

INSCOM Journal

A final salute

Winter 2012

BY Brian Murphy

INSCOM Public Affairs



The Reeves family spends a quiet moment at the INSCOM memorial wall prior to the Memorial Day ceremony, May 26. (photo by Brian Murphy)

Although his father dedicated 20 years of his life to serving in the Air Force, Jason Reeves wasn't someone who knew at an early age that he wanted to join the military.

Growing up, his parents thought maybe he'd be an architect or engineer because Reeves was such a quick study. Or maybe he'd be a lawyer because he was a spirited debater who was extremely passionate about what he believed in.

But Reeves surprised everyone and enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of 20. While the decision caught his family by surprise, no one questioned his commitment to becoming the best Soldier he could possibly be.

"He loved being around people and he loved helping others," said David Reeves of his son.

For more than a decade, Reeves did just that – mentoring junior Soldiers and doing what he could to positively impact the lives of those less fortunate.

"He believed in the military and he loved what he was doing," said Ruthie Reeves, his mother. "He told us that Soldiers don't do it for political reasons. They do it because they truly believe they are making a difference in the lives of those men, women and children overseas."

Staff Sgt. Jason Reeves, of the 2nd Military Intelligence Battalion, 66th Military Intelligence Brigade, ultimately sacrificed his life for what he believed in, as he was killed in action near Forward Operating Base Lightning, in Gardez, Afghanistan, Dec. 5, 2010.

The U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command honored Reeves during a Memorial Day ceremony at the Nolan Bldg., Fort Belvoir, Va., May 26.

During the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Mary A. Legere, INSCOM's commanding general, highlighted Reeves' accomplishments – referring to the 32-year-old as an “American hero.”

“While I did not have the pleasure of meeting Jason, I had the opportunity to meet his Soldiers, to hear their stories, and to understand what an exceptional leader and person Staff Sgt. Reeves was,” Legere said.

“If Soldiers are our Army's credentials, than Staff Sgt. Reeves' were his,” Legere continued. “He was someone they looked up to and trusted, someone who ensured their readiness. He was their rock and their role model, the older brother who looked after them, the leader they aspired to be. They loved his courage and his discipline, his humor and his intelligence. They loved him.”

Reeves attended basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Gordon, Ga. His first assignment was with the 75th Ranger Regiment at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., as a satellite communications operator in 2000. The following year, Reeves was assigned to Fort Irwin, Calif., as a signals support specialist.

Reeves' next assignment was with the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team at Camp Hovey, Korea, in 2005. Reeves returned to Fort Huachuca, Az., as a platoon sergeant in 2007, and then moved on to the 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as a human intelligence collection sergeant. He deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom during 2008-09.

Upon his return from Iraq, Reeves was reassigned to the 66th MI Brigade, where he was selected to provide support to the Combined Joint Operations Task Force Afghanistan.

Faced with a challenging mission in less-than-ideal conditions while half a world away, Reeves was still able to rise to the occasion and make an impact on those around him.

“His work ethic was above reproach and he had a willingness to go above and beyond the job description,” said Sgt. 1st Class Craig Kochheiser, a Special Forces engineer who worked with Reeves during the deployment.

“From day one, Jason was able to come into our team and ingrain himself through his work ethic, intelligence and dedication,” Kochheiser continued. “He was able to really mesh well and become a part of the team, and every one of us was able to take away something from our time with him.”

While the location where Reeves was working in Afghanistan wasn't glamorous, he cherished his time there and strived to make the most out of the opportunity, his family said. “We found out after the fact that he was planning on extending in Afghanistan,” said Stacy Reeves Roeber of her brother. “I couldn't even dream of being sent there and he had already put in the paperwork to stay there longer.”

During his 12-year career, Reeves also earned a reputation as a born traveler – volunteering for assignments in Korea, Germany, Iraq and Afghanistan. He particularly enjoyed exploring parts of those countries most tourists never experience.

“He loved finding places off the beaten path that most tourists had never heard of,” said Ruthie Reeves. “Jason was always adventurous. Rather than sitting around in his barracks room, he preferred to get out and explore whatever countries he was stationed in.”

Another endearing – and sometimes maddening – trait of Reeves was his stubborn nature. Once his mind was made up and he believed in something, there wasn't much hope of getting him to change his stance.

“He actually turned down a promotion to sergeant first class three different times,” said 1st Sgt. William

Hatfield, first sergeant, Company A, 2nd MI Battalion, 66th MI Brigade. “His explanation to me was he did it so he could stay with his Soldiers. That’s where the training was and that’s where he wanted to be. He felt like the more rank he gained, the less time he’d have to work with his Soldiers.”

While turning down a promotion, not to mention the pay increase that comes with it, would be considered highly unusual for most people, Reeves wasn’t most people.

“Jason received awards and recognition that we never knew about until after the fact,” Ruthie Reeves said. “When we would talk to him on the phone, he’d tell us about things that his Soldiers had done, but he never really talked about himself like that.”

With that in mind, it should come as no surprise that his Soldiers really looked up to Reeves as a mentor and a natural leader.

“He was really different than any other noncommissioned officer I’ve ever worked for,” said Spc. Drew Denman, 2nd MI Battalion, 66th MI Brigade. “He was a lot more personal with you and took a lot more of his personal time to be there to talk with you. He always took a very different and unique approach to Soldiering. I’ll never forget that.”

Which is why, even though Reeves is gone, his impact on those around him will be felt for years to come.

“To his immediate and his Army Family, Jason was a beloved son, a brother, an uncle and a friend who is sorely missed,” Legere said. “He was an American hero, a Soldier, a respected intelligence specialist and an eternal member of our INSCOM team. His sacrifice and service to our country will never be forgotten. His memory will remain with us here and in all of our hearts.”

[Back](#)