. I will definitely miss all of the cookouts!"

*-Nora Jacqueline*



SA (Staff Sgt.) Michael A. Cinco

"R.I.P. Special Agent Cinco."

*-John Slaughter*

# FALLEN HEROES



Technical Sgt. Joseph G. Lemm

"Three times, this war took him thousands of miles from his family, the city and country he so dearly loved. And now it has taken him to a new post in eternity."

*-William Bratton, NYPD*

"Joe was a fun, entertaining guy who was very knowledgeable about his job. The perfect person. Joe was a great guy!"

*-Dot Jenkins*

"Detective Lemm not only fulfilled his ambition of becoming a police officer. He went a step further and answered the call of duty to his nation."

*-NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio*

"My Brother, Louis. Bones. Shotgun Lou. May His Soul Rest In Peace"

*-Vinny Bonacasa*



Staff Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa

"Bones was such a warm, kind and caring soul. He liked to have a good time and really loved to make others laugh. The 105th will always have his back."

*-Amanda Kortright*

"I was 8 years old and we were watching *The Terminator* in Grandpa's living room. At one of the gory scenes, he covered my eyes and shouted that I 'was too young to watch.' But, he secretly opened his fingers so I could see."

*-Devon Gishert*

"On behalf of all New Yorkers, I extend my deepest sympathies to the family, friends and fellow servicemen of Staff Sgt. Bonacasa. We will join his loved ones in honoring his valor, leadership and service to this great nation. His sacrifice will be remembered with gratitude."

*-N.Y. Gov. Andrew Cuomo*

"He never forgot his roots in Beemer (Neb.), where many know the family well. Joe came back a lot. He talked to the school, right after 9/11. He made it more personal."

*-Jan Liermann*

"We do best homage to our deceased when we live our lives most fully, even in the shadow of our loss. In affirming the One we affirm the worth that each life brought us closer to the Source of Life in unity and purpose."

*-Rabbi Steve Benn*

"He loved investigating crime, catching criminals and finding the truth. But as great of an Airman as Pete was, he was an even better person."

*-SA Christopher Joers*

"His smile could make an entire room light up. That was one of my favorite things about him. I'm so happy that God allowed us to witness that infectious smile."

*-Jeff Gallo*



SA (Staff Sgt.) Peter W. Taub

"Pete had the best smile and such a positive attitude. We will never forget you."

*-Heather Rose*



**The Fallen Heroes**  
HQ AFOSI memorial message was delivered by Chap. (Lt. Col.) Joel Warren, at Quantico, Va.

"We come together acknowledging our loss and celebrating life because we know there is more to it than grief. Standing along side us in our grief are many people who have been there before and they've overcome. The challenge for us is to remember who we are and how we are set apart as service members and OSI. These individuals have taught us great humility - what it means to be in service. We must set aside our sadness, move beyond it."



...COHEN • JAMES D DEACON  
 • JERRY LEE DANAY • JOSEPH J GOMEZ • JOEL T HAGEMAN • MELVIN ...  
 CLIVE G JEFFS • VAN I JOYCE • JERRY ...



**WE REMEMBER**




Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa  
 Special Agent Michael Cinco  
 Technical Sergeant Joseph Lemm  
 Special Agent Chester McBride  
 Special Agent Peter Taub  
 Special Agent Adrianna Vorderbruggen



















HALLIDAY • GEORGE THOMPSON Jr • OLIN D MARLAR III • R D McDONELL • JEFFREY M PARMELE  
 ER • RICHARD J ROSSANO • LARRY A SIMONSON • JEROME F JACKSON • RANDALL A THOMPSON  
 ZKIEWICZ • MANUEL RAMERIZ PUENTES • JACOB B BABIN Jr • ROBERT D COFFEY • JAY J FISHBECK

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