

Acts of Courage: Inside America's Military

TODAY'S ★★
ARMY
★★★ HEROES



by Joyce Markovics

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by **Joyce Markovics**

Consultant: Fred Pushies

U.S. SOF Adviser

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Fighting Two Wars

On September 11, 2001, members of a **terrorist group** from Afghanistan **hijacked** four U.S. airplanes full of passengers. The terrorists flew two of the planes into the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center. They flew another plane into the **Pentagon**, and one plane crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. In all, nearly 3,000 people were killed.

The twin towers after being attacked on September 11, 2001

The terrorist group responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001, is called **Al Qaeda**. Osama bin Laden was the leader of the group when the attacks were planned.

In October 2001, the United States sent troops to Afghanistan to destroy the camps where these terrorists had been trained. Then, in March 2003, the war on terror expanded into Iraq. Some U.S. officials believed that Iraq's ruler, Saddam Hussein, was building powerful weapons, including **nuclear** ones, to use against the United States and its **allies**. Though these weapons were never found, the United States, with help from other countries, was able to remove Hussein from power.

Thousands of brave U.S. Army soldiers served in Afghanistan and Iraq in the years following the September 11 attacks. This book recounts some of their amazing acts of courage as they faced terrible danger in service to their country.

The red parts of this map show where some of the events in this book took place.



U.S. Army soldiers in Iraq in 2003



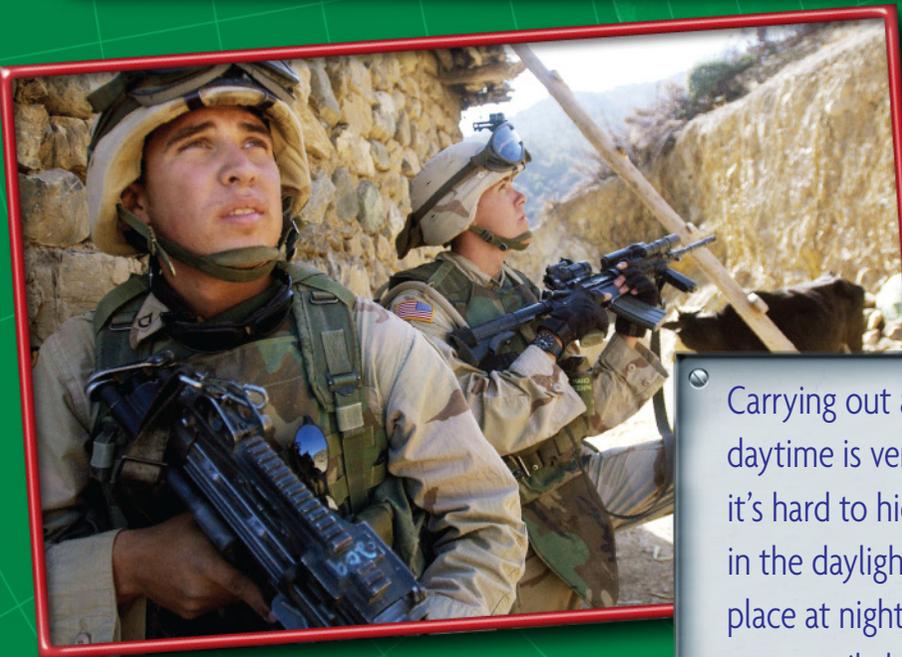
Grenade Attack



Leroy Petry

Rank: Staff Sergeant (Later promoted to Sergeant First Class)
Hometown: Santa Fe, New Mexico
Conflict: War in Afghanistan
Date: May 26, 2008
Honor: Medal of Honor

Army Ranger Sergeant (Sgt.) First Class Leroy Petry will never forget May 26, 2008. That's the day he led a team of soldiers on a **raid** to capture terrorists in Paktia **province**, Afghanistan. It was daytime when helicopters carrying the men touched down in a dusty village. Shortly after they landed, Sgt. Petry and a few of the others went looking for the enemy fighters in a building. Once they were inside the courtyard of the building, bullets suddenly started flying at them. They were under enemy fire!



Two U.S. Army soldiers looking for enemy fighters in Afghanistan

Carrying out a **mission** during the daytime is very dangerous, because it's hard to hide from the enemy in the daylight. Most missions take place at night, because soldiers can more easily hide in the dark.

Almost immediately, Sgt. Petry was shot in both legs. Then, without warning, an enemy **grenade** exploded nearby, wounding two other soldiers. Minutes later, a second grenade landed a few feet away from Sgt. Petry and the injured men. Despite his serious injuries, Sgt. Petry did the unthinkable. Without hesitation, he lunged for the grenade before it could explode. "I grabbed it with my hand, and I threw it as hard as I could," he said.

An Army soldier gets ready to throw a grenade during a training exercise.



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About the Author

Joyce Markovics is a writer and editor in New York City. In writing this book, she wished to pay tribute to all the brave men and women who have risked their own safety for the sake of others.

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Acts of Courage: Inside America's Military

TODAY'S ARMY HEROES

In the years following September 11, 2001, thousands of brave men and women have fought in the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many of them have faced extremely dangerous, even deadly, combat situations. This book recounts some of their stories. From Staff Sergeant Leroy Petry, who saved the lives of his teammates but lost his right hand in the process, to Staff Sergeant Robert J. Miller, who gave his life to save others, the courageous actions of the U.S. Army soldiers in this book show what heroism truly means.

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TODAY'S NAVY HEROES

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