



PASSING THE TORCH
The Next Generation of Patriot Veterans

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." --John 15:12-14

It is notable that [Veterans Day](#) shares the same anniversary date as the signing of the Mayflower Compact in 1620. That simple document, after all, is the taproot of a great nation, now a shining beacon of Liberty, which owes its very existence to the toils and trials of generations of American Veterans.



American Service Personnel in Afghanistan with Essential Liberty Guides

From the cold winter winds at Valley Forge in 1777 to the deadly terrain of the Korengal Valley in eastern Afghanistan today, generations of American Patriots have stood fast in defense of Liberty and at great cost.

I am certain I will never meet a seasoned war Veteran who is fond of combat, but to a man, every Patriot concurs with John Stuart Mill's timeless note on the subject: "War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse. A man who has nothing which he cares more about than he does about his personal safety is a miserable creature who has no chance at being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

I am equally certain that these Patriots, like millions of others since the 1789 founding of our Republic, have honored their "[sacred oaths](#)" to support and defend the Liberty enshrined in our Constitution, against all enemies foreign and domestic.

It is this shared devotion to honor and duty that inspires me this Veterans Day, because it means that I have the privilege of writing about great American Patriots who have influenced my life; men like [Roger Ingvalson](#) (USAF) and [Roger Helle](#) (USMC).

This year is something of an exception, in that I only recently met the young Patriot in this Veterans Day profile. He is, in part, by his own account, the product of Patriot Post mentoring, and a fine representative of the next generation of Veterans.

With humbling regularity, I hear from young Patriots who are serving our nation in many capacities, whose decision to do so was influenced during their formative years by our advocacy for Liberty and Rule of Law. Such is the case with 2LT Lee Miller, now the youngest honorary member of our [National Advisory Committee](#).

A few years ago, our Advancement Director, Christy Chesterton, came across hundreds of members of a Patriot Post fan group at the United States Military Academy at West Point. We contacted the administrator of that group who was then-Cadet Lee Miller.

Lee and I corresponded during his remaining years at the USMA, and recently he and his family spent a weekend with our family after his completion of the infantry basic leaders course at Ft. Benning. In addition to getting acquainted in person, we helped him "feed the Ranger baby" (put on a little weight) in

preparation for the two months of deprivation that he's now enduring in order to earn his [Ranger tab](#).

I have had the pleasure of meeting thousands of young military personnel, enlisted and officer ranks, from all walks of life. Lee's patriotic spirit and heart for serving others are typical of what has inspired many of them to serve. They are thus typical of the next generation of American Veterans.

Lee is the product of a North Carolina family rooted in faith and patriotism, grassroots folks who have a clear understanding of the [challenges](#) confronting our nation. He grew up in a Presbyterian church founded prior to the birth of our nation. He attended public schools and, among other activities, earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

I asked him about his inspiration to become an Army Ranger.

Lee responded, "I grew up watching old war movies with my dad. When other kids wanted to be cowboys, astronauts, or firefighters, I wanted to be a soldier. My favorite was 'To Hell and Back' starring Audie Murphy as himself. I loved the story of a poor, runt farm boy from Texas who was rejected by every service but the U.S. Army Infantry. He would go on to be arguably the greatest combat soldier in American history, and that made him my personal hero. At the age of 6, I knew I wanted to be a soldier and never changed my mind. A few years later, my Dad took me to Fort Bragg to see the 82nd Airborne Division for All-American Week. We were hosted by two family friends, both Rangers who served in Vietnam. Listening to the war stories of these Vets, I wanted to be an Airborne Ranger."

In regard to his love of country, Lee notes, "I knew I lived in a great country which I wanted to support, but it wasn't until I was 15 that I learned why the United States was such a great a country. A peer introduced me to *The Patriot Post* and this free publication picked up where my expensive government school education left off. I learned the difference between a republic and a democracy, the Rule of Law over the

rule of men, and the importance of the role of State governments and their sovereignty. It was through *The Patriot* that I really gained an understanding of the nature of Liberty enshrined in our Constitution."

He concluded, "West Point and the military have only reinforced my understanding of the Constitution, and it is because of *The Patriot Post* that I, like many of my colleagues, have a full understanding of the oath we have taken as commissioned officers to 'support and defend' it. That is why I chose to have my commissioning ceremony on Constitution Corner at West Point on Graduation Day. It's why I speak of our Republic and not a democracy, individual Liberty instead of 'freedoms,' and the natural rights of man rather than those ostensibly ensured by governments. I am a Patriot, and a friend to all other Patriots. While soldiering is my passion, the preservation of Liberty is my purpose, and I know that paramount in this soldier's creed are these words: 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.'"

And a footnote: On the occasion of Lee's graduation at Benning, the senior officer who addressed the graduates spoke on the subject of "Passing the Torch of Liberty." When referencing their oath, he pulled from his pocket, a copy of *The Patriot's* ["Essential Liberty Guide"](#), which Lee immediately recognized and which confirmed that this commanding officer also has a full understanding of his oath.

On this Veterans Day, I ask for your prayers for our next generation of Veterans, for 2LT Lee Miller and his young fellow Patriots as they complete the rigors of Ranger School. I ask for your prayers for all Patriots serving the cause of Liberty at home and abroad, and for their families.

I also ask that you help us [pass the torch](#) of Liberty to the next generation of Patriot Veterans. A young North Carolina boy named Lee Miller would never have encountered *The Patriot Post* were it not for the commitment of fellow Patriots like you.

A final word: An hour before I began this essay, I received the following note from an Army Warrant

Officer deployed in Afghanistan; a young man I have never met, but a Patriot brother just the same: "We know, as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, that Patriots at home support *The Patriot Post* so that we may enjoy its contents at no charge. That said, however, for me it is important that I also invest to

sustain your critical mission and not just rely on the generosity of others. Keep up the great work."

Messages like this one humble us beyond words.

Please invest in our mission by supporting our [2010 Year-End Campaign](#).