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## **SFC RYAN A. GLOYER**

APRIL 6, 1982-NOVEMBER 3, 2016

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### **OBJECTIVES**

To honor SFC Gloyer for his service and sacrifice, his commitment to education, and the legacy he left behind.

To share SFC Gloyer's legacy in order to inspire and motivate SV students to be inclusive, confident, dedicated, and selfless individuals who persevere and work alongside others to overcome any of life's challenges.

### **LEGACY**

- Life-long Teacher & Learner
- Selfless Service
- Inclusiveness
- Perseverance
- Dedication
- Excellence
- Continuous Improvement
- Leadership by Example
- Honor & Integrity
- Courage & Valor

### **MILITARY ASSIGNMENTS**

**U.S. Army Enlistment Date: December 28, 2004**

**82nd Airborne: 2005 – 2013**

**10th Special Forces Group, ODA-0224: 2014 - 2016**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS / SERVICE**

**-3 Tours of Duty - Afghanistan: 2007, 2009, 2016**

**-1 Tour of Duty - Republic of Chad: 2015**

**-Earned Ranger Tab: April 7, 2006**

**-Earned Green Beret Tab: September 18, 2014**

**-Purple Heart, Bronze Star w/Valor, Bronze Star**

**-Meritorious Service Medal - Operation Enduring Freedom VIII**

**-Army Commendation Medal - Operation Enduring Freedom X**

**-Army Commendation Medal - Inducted into Audie Murphy Club**

**-Global War on Terrorism Service Medal**

**-Basic Combat & Advanced Individual Training**

**-Parachutist, Jump Master, & Military Free Fall Badges**

**-Combat Infantry & Expert Infantry Badges**

**-Warrior Leader & Infantry Advanced Leader Courses**

**-Combat Lifesaver & Advanced Land Navigation Courses**

**-Sere (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, & Escape) Course**

**-6 Months Russian Language Training**

### **EDUCATION & EXTRA CURRICULARS**

**Seneca Valley Class of 2000.**

**-Soccer, 3 Year Letter Winner, Captain senior year**

**-Track and Field, 3 Year Letter Winner**

**-District Chorus & 3 All School Musicals**

**Thiel College Class of 2004, Magna Cum Laude Honors**

**- Dual Degree in Early Education and Psychology**

**- Earned PA Teaching Certificate**

### **FAMILY**

**-Parents: Richard (Dick) & Lurene Gloyer. Step-mother Michelle Rossi**

**-Siblings: Older Brother Matthew, and Younger Brother Justin**

**-Stepbrother: Michael LaButis, and Stepsister: Rebecca LaButis**

# In Memory of

## SGT. 1ST CLASS RYAN ALLEN GLOYER



Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Ryan Allen Gloyer, 34, of Zelenople, died courageously in battle in Kunduz, Afghanistan on Thursday, Nov. 3, 2016, in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.

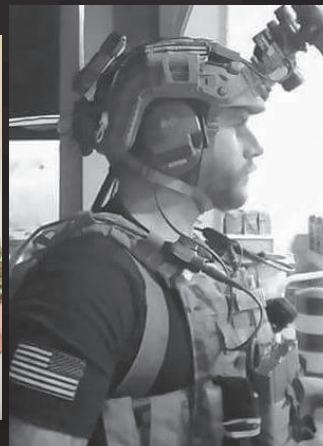
Ryan, a member of the Seneca Valley Class of '00, was a model student and athlete, lettering three years in soccer and track. He danced in three school musicals, sang in the choir and was selected for participation in District Chorus. For his senior project, Ryan taught younger students how to break dance. Throughout his high school days, Ryan developed a charismatic, gregarious, animated and fun-loving personality. He continued his education at Thiel College, Greenville, where he graduated with magna cum laude honors and received degrees in psychology and early education.

On Dec. 28, 2004, Ryan enlisted in the Army with orders that would send him to Airborne Jump Qualification School and Special Forces Selection Course after graduation from boot camp. From day one of his military career, Ryan had his sights set on becoming a part of an elite unit and had a goal and steadfast determination to be a Green Beret. Along Ryan's journey to becoming a Green Beret, he went to Ranger School and earned his Ranger Tab in April 2006. He also served with the 82nd Airborne and completed two tours of duty in Afghanistan in 2007 and 2009. During his first 15-month deployment to Afghanistan, Ryan made valorous achievements in support of Operation Enduring Freedom which earned him the Bronze Star Medal with Valor Device and the Meritorious Service Award. In his second 12-month tour of duty to Afghanistan in 2009, he received the Army Commendation Medal under Task Force Fury. In April 2010, Ryan was selected to be inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club for his dedicated leadership, exemplary professionalism and high standards of excellence.

In 2013, Ryan completed the Special Forces Selection Course and was accepted into the Special Forces Training Program. After 18 months of intensive training and Russian language instruction, Ryan graduated and finally donned his green beret in September 2014. Upon graduation, Ryan attended the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School to complete Free Fall training. Ryan was then assigned to the 10th Special Forces Group, 2nd Battalion, located at Fort Carson, Colorado. In May 2015, Ryan deployed to Chad; in June 2016, he deployed to Afghanistan for the third time and was scheduled to return home at the end of November.

Ryan was awarded a Purple Heart and a 2nd Bronze Star for his heroism during the battle (The Battle of Boz Qandahari) that took his life.

Ryan's awards and medals include: the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Bronze Star with "V" (Valor), two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Special Forces Tab and Sergeant Audie Murphy Club Medallion.



It is our privilege and honor to dedicate today's game (Sept. 8, 2017) and Veteran Recognition Event in memory of Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Ryan Allen Gloyer.



October 10, 2017

Dear Seneca Valley School Board, Administrators, Teachers and Students:

It is my honor to share the priceless lessons that my dear friend Ryan A. Gloyer taught me or lived himself. I hope that you will find inspiration and truth in them too.

- 1) Always be true to yourself.
- 2) Follow your dreams.
- 3) Stand up for what you believe, even if you are the only one standing.
- 4) Persevere – even when it seems that all hope is lost.
- 5) Teach whomever, whatever, and whenever. Education is priceless.
- 6) Be confident. Shine like the brightest light for all to see.
- 7) Laugh with wild abandon.
- 8) Laugh at yourself.
- 9) “Look cool even when you don’t know what you’re doing”.
- 10) Dance whenever and wherever you are moved to.
- 11) Bring a smile to the saddest person in the room – especially the saddest person in the room.
- 12) Give the tightest hugs.
- 13) Always say what you mean and mean what you say.
- 14) Inspire people – of any age.
- 15) Mentor and educate any and all whom you have the opportunity to.
- 16) Give tough love, followed by words of encouragement.
- 17) Push yourself physically because you should not quit, no matter what.
- 18) Tell the best stories, include grand gestures, if it helps.
- 19) Sing out loud, just because.
- 20) Assist those who are more vulnerable than yourself.
- 21) Appreciate the strengths in others.
- 22) Strengthen your weaknesses.
- 23) Question almost everything, for it is in the questioning that the true learning takes place.
- 24) Never be afraid to be YOU.

These are just some of the invaluable lessons that I obtained from many blessed years as Ryan’s friend. He had such a profound impact on my life and I can say with all confidence that I am not alone in that fact. He changed the world. He changed it for the better. He will be forever missed as a student, a teacher, a friend, a soldier, a son, a brother, and a loved one.

I cannot think of any individual more fitting to have the Seneca Valley Middle School renamed after than Ryan A. Gloyer. He was always intrigued by the process of learning. He was always passionate about teaching lessons to his students, his friends, his mentees, and his family. He had a unique way of imparting information in a very animated, exciting way that made whoever his pupil was want to listen and learn more.

I truly hope that this letter can provide an additional snap-shot into what a ‘big deal’ Ryan was. I am not trying to sound sarcastic about that fact. He was bigger than life. He was a role model for countless people who met and knew him. He would be humbled to have this honor. An honor that is very well deserved.

Thank you for honoring Ryan. For allowing many of us to share about the man he was. If I can provide any further information about him it would be my genuine pleasure.

Sincerely,

Shannon Reesh



## SFC Ryan A Gloyer Obituary by Richard A Gloyer

SFC Ryan Allen Gloyer, age 34, of Zelienople, PA, died courageously in battle in Kunduz, Afghanistan in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel on November 3rd, 2016. Born on April 6, 1982 in Torrance, CA, the beloved son of Lurene W. Gloyer of Fountain, CO and Richard A. Gloyer (Michelle Rossi) of Seven Fields, PA and Fiancé of Sierra Day of Fountain, CO. Ryan is survived by two brothers, Matthew R. (Michelle) Harris Gloyer of Orange, CA, and Justin W. (Marisa) Gloyer of Santee, CA. He is the Step-Brother of Michael (Anne) LaButis of Califon, NJ and Rebecca LaButis of Pittsburgh, PA.

Ryan and his family moved to the northern suburbs of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1989 when Ryan was seven years old.

At an early age, Ryan demonstrated a vivid imagination and would frequently dress-up and pretend to be a frontiersman, cowboy, American Indian chief, or soldier.

Around the age of 10, Ryan started wearing camouflage shirts & pants. Ryan's mom gave him a hat with "Special Forces" printed on the front of the hat. Ryan wore that hat almost every day until middle school when the letters started to chip off. Ryan kept that hat and today it still hangs in his closet.

His interest in the military increased every time he visited "Pop" (Ryan's grandfather) who was a World War II veteran and was wounded during the June 1944 invasion of Normandy. Ryan was intrigued with his grandfather's war souvenirs and fascinated by passages from his war diaries.

In high school, Ryan was a good student and athlete, lettering 3 years in soccer and track. He participated in 3 school musicals as a dancer. He sang in the choir and was selected for District Chorus. For his senior project, Ryan taught younger students how to break-dance. Throughout his high school days, Ryan developed a charismatic, gregarious, animated, and fun-loving personality. He was able to make friends across various social groups by possessing a knack for making them laugh with his singing, dancing, impersonations, and antics.

Ryan graduated from Seneca Valley High School in May, 2000. He continued his education at Thiel College, Greenville, PA, where he graduated with magna cum laude honors and received degrees in Psychology and Early Education. He obtained his Pennsylvania Teaching Certificate after completing his student teaching at a Greenville elementary school. While at Thiel, Ryan continued to participate in musicals, theater, various clubs, and in his senior was selected to be a resident assistant. His outside reading interests included American history, military history, survivor and outdoorsman magazines, and fantasy series books like Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings. He loved all kinds of music including classical, 40's big band swing, Oldies, contemporary, and hip-hop. He loved movies and particularly enjoyed all of the Disney animated films.

On December 28, 2004, Ryan enlisted in the Army with orders that would send him to Airborne Jump Qualification School and Special Forces Selection course after graduation from boot camp. He decided on the non-commission officer route rather than OCS because he wanted to experience all facets of the life of a soldier and because he believed that the sergeants did the "heavy lifting" and were always in the fore-front of the action.

From day one of his military career, Ryan had his sights set on becoming a part of an elite unit and he had a goal and steadfast determination to be a Green Beret. He wanted to be one of the "Best of the Best."

Ryan possessed unbelievable self-discipline to keep himself in top physical condition throughout his 12-year military career.

Although he incurred a couple of set-backs in reaching his goal of being a Green Beret, Ryan did not view them as failures. Instead he viewed them as learning opportunities to improve himself and they strengthened his resolve to achieve his dream. Ryan embraced the concept that anyone can achieve their dream job if they have a strong work ethic to go above and beyond what is required and they possess the self-discipline, courage, and fortitude to overcome obstacles and disappointments as well as

a never give-up attitude. In this regard, Ryan was a role model to all in how to achieve what you want in life.

Along Ryan's journey to becoming a Green Beret, he went to Ranger School and earned his Ranger Tab in April, 2006. He also served with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and completed two tours of duty in Afghanistan in 2007 and 2009. During his first 15-month deployment to Afghanistan, Ryan made valorous achievements in support of Operation Enduring Freedom which earned him the Bronze Star Medal with "V" (Valor) device and the Meritorious Service Award. In his second 12-month tour of duty to Afghanistan in 2009, he received the Army Commendation Medal under Task Force Fury. In April, 2010, Ryan was selected to be inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club for his dedicated leadership, exemplary professionalism, and high standards of excellence.

In 2013, Ryan's tried a 3<sup>rd</sup> time to complete the Special Forces Selection Course. This time he completed the course and was accepted into the Special Forces 18 month Special Forces Training Program. After 18 months of intensive training and Russian language instruction, Ryan graduated and finally donned his green beret in September, 2014, almost 10 years from his enlistment date. It was the proudest moment of his military career. Upon Graduation, Ryan attended the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School to complete Free Fall training.

Ryan was then assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, located at Fort Carson, Co. In May, 2015 Ryan deployed to Chad for 3 months and in June 2016 he deployed to Afghanistan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time and was scheduled to return home at the end of November, 2016. Ryan was awarded a purple heart and a 2<sup>nd</sup> bronze star for his heroism during the battle that took his life.

Although Ryan's life was short, he lived life to the fullest. He was an inspiration to all who knew him from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students he taught in Greenville to the soldiers who trained under his leadership.

Ryan led by example and set the standard for what a soldier should be. He dedicated himself to be the best he could possibly be in all he did and encouraged and inspired others to continuously to improve themselves. Ryan also taught us how to enjoy life by entertaining us with his animated personality, stories, historical facts, and antics. He was always the life of every party.

He truly cared about the men he mentored and trained. He made it his personal duty to not only insure that they were combat ready, but also that they were confident within themselves to live a happy life. He loved his "Brothers," and they in turn loved him back. Ryan truly was one of the "Best of the Best."

Ryan's awards & medals include:

Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Bronze Star with "V" (Valor), two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Special Forces Tab and Sergeant Audie Murphy Club Medallion.

Visitation will be held Tuesday, November 29, 2016 from 6-8 pm at the Murphy Funeral Home, 4510 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22203

Funeral Services will be held on Wednesday, November 30, 2016 at Fort Myer Memorial Chapel, 101 McNair Road, Fort Myer, VA, 22211

Burial with full military honors will follow services in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Green Beret Foundation, 14402 Blanco Road, Suite 101, San Antonio, TX 78216, [www.greenberetfoundation.org](http://www.greenberetfoundation.org).

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH VALOR DEVICE  
RYAN A. GLOYER  
CAMP AIRBORNE, TF FURY

On 25 July 2007 4th Platoon, Delta Company, 2-508th PIR was called to escort a vehicle recovery team consisting of a HMMT wrecker and an EOD HMMWV to an IED blast site near the village of Kolagu in the Zormat District. Three kilometers east of the IED site, 4th Platoon was ambushed from a wood line one hundred meters off the road by an enemy force of approximately sixty anti-coalition militia. Upon the initial contact at least six RPGs were fired at the recovery team, immediately disabling the EOD truck and engulfing the now disabled wrecker in flames. SGT Gloyer immediately called out targets to his gunner and radioed the platoon sergeant the status of the downed vehicles. As the lead vehicles turned around to repel the enemy from their dug in ambush line, SGT Gloyer ordered his vehicle to stop in the kill zone in an effort to secure the disabled vehicles. As the recovery vehicles continued to receive sustained machine gun and RPG fire, SGT Gloyer was unable to contact the disabled EOD vehicle to gain a status of the personnel inside. After receiving no reply on the radio, SGT Gloyer feared the worst and under intense machine gun fire dismounted his vehicle on the contact side and ran through the open area to the EOD vehicle. Upon arriving at the EOD vehicle he spoke with the personnel inside about their status and gave them specific guidance regarding the platoon's intent to destroy the enemy and secure the wrecker. Then SGT Gloyer moved under fire again to the platoon sergeant's vehicle and volunteered to attempt to flank the enemy with his dismount team. As the reports were sent up and close air support was enroute, 1st Platoon at the nearby IED site began movement back to the ambush location. Until 1st Platoon arrived, the dismount team was pinned down by machine gun fire, but SGT Gloyer and his team continued to engage and repel the enemy closing in on the platoon with their personal weapons. For over ninety minutes the platoon exchanged fire with the overwhelming force, causing the enemy to lose confidence and eventually retreat. Once 4th Platoon was reinforced by an ANA platoon and 1st Platoon, SGT Gloyer led his team across the objective in pursuit of the enemy and exploited the ambush line for any useful evidence.

Throughout the entire firefight SGT Gloyer's leadership and personal courage under fire motivated and helped his paratroopers to fight off the determined enemy attack and directly resulted in the killing of nine enemy personnel and the capture of one enemy fighter, striking a huge blow to the morale of enemy forces in the Zormat District.

**PROPOSED CITATION FOR ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL  
WITH VALOR DEVICE**

**SGT RYAN A. GLOYER**

**SQUAD LEADER**

**FOR 25 JULY 2007**

**FOR EXCEPTIONAL VALOR AS A SQUAD LEADER WHILE ASSIGNED TO 2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION (ABN) 508<sup>TH</sup> PIR, 4<sup>TH</sup> BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM. SGT GLOYER'S PERSONAL COURAGE, VALOR, AND SELFLESS SERVICE WHILE BEING DIRECTLY ENGAGED BY ENEMY FORCES GREATLY CONTRIBUTED TO MISSION SUCCESS AND REFLECT GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, THE 4<sup>TH</sup> BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, THE 82<sup>ND</sup> AIRBORNE DIVISION, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.**

Award upgraded to a bronze star medal with V (valor) device

## Until Dawn: The Battle of Boz Qandahari

### 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)

Story by [Staff Sgt. Jorden Weir](#)

**Date:** 02.03.2017

**Posted:** 02.03.2017 13:57

**News ID:** 222461

Surrounded, outnumbered, but never defeated... Green Berets fight through overwhelming odds to accomplish the mission and save the lives of their brothers.

FORT CARSON, Colo. – After landing in a flooded field outside Boz Qandahari Village, Kunduz Province, Afghanistan on the night of Nov. 2, 2016 and as they trudged a mile toward their target through mud up to their waists, Army Sgt. 1st Class Morrison, the senior medical sergeant with Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) 0224, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), remembered thinking, “Alright, yeah, that’s how it’s going to be tonight.”

“We came to the realization that we were going to be wet and muddy real quick,” said Sgt. 1st Class Valderrama, the senior weapons sergeant for ODA 0224.

Their mission was to target known enemy safe havens and disrupt the refit operations of several high-level Taliban leaders.

What followed was a night-long battle for survival for the men of ODA 0224, as 10 SF operators, 2 American support elements, and a small partner force of Afghan soldiers fought off wave after wave of fortified and determined Taliban insurgents while trying to escape a village that had suddenly become an angry hornet’s nest. The night’s brutal fighting resulted in approximately a third of the 59-man force suffering casualties, including two Green Berets killed in action. Yet, despite pain and loss, the men of ODA 0224 rose to the occasion and showed a level of heroism that was nothing short of extraordinary. Upon reaching the infiltration area via helicopters, they began slogging through the flooded fields toward their target a mile away. An hour later they reached the village, where they entered by climbing a cliff face with switch-back trails carved into the sides.

“The village itself was something like a castle,” said Morrison, “just steep, 100-foot high cliffs on all sides of the village with only one entry way.”

Using aerial assets at their disposal, the team knew immediately that enemy combatants were beginning to maneuver around them.

They cleared the first two compounds of interest (COI) without incident, collecting valuable intelligence and destroying contraband as they went. They learned that bad weather was on the way, and they needed to move their timeline forward in order to exfiltrate the area safely.

“We determined to bypass our third [COI] and go straight to our fourth,” said Sgt. 1st Class Seidl, the team sergeant for ODA 0224.

However, as they approached the fourth COI through a street lined with 10-foot high walls on either side, they encountered a problem.

“The lead blocking position calls up and says, ‘hey we’ve got a huge metal gate blocking the road’,” said Seidl.

Morrison, who was at the gate along with Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Gloyer, an intelligence sergeant with ODA 0224, said, “The spider senses were definitely tingling, being up there at that gate.”





This area was a known Taliban hideout, and they had just run into a 20-foot tall steel gate that no one had known was there.

“Kind of ominous,” Morrison said.

Seidl and Valderrama were planning out how to get around the gate through an adjacent compound when the ambush began.

“We heard a distinctive thud, and we both turned to look at the gate,” said Seidl. “That’s when the first grenade detonated.”

Morrison and Gloyer, along with several Afghan soldiers, were caught in the blast. Morrison was knocked to the ground, suffering shrapnel wounds to his body, hands and face. He regained situational awareness immediately, engaging and suppressing an enemy fighter inside of a second-story window before dragging an unconscious Afghan soldier out of the kill zone.

Gloyer, who was mortally wounded in the blast, managed to run back to the group before collapsing into Morrison and Valderrama. Morrison, ignoring his own grievous injuries, began treatment on Gloyer, directing a fellow operator to perform complex medical aid under his supervision after realizing that he had the use of only three fingers on his hand.

With Taliban forces attacking from nearly all sides, the pitch black of the night had suddenly become a hell storm of enemy fire.

“They basically had us, almost 360 degrees,” said Valderrama.

One fallen Afghan soldier was still in the kill zone. While trying to rally the Afghans, Seidl watched his own team leader, Capt. Andrew Byers, take action.

“Byers sprinted past me,” said Seidl. “He just ran straight into the smoke and the dust.”

Inspired by his team leader’s selflessness, Seidl took off after him, and together they pulled the fallen Afghan out of the kill zone.

Shortly after, a call came over the radio saying that another Green Beret was down. Warrant Officer 1 Meade, the assistant detachment commander for ODA 0224, had been shot five times in the legs, hip, hand and wrist.

Staff Sgt. Russell, the junior weapons sergeant for ODA 0224, was with Meade.

Russell recalled a rush of fear when he realized the team had just been hit at their southern and northern-most points, and they were trapped in an alley. But fear didn’t stop Russell from reacting quickly.

“I grabbed [Meade] by his plate carrier,” he said, “dragged him back a few feet, and tried to get in front of him, between what was basically a three-way kill zone... I thought I was dead.”

Meade, who is recovering from his injuries at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, said Russell acted heroically in saving his life.

“He ran into machine gun fire to get me,” said Meade, “Then, whenever he couldn’t drag me any further, he laid down on top of me and protected me with his own body.”

When Seidl arrived at their location, he found Russell alone and kneeling over Meade.

“He’s engaging [the enemy] in three different directions,” said Seidl, “And all the while, he managed to get tourniquets on both of [Meade’s] legs, saving his life.”

Russell was recognized with the Silver Star Medal for his actions that night.

Seidl, Russell and another operator pulled Meade to relative safety before continuing to fight.

The fight was greatly assisted by Air Force Staff Sgt. Hunter, a combat controller who accompanied the ODA that night. Hunter, who was recommended for the Air Force Cross Medal for his actions, spent the night calling in precision air strikes on enemy positions and keeping the team informed on enemy movement seen from the air.

With casualties mounting, and small arms fire and grenades raining all around them, Byers made the call to set up a defensive posture inside of a compound, so they could care for their wounded.

Choosing one nearby, Seidl and Byers stacked up to breach its gate and threw fragmentation grenades inside. Seidl turned to rally the Afghan soldiers into action.

“That’s when I hear the first boot kick the gate,” Seidl said.

Byers, determined to get his team out of harm's way, attempted to kick the gate open himself. It held fast, however, secured by an object. Seidl said he saw Byers reach across the gate to grab the object holding it closed.

"And that's when I watched the rounds rip through the gate and into [Byers]," said Seidl.

Reacting quickly, Seidl emptied his magazine into the gate while Valderrama darted forward to pull Byers out of the fatal funnel.

After handing off a mortally wounded Byers to another soldier for first aid, Valderrama and Seidl breached a different compound and began clearing it by themselves.

"He went left, I went right," said Seidl. "Not ideal."

Luckily, it happened to be the only compound with shorter walls than the others, allowing more clearing options. But, because of its short walls, the Taliban also had a line of sight advantage.

"It was probably the most vulnerable compound to be in," said Seidl, "but at the time it was the only one we could get into."

After about a half-hour of brutal fighting, the team finally got the defensive foothold they needed.

With everyone inside the compound, they established as much of a defensive perimeter as they could with their limited personnel. What hard-shelled rooms were available, quickly became occupied, so the Green Berets established a casualty collection point (CCP) outside.

Valderrama set up lanes of fire by placing uninjured Afghan soldiers around the perimeter, then set off running from position to position, continually ensuring the best defense possible.

"I basically wanted them to build a wall [of fire] between us and anyone out there," said Valderrama.

Hunter, at the authorization of Seidl, called in multiple danger-close air strikes onto enemy positions all around them, the closest of which detonated approximately nine feet from their own location.

Morrison, who was significantly injured in the initial grenade blast, continued to refuse medical treatment to himself so that he could assist with the other wounded soldiers.

"He's completely injured," said Seidl of Morrison. "He looks horrible. He's got blood covering his face, he's limping, he can barely hold a rifle, but he's still fighting."

Sadly, it was during this time that Gloyer succumbed to his wounds from the initial grenade blast.

With severe injuries to his team leader, Byers, and assistant team leader, Meade, Seidl now found himself not only in charge, but in charge of a mass casualty situation.

Aside from calling in MEDEVAC requests, and maintaining radio communications with higher, Seidl also called for reinforcements to help facilitate their movement out of the village to the landing zone.

With about a third of his force depleted by casualties, Seidl's team was forced to hold their position until a quick reaction force could arrive to assist in exfiltration.

"For two hours we fought in that compound," said Seidl. "[We] fought for our lives."

And they repelled every attack on their perimeter, not suffering a single additional casualty.

When help arrived, it was in the form of a single 10-man special-forces unit, ODA 0222, who had stormed the village alone to reach their comrades.

With the additional forces, everyone was able to begin movement away from the compound and village. They continued the fight through 800-meters of volatile enemy territory toward the MEDEVAC location.

Bounding out of the village proved to be difficult due to the force fragmenting and creating gaps in the defense.

Suddenly, aerial assets warned them of enemy movement directly to their flank, and as the enemy opened fire, soldiers darted off the road for cover, including those carrying the stretcher holding Byers. Morrison was up ahead pulling security.

"I remember turning around," said Morrison, "and seeing [our medic] laying there, bullets all over the place, just holding pressure on [Byers'] wound."

With the immediate threat suppressed, they regrouped and travelled to a nearby field. Despite still being under fire, Seidl called for MEDEVAC on the spot, due to the slow movement of the formation and the

deteriorating health of their casualties.

“We got to a field and we’re like, you know, there’s no better time than the present,” said Morrison.

“We need to get our more seriously injured guys [evacuated] right away.”

When the helicopter finally touched down, the Green Berets loaded Byers and Meade on board, along with their medic, who was treating them.

Unfortunately, Byers succumbed to his wounds during that flight.

For selflessly running into a kill zone to retrieve a fallen Afghan comrade, for maintaining positive control of a 59-man force during a seemingly hopeless situation, and for sacrificing his life by leading from the front in an effort to rescue his men, Byers was posthumously awarded the Silver Star Medal. One wounded, litter-bound Afghan soldier still lay in the open field, and upon seeing him, another Green Beret from ODA 0224 laid on top of him, shielding the soldier’s body from the enemy bullets pinging all around them.

Everyone not involved with moving casualties were concentrating their full efforts on returning fire, trying to suppress the enemy attacks still coming from the village.

As the helicopter flew away, the enemy transitioned their fire directly onto the landing zone, where the remaining force had little protection.

“I hadn’t had fire that close to me in a very long time,” said Seidl. “If I had an [entrenching tool] I would have dug a Ranger Grave and gotten as low as I could into that field.”

Dawn had broken by this point, taking with it the cover of darkness. The enemy fire was so concentrated that the second MEDEVAC helicopter couldn’t land, forcing the SF operators to move their wounded another 300 meters to a tree line. Improvising to assist in the movement, Seidl and Morrison used a nearby donkey to help carry Gloyer to the new extraction point.

When they made it, Seidl called the evacuation. And, as the sun rose on the morning of Nov. 3, the remaining men of ODA 0224 left the area.

Despite a night filled with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, these Special Forces operators accomplished a difficult mission.

“I felt content with the effects that we had on the enemy that night,” said Seidl.

In total the men of ODA 0224 killed 27 Taliban insurgents along with three high-value area Taliban commanders.

“I feel content that their network was severely hindered and damaged, and probably going to be out of commission for quite a while.” Seidl said.

For taking charge of a severely injured and depleted force, leading them out of a kill zone and establishing a defensive posture that repelled every subsequent attack, for making the tough call on multiple danger-close air strikes near his own position in an effort to eliminate an overwhelming enemy force, and for leading every man under his charge out of a hostile city after inflicting catastrophic damage on multiple Taliban enemies, Seidl was recognized and awarded with the Silver Star Medal.

It was a bittersweet victory, however, with the devastating losses of Byers and Gloyer.

“I know we’ve taken losses in the past,” said Seidl, “but I don’t know that we’ve ever taken a loss like this in quite some time, where a team is hit this hard.”

The loss of Byers and Gloyer effected every member of the Special Forces unit.

“It’s a terrible loss for everybody,” said Morrison. “The only comfort to any of it was that they were with friends, the whole time.”

Morrison recalled the professionalism, and commitment to the team and mission that both men possessed.

“Both of them were extremely dedicated,” said Morrison. “Both of them believed in what they were doing.”

Morrison explained that despite the dangers, despite the risks and the hardships, being a Green Beret is ultimately a calling.

“When we sign up for Special Forces, we volunteer several times,” said Morrison. “We volunteer to join

the Army, then we volunteer to go to [SF] Selection, then we stay around and deal with all the hardships of the [SF] Qualification Course. So it goes without saying that those guys wanted to be where they were that night.”

The fighting spirit and warrior mentalities of both Byers and Gloyer live on in the men of ODA 0224, who distinguished themselves as heroes of the highest caliber.

“Some of the things that I saw of the men that night was some of the most courageous and amazing things I’d ever seen,” said Seidl, “or could ever hope to see.”

For their actions that night, team members with ODA 0224 were awarded three Silver Star Medals, three Bronze Star Medals (two with Valor), four Army Commendation Medals with Valor, and six Purple Heart Medals. Their valorous actions were recognized during a ceremony held at Ft. Carson, Colo. on Feb. 1, 2017.



SFC Ryan A Gloyer Tribute by SFC Adam W. Valderrama, 0224 Sr Weapons Sergeant – Ft Carson Memorial – Dec 8, 2016

Ryan Gloyer is exactly what I thought a Green Beret would be when I showed up to group. My first day on the team I showed up early and met Ryan who was already there prepping his stuff for the range. After some introductions and about 45 minutes I said to myself as all my own prep time disappeared, who is this John Travolta look alike and how can he talk so long without breathing? I wish I would have known at that time that we would become such great friends in just a short amount of time.

Ryan was a man who was very proud of his military background. He loved the 82<sup>nd</sup> through and through and cherished his time and experience there. He is the only person I know who was proud of the fact that it took him three times to get selected at SFAS. It truly showed his perseverance and spoke to his character, as he is not a man who would quit or give up on things he wanted. Ryan held the team record for an APFT score of 343, if not for the company. A simple score is not enough though to speak of his physical fitness, he was a physical stud, possibly freak. He would do a half marathon while on deployment every other week, running between a 730 and 8 min pace....on a treadmill.

Ryan truly took me in as a teammate, mentor, and a friend as did all the men of 0224. I could not have received a better welcome into the regiment. I want to share a couple of things about what kind of person Ryan was that many outside of our team might not have known. First, Ryan was a teacher, or working to become one before joining the military. As you saw from his bio he was a student teacher while in college. It truly showed as Ryan was the best teacher on the team, it was truly one of his gifts as was being leader as it came so natural to him.

Ryan had an incredible love for the Harry Potter books and the Lord of the Rings movies, things that he was not embarrassed to share with everyone. In fact he spent most of the deployment trying to convince me to read the books of both series. We also started a marathon of the Lord of the Rings movies in which Ryan spent the entirety of the first two movies telling me the difference between the books and the movies...all six hours of them. We never made it to the third. Ryan was also an outstanding singer and world class entertainer. His rants on most debatable topics were filled with karate kicks and punches, by the way he was also a master of karate.

Ryan was a phenomenal teammate to all of us on 24 and everyone in B co. someone that could be sought out for professional guidance. He was a great friend and mentor for myself as I will be unfortunate to not go through my life and military career without him to critique me, as he did very well, and guide me to be a better leader, NCO, and human being. Though we only knew each other for eight short months it feels as if I have known him my whole life for as close as we became. I consider him one of my best friends I ever had, as he was someone I could talk to about anything. He is a man I emulate to be one day and will sorely miss as well as Andy. We all know you two are at peace now alongside each other. Good-bye to both and please watch over us.

SFC Ryan A Gloyer Tribute by SFC Brian Seidl, 0224 Team Sergeant – Ft Carson Memorial – Dec 8, 2016

.... As for Ryan, I didn't meet him until a few weeks after Christmas (2015) leave, but had heard his name so many times in the team room, I knew he was a solid core within this detachment. He was in an Achilles Dagger class that started right when leave ended. When I did finally meet him, he strolled into the team room in his suit and tie and introduced himself, I'd soon find out that was more of his daily dress than just appeasing the Achilles Dagger Cadre.

Within the months to follow, Ryan would continually display levels of leadership and expertise in his daily duties that I had not seen in an SF operator in quite some time. So when I was asked to provide an AST to represent the detachment up at SOTF, I instantly knew who to send. Ryan was a true master of the basics, and took pride in everything he did, always giving it his all.

Ryan also had a way to brighten any mood, and if you were ever bored, all you had to do was bring up politics, history, policy, war or any multitude of subjects, and Ryan would entertain you with a solid 30 minute rant. He could spin it one way or the other, and it always ended in tears from laughing so hard.

I tried to set a high standard when I took over as the team sergeant of 24, especially with regards to PT. Ryan shattered my standard, leaving me in the dust, not once but multiple times. Again, something I had not seen in an SF operator in quite some time, there are PT studs and then there is Ryan. In his final hours after being five feet from a grenade blast, he still jumped to his feet and ran out of the kill zone of a near ambush in response to our "come to me" callout. He poured his heart into everything he did, constantly leading the way by example, never failing to step up when the occasion called for it.

## **SFC Ryan A Gloyer Tribute – 30-NOV-2016**

By Richard A Gloyer

I would like to thank everyone for being here today for Ryan.

He would be honored and humbled by your presence.

When Ryan was 3, he sang in our church **Angel Choir**.

One of the favorite songs was - "**This Little Light of Mine**".

With an index finger raised to symbolize their light, the children sang:

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine; Let it shine, Let it shine.**

For 34 years, Ryan's light shined like a beacon in the night as he lived life to the fullest.

In paying tribute to Ryan, I would like to remember him for the way he showed his love for us, for his character & talents that made him an exemplary soldier and a special & unique individual.

**From John 15: v12 – This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.**

Ryan demonstrated his love for us in many different ways as a teacher, mentor, leader, entertainer, and patriot.

### **Teacher & Mentor**

Having had the background in teaching school, Ryan was able to easily transition to the development of military training plans.

It was Ryan's dedication to excellence, however, that made the training plans and the classes he taught so exceptional. The subject matter was always delivered enthusiastically, completely & concisely.

As a combat experienced soldier Ryan's advice was frequently sought for various issues faced by his Teammates. Ryan could be counted on to provide thoughtful & meaningful counseling with the individual's best interests in mind.

### **Leader**

Ryan had a passion to become a Green Beret since the day he enlisted. Along the way, he had a couple of set-backs. Ryan did not view disappointments as failures, instead he looked at them as opportunities to improve himself.

He believed that anyone can reach their dream through hard work, the drive to exceed requirements, and possess the discipline, courage, and a never give-up attitude to overcome obstacles.

After almost 10 years and 3 tries at the SF Selection Course, Ryan graduated in September, 2014 and finally donned his Green Beret. On this day, his light shined ever so brightly. By sharing his story, Ryan in essence was encouraging others to never give-up on achieving their own dreams.

In everything Ryan did, he strived for excellence and continuous improvement. In leading by example, Ryan inspired others to raise their level of performance.

In 2010, Ryan was rewarded for his leadership by being inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club for his dedicated leadership, exemplary professionalism, and high standards for excellence.

### **Entertainer**

At an early age, Ryan demonstrated a vivid imagination. He was animated, carefree, and made us laugh with his rag-tag frontiersman, cowboy, Indian chief, and soldier outfits. Even as a child, Ryan marched to the beat of a different drummer.

As Ryan matured, he developed a knack for making his friends laugh with his singing, dancing, impersonations, story-telling, cadence calling, and ranting on any particular topic. When all of these talents were put together, he was quite an act. He had the ability to make you laugh, until you cried.

### **Patriot**

Ryan loved his country. He loved its freedoms and opportunities. From his reading of American History & Military History, he knew how this country was formed, how it was governed, and how it suffered through wars to preserve our way of life.

Ryan had a solemn sense of what was necessary to protect our country. He believed, we were free, because of the brave.

Before Ryan deployed to Afghanistan in June, he told me how much he loved his job and that he was extremely confident in each of his Teammates. He also said he was aware of the dangers in his job, and was prepared for whatever might happen.

### **Closing:**

**From John 15: v13 – Greater Love has no man than this; that he lay down his life for his friends.**

**On November 3, 2016, Ryan lost his life fighting for his “0224 Brothers” and his country. On that day, we lost one of the “Best of the Best.”**

**Our Hearts are broken, and we grieve his loss.**

**We love you Ryan, and we all will miss you so very much; but you will never be forgotten**



In his memory, Let us forever keep the light of Ryan's spirit burning brightly within our hearts.

Let us never forget his enthusiasm for living life to the fullest

Let us never forget his strength of character, standards of professionalism, excellence, & continuous improvement.

Let us never forget how he inspired us to achieve great things & how he how he made us laugh, until we cried.

Let us never forget Ryan's deep love for our country and for his "Brothers",

Let us never forget the ultimate sacrifice he made for our country.

Let Ryan's light transcend beyond ourselves to others; to our children & our children's children; **and through our actions, let us love others, as Ryan loved us.**

**Let his light shine, Let it shine, Let it shine**

**SFC Ryan A Gloyer Tribute – 30-NOV-2016**  
**by Justin W. Gloyer**

Good Afternoon,

As Ryan and I grew up together I copied his actions, mannerisms, and his likes and dislikes. Ryan never told me to back off, or that I was annoying, or that I didn't belong. He took it in stride, and chalked it up to being an older brother. He taught me the meaning of hard work, dedication to physical fitness and discipline, the importance of music and a well rounded album collection, how to have fun, but not at another's expense, and that no matter how tough a decision might be, there is always a right one to make. After Ryan was killed I began searching every picture, memory, and writing I could in fear of forgetting any bit of my idol. In this search I found that Ryan taught me one last lesson through words he had written a little over a year ago but I hadn't felt the full meaning of them until suffering the most difficult loss of my life.

Ryan's final lesson to me, in his words:

"When old people pass they leave behind a life of lessons learned, their legacy, and fond memories with those that loved them. What truly makes this a tragedy is that when young people pass they take with them the future that might have been. So many missed opportunities for them to affect the world around them and leave their mark. I know a great deal of people will be asking themselves; why? Why now? What purpose is there to such a great tragedy? I've been around the world and seen such violence and hatred; I've been witness to unspeakable acts in the name of a religion or a flag. To live a life of hate-fueled action is a life not worth living. For nothing else, let this be a reminder of what it means to live a life of love and joy and choose to love the ones around us every day. Let this be the first day of the rest of my life that I choose love over hate."