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A Purple Heart for a Heart of Gold

AUGUST 24TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

A Purple Heart for a Heart of Gold Jake McGuire is a 2009 graduate from Dexter High School. Shortly after graduation McGuire made the decision to enlist in the army. He could never prepare for what would happen shortly after enlisting.

“I went to basic training in Benning, Georgia from January 24th to May 5th of 2011,” McGuire recalls.

McGuire was then stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas where he would stay for about a month until then leaving for Fort Irwin, California for pre-deployment training.

“The pre-deployment training was fun, but you had to depend on the guys with you.”

Four months later McGuire was deployed to Afghanistan. “It’s a whole different world over there. You don’t know who’s friendly and who’s not sometimes. You have to look after your brothers on the right and left of you because you know they’d do the same for you,” states McGuire.

McGuire got used to the living conditions as time progressed. “We lived in tents, and got one hot meal a day. Sometimes the showers wouldn’t work, so we took a shower every four days if we weren’t doing missions.”

He remembers the day of his accident starting like any other day would. “We had a last-minute mission we had to go on.” McGuire was driving the lead truck and stopped at the first village and did their checks at a point where there was a culvert. Still, everything seemed fine.

McGuire recalls, “We drove closer to the next village. I saw two blast holes, but I went in-between the two. Up ahead a little further there was a hole on the right side of the road, and a little dip in the road. As soon as we hit that little dip our truck shot up in the air.”

“I blacked out and I remember waking up and seeing a lot of dirt in the cab and just saw the sky.”

“I felt like I was falling, so I braced myself and hoped for the best. I then felt the truck crash and I blacked out again.”

McGuire woke up to the guys in the back yelling at him. He was stuck in the fetal position. “I cut my seatbelt off me, and then got pulled to the back by the two guys in my truck. We tried opening all four doors but we were stuck. We were trapped in the truck for probably ten to fifteen minutes.’

Luckily, an Afghan soldier convoy was coming down the road. “They had a wrecker and they flipped our truck onto its side while we were still in it. Finally they broke open the top hatch.”

“My squad leader picked me up and sat me on the ground. All I could think about was how I just knew I was going to be paralyzed.”

They took McGuire to the nearest camp where he was then taken to Germany, then flown back into the states. “I ended up having a concussion, vertigo, broken nose, stitches in my top lip, gash on my jaw line, fractures, and two messed up discs. Besides the two discs, everything else has healed.”

McGuire closes by saying, “I thank God that I’m alive and I was able to make it through this. I am trying to reenlist, but if I can’t because of the medical reasons then I am going to go to college for criminal justice.”

McGuire also said even if he had the chance to do it all over again, he would still enlist in the army because he loves it.

McGuire, deservedly, was awarded the Purple heart in March of 2012.

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