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SOF Soldier remembers fallen MARSOC corpsman

3/4/2009 By Pfc. Stephen C. Benson, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command

March 4, 2009 — The men and women who serve together in our armed forces go to the furthest lengths to protect each other at home and in combat. So it is no wonder when we lose a fellow servicemember we go to great lengths to honor their sacrifice. Whether it is through awards, plaques, buildings with their namesake or even tattoos, we find ways to keep their memory alive long after they have left us. One Soldier decided to honor his fallen comrade in his own unique manner and share his gift with all those that were touched by the life and sacrifice of Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Charles Luke Milam.

Army Maj. Michael Solovey served with 7th Special Forces Group, United States Army, Special Operations Command in 2007. During that period he was deployed to Afghanistan, and his unit worked closely with Milam's company from 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command.

According to Solovey, Milam's company asked if Solovey could put something together for them in which Milam was featured prominently, as he fell during combat operations on Sept. 25, 2007. Solovey took his pencil to the canvas and "Precision Pride" was the result.

"'Precision Pride' is definitely one of my favorite prints for a couple reasons," said Solovey. "I personally served with the unit in combat, it was for a sister service in the [special operations forces] community, and I actually met the fallen Corpsman."

The drawing is a collage of Marines and Sailors conducting various actions in combat from freefall parachuting, patrolling, reconnaissance and sniping. In the upper left hand portion of the drawing, Milam is depicted in full combat gear looking into the distance. He is shown directly above the Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman insignia.

Solovey is an accomplished artist and has a talent for drawing and painting. He has studied abroad at the Marchutz School of Art in Aix-en-Provence, France and has done over 45 sets of prints since 1998. He is frequently commissioned by units to draw these, however, this is his first for a Marine Corps unit and a work he has a particular attachment to.

"This print was a huge step for me in that I branched out into another community that doesn't know me as an artist," explained Solovey. "It was a tremendous honor to depict a fallen comrade in an original work I knew would be reproduced into 320 prints."

Along with those 320 prints, Solovey made fifty artist proofs. He got in touch with Milam's family and offered the original pencil drawing to his father prior to releasing prints to the public. According to Solovey, this was his biggest motivation in doing the project. Many of the prints have been reserved for Milam's company and 2d MSOB as a whole.

Solovey's contact at 2d MSOB, a gunnery sergeant who deployed with Milam's company, said he was very impressed with the artwork along with the rest of his fellow Marines and Sailors. According to him, the piece means a lot to them and they were appreciative of the effort and time he put in to commemorating their fallen brother.

If you wish to get one of the "Precision Pride" prints or an artist proof by Solovey, visit www.soloveyart.com for more information.



MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - This is a copy of the piece Army Maj. Michael Solovey created for 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command. Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Charles Luke Milam, a sailor who fell during combat operations in Afghanistan, is featured in the top left corner, above the Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman insignia., **Army Maj. Michael Solovey**, 3/3/2009 7:00 PM