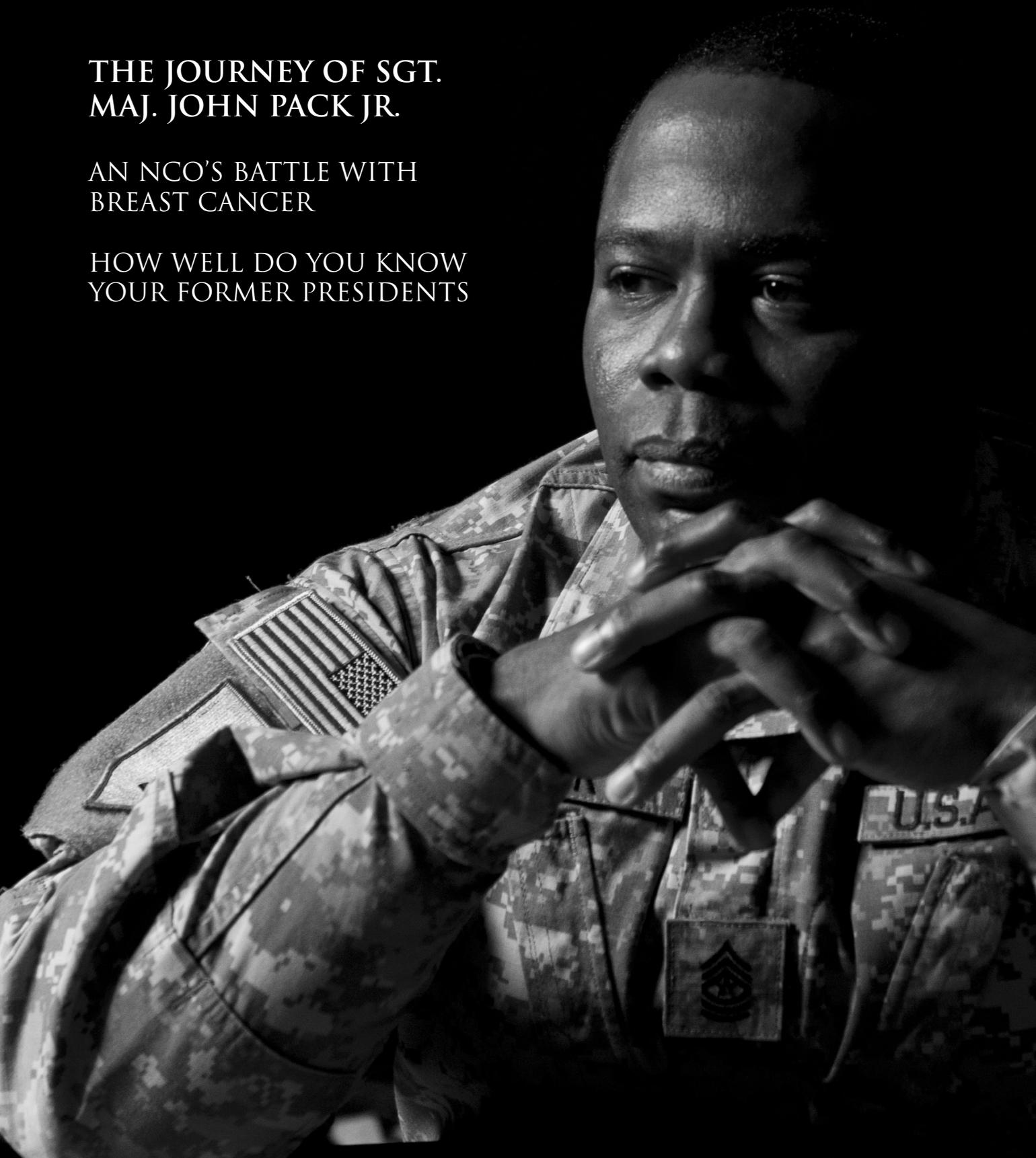


THE FIELD REPORT

THE JOURNEY OF SGT.
MAJ. JOHN PACK JR.

AN NCO'S BATTLE WITH
BREAST CANCER

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW
YOUR FORMER PRESIDENTS



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One NCO on JBLM won the fight of her life. Read about her path to victory and the people who supported her along the way.

Editor's note: With the New Year past us, February offers everyone the opportunity to celebrate lives and personal achievements of others. This month's features focus on the holidays we'll celebrate during the next 29 days. While many of us may believe we know the stories behind these days, we would like to explore these origins a bit further.

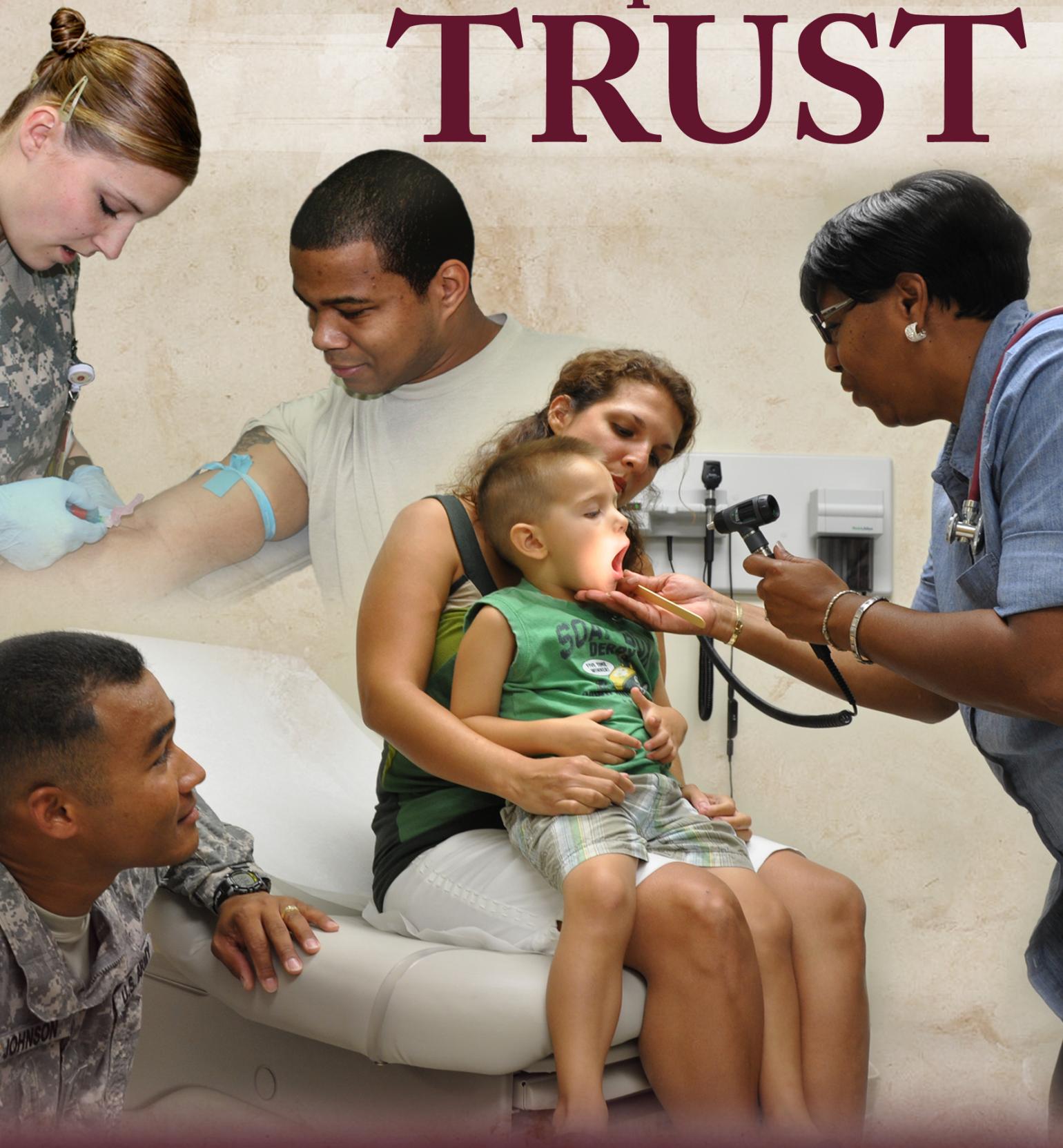
I believe it's important to reflect as to why a month is dedicated to learning and appreciating Black History. The third Monday in February offers that rare moment, where we can celebrate the legacies of the presidents whom are so often criticized while holding the actual office. These stories are always worth reading again.

We are all part of something fantastic and I can't wait to see the progress this publication will experience during the upcoming months. We have a lot more in store for upcoming issues!



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PATIENT APPRECIATION MONTH

February 2011

Grandpa P's Knee

Remember when you were young and your grandfather would set you on his knee and begin a tale with something akin to, "When I was a little boy we'd walk to school, uphill both ways, in a blizzard!"

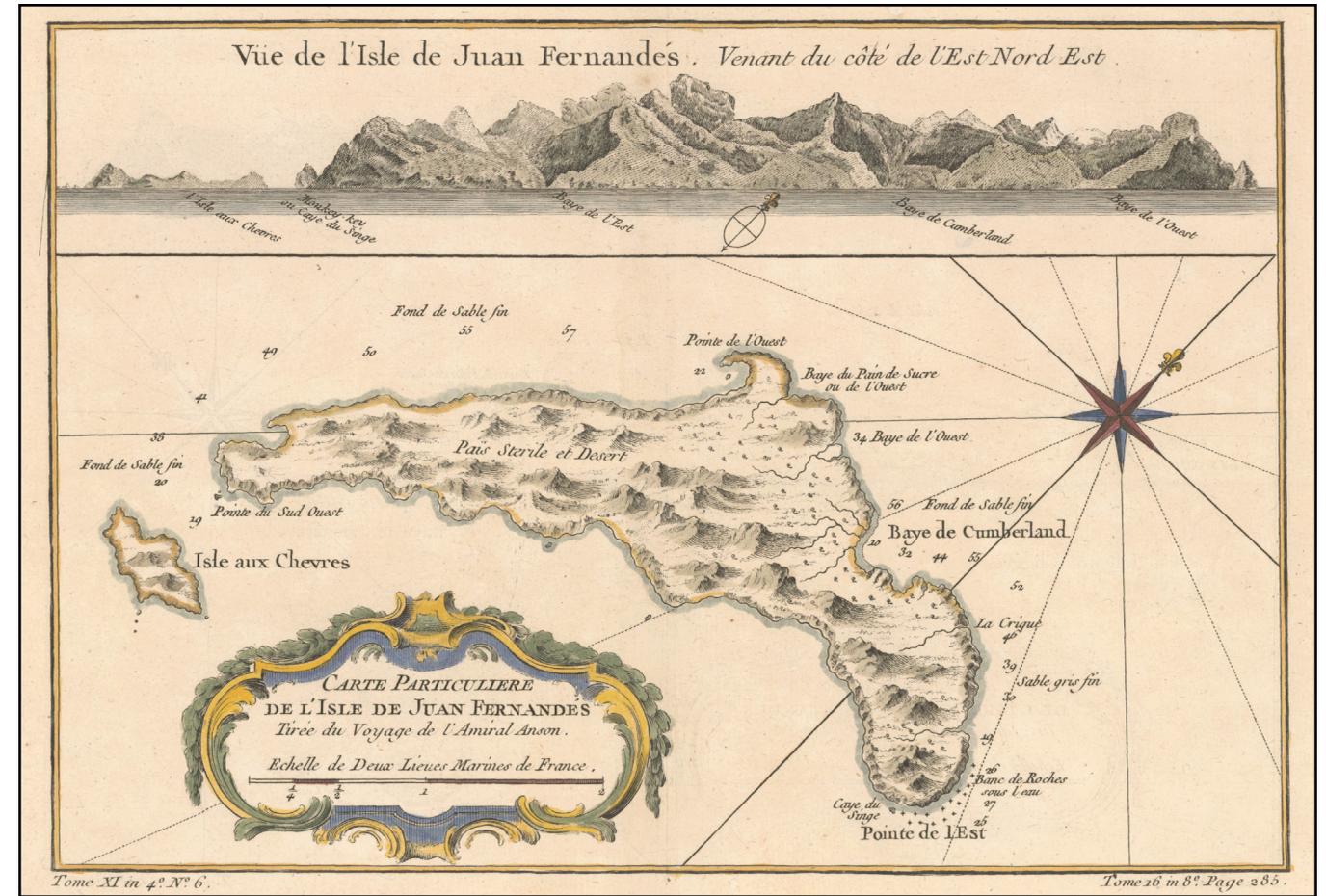
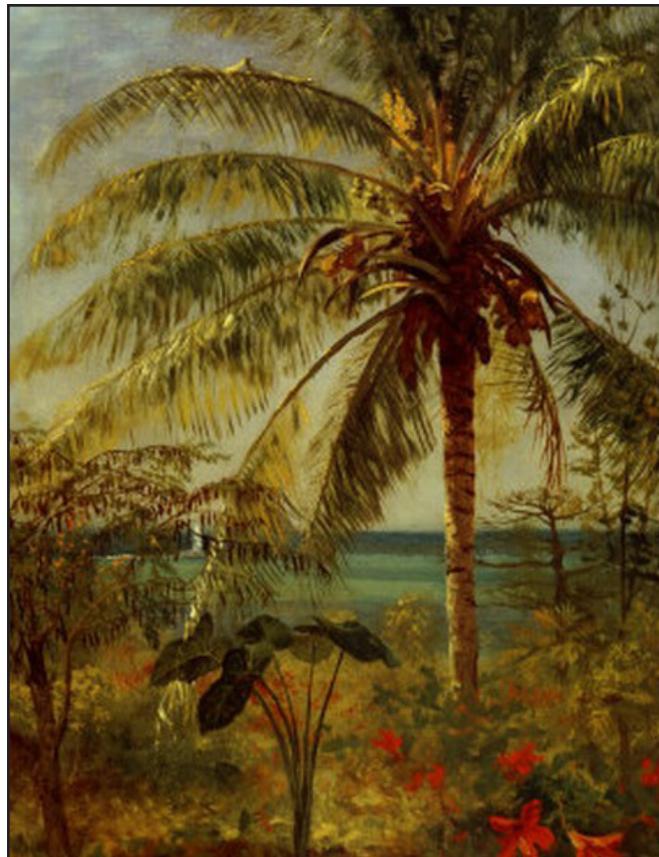


Well hop into your favorite armchair, grab your reading spectacles, and let Grandpa P help you regain a piece of your misspent youth with this tale of human struggle, perseverance, and dare I say? Love of this thing we call life.

Now when I was a little boy, or rather several hundred years before...

This tale begins as so many do, off the coast of an island paradise. A place unsullied by the presence of mankind. Off the island's coast an aging, worm ridden, barnacle infested and weather beaten galley prepares to weigh anchor. The year is 1704 in the month of October. The ship is the privateer vessel Cinque Ports, and a somewhat heated discussion has just concluded. At this point a 28-year-old sailing master named Alexander Selkirk is put ashore. He has just decided to maroon himself on the island and await the next vessel to come by and provide passage home. After imploring his fellow sailors to remain on the island with him, he takes a musket, a bible, some tools and some clothes, he then is put ashore alone. As the vessel raises anchor and sets sails Selkirk has second thoughts and races after the ship until it disappears from sight.

What happens over the next 5 years becomes the stuff of myth and legend...



Selkirk sets up two camps during his time on the island, one near a freshwater source, the other within eyesight of passing ships. His nights are spent sleepless until he domesticates some of the local feral cats to guard against rodents. Selkirk's days on the island are spent hunting, fishing, and reading his bible. During his time he spots several vessels passing, but does not hail them owing to the fact that they are flying Spanish colors. Selkirk is rescued on the first of February 1709 by the Scottish privateer ship Duke. After returning to Scotland Selkirk continues sailing. In 1717 he meets a widower in Plymouth and marries, but his first love remains the sea. On the 13th of December 1721 he succumbs to yellow fever and dies.

After his death Selkirk may have faded into the annals of history as one lucky sailor. However after his rescue several events occur which ensure he is remembered for different reasons. In 1863 the crew of the HMS Topaz travel to the site of Selkirk's marooning and place a bronze plaque in his honor. In 1885 Lady Aberdeen unveils a bronze statue and a plaque of Selkirk on the site of his original home in Lower Largo. However the most significant tribute to the memory of Alexander Selkirk happens in 1719 when author Daniel Defoe writes his classic novel "Robinson Crusoe", which is supposedly based on the accounts of Selkirk's exile.

That's the end of this tale of the sea, and now youngsters, it's time for Grandpa P to rest his eyes, so get lost kids.

10 THINGS I KNOW...

President's Day Edition

MARTIN VAN BUREN

The expression "O.K." as we know it today came to pass during his 1840 presidential re-election campaign. Van Buren was nicknamed Old Kinderhook, after his Kinderhook, New York birthplace, by his supporters. Their chants of "O.K." came to mean "all right."

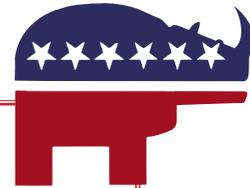


GROVER CLEVELAND

Is Barack Obama really our 44th President? Only if you count Grover Cleveland twice. Cleveland served two non-consecutive terms. He was the 22nd and 24th President of the United States.

MILLARD FILLMORE

In 1850 he became the last American President that claimed to be a Whig. What is a Whig you ask? Think of them like a party: a Republican or Democratic party that is.



ZACHARY TAYLOR

In 1849 he coined the phrase "First Lady" while eulogizing Dolley Madison but it didn't become part of the American lexicon for almost another 30 years. A journalist by the name of Mary C. Ames referred to Rutherford B. Hayes' wife Lucy as the new "First Lady" during coverage of his inauguration and it stuck.

FRANKLIN PIERCE

Quite a few Presidents can thank him for staying warm inside the White House. Pierce had the first central heating system installed in 1853.

FRANKLIN PIERCE

He is also the only President to be arrested while in office. Pierce allegedly ran a woman over with his horse but charges were later dropped due to insufficient evidence.

GERALD FORD

He was the only President in U.S. history that was not elected by the people. Richard Nixon appointed Ford as his Vice President in 1973 to replace his scandal plagued Vice President Spiro T. Agnew. Eight months after being appointed Ford became President when Nixon resigned.



IF I
WERE 21
I'D VOTE FOR
NIXON

JAMES BUCHANAN

It's fair to say that the 1800's were a more conservative time in America compared to the America we know now. It's fair to say then that the 15th President was ahead of his time and our time for that matter. James Buchanan never married making him the one and only bachelor President.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON

He died in office barely a month into his tenure as the 9th American President. He was the first President to die in office.

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

Legend has it that he got stuck in the White House bathtub the first time he used it soon after his inauguration as the 27th President of the United States. He had to have a bigger tub installed.

Fighting Chance



“Cancer is not a death sentence.”

-Sgt. 1st Class Rowena A. Brown

Story by Sgt. Ashley M. Outler | 28th Public Affairs Detachment

When she joined the Army she knew there would be many challenges ahead, with some that would put her life at risk. What she didn't know was that the enemy threatening to take her life would be living inside of her.

After a seemingly routine check-up in mid-2005, Sgt. 1st Class Rowena A. Brown received a heart wrenching phone call informing her that a cyst in her right breast contained cancer cells.

“Even after all this time I remember it really well,” said Brown about her reaction to the diagnosis. “When they told me I listened, and boom that was it,” she said holding back tears. “I knew that the hard part would be telling my family.”

The moments after receiving the news were filled with even more anxiety as she desperately tried to get a hold of relatives and loved ones, none of whom were reachable.

“When I wasn't able to get a hold of anyone, I jumped in the car and just drove and drove. I had nowhere to go but wanted to get my mind off of it,” she said.

Brown, who is a single parent, had an especially difficult time sharing the news with her daughters Brittani Brown and Ke' Aundra Davis-Brown.

“I panicked, I cried; I didn't know what to say or do,” said Brittani who was 11 when her mother was diagnosed.

Through doubt, confusion and pain Brown remained faithful that it was not her time.

“Cancer is not a death sentence. People can say that it's a deadly word but you continue living. You can't give up and feel hopeless,” she said.

Brown, who grew up in Los Angeles, described her children as the biggest motivation for survival.

“I didn't have a choice, I had to be okay for the sake of my kids and as long as I'm here I'm going to fight for them,” said Brown, whose office space is riddled with photos of her children. “I wanted to be there when they graduate high school and to see them grow-up.”

Her diagnosis was followed by several painful surgeries that are still not complete.

“Losing a part of my body was hard but I am still here and I could always look at that,” she said about her mastectomy. “I see it as an experience that I can share with others to help them.

In spite of her ongoing struggle, Brown remains devoted to her children, her friends, family, Soldiers and the responsibilities of her job as the noncommissioned officer in-charge of logistics for Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, I Corps.

“I'm thankful that God gave me another chance to be here and that I'm able to watch my kids grow up because anything could happen at any given time,” said Brown who watched her daughter Brittani, who is now 18, graduate from High School this year.

Her experience with breast cancer brought her to a local support group called Sisters of Hope in Tacoma, where she shares her story and offers support for others.

“I have always had compassion for people and not because of their illness, just because they are people,” said Brown. “We never think of certain things being of great importance until we have encountered it ourselves. I look at life differently. It helped me realize those things that are taken for granted.”



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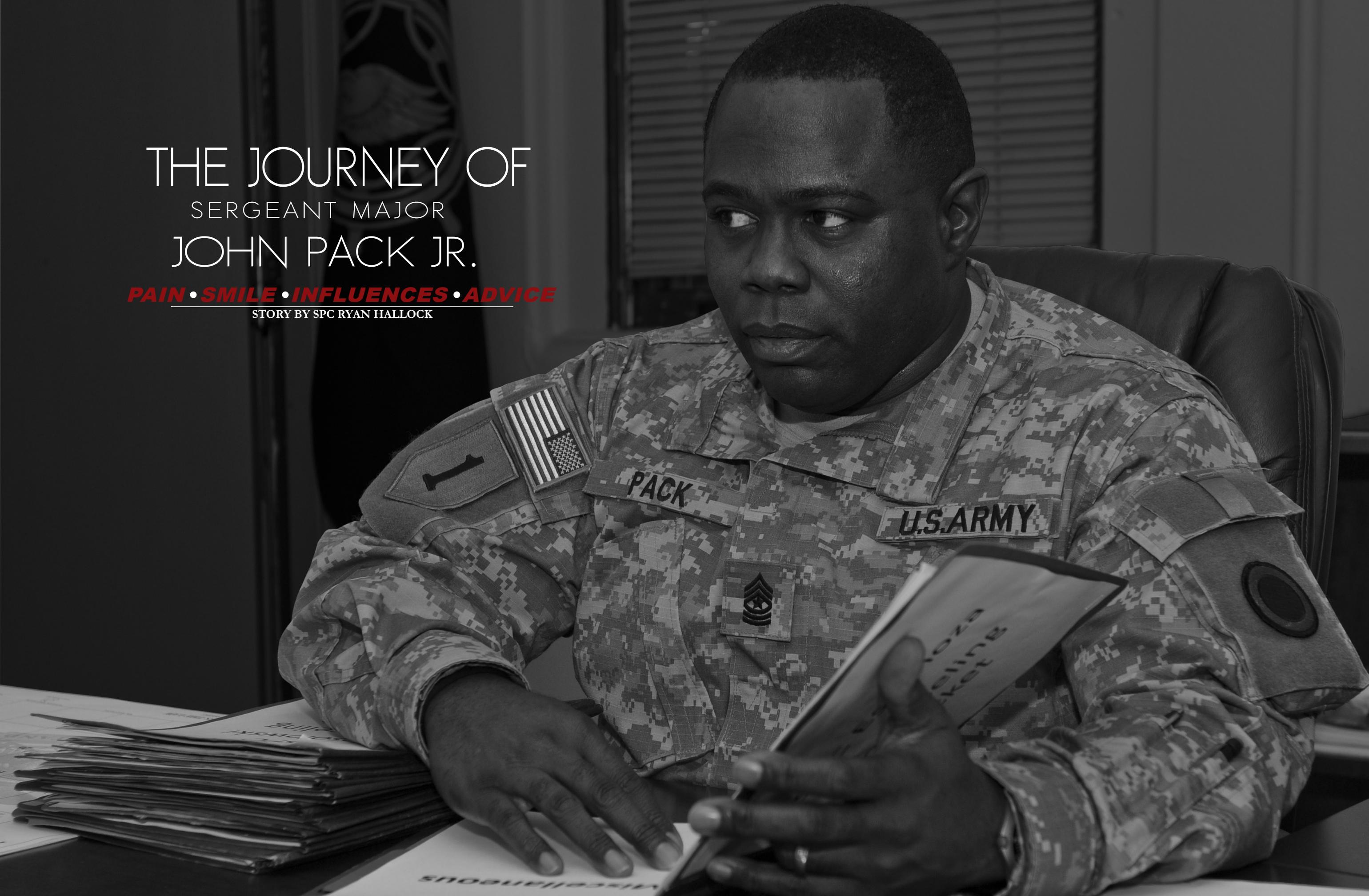


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THE JOURNEY OF SERGEANT MAJOR JOHN PACK JR.

PAIN • SMILE • INFLUENCES • ADVICE

STORY BY SPC RYAN HALLOCK



EARLY ON

Philadelphia, April 1968. Nineteen-month-old John Pack Jr. sits in front of a television that's broadcasting the news of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. He says it's a faint memory but one that stands out and will be with him forever.

King preached unity during one of our nation's most divided times. Times when the color of your skin determined where you lived and what school you attended.

"I am a huge admirer of him," says Sgt. Maj. John Pack Jr., of the late civil rights leader. "He preached equality but more importantly he talked about being able to go out there and educate yourself. I think education is the equalizer. I tell my kids that all the time. It will open up doors when people see that you are intelligent, that you are respectful."

Pack hasn't always been at the top. People haven't always stopped what they were doing when he enters a room, and he hasn't always had what he would consider a normal family life.

However, it's been a steady stream of positivity from family members, leaders and major influences that have inspired him to continue to lead Soldiers after 27-years of service. These prominent figures in Pack's life have carried him through ups-and-downs, and helped him progress to the top wearing a smile on his face.

BRONX LIFE

Pack started to run with the gangs in New York near his neighborhood. It wasn't going to be the path that he took for too long after moving to the Bronx as a child. His mother Lutitia Pack wouldn't stand for it. His father Johnny Pack, a Vietnam veteran who retired from the Marine Corps, wasn't always there for him growing up but his mother was. After his parents divorced, Pack and his mother left to the Big Apple where she taught him the ideals and values that make him the

man he is today.

"My mom was a big, big influence for me," says Pack. "She instilled discipline."

Life in New York for Pack was new and exciting as his mother immersed him in different ethnicities.

"At that time in New York I got an opportunity to be exposed to it all," says Pack. "Sometimes if we seclude ourselves... You don't get the opportunity to have an open assessment of everybody as human beings."

Despite of the positive cultural atmosphere, his mother made the decision to separate her son from the negative influences of the projects nearby and send him to Wilmington, N.C. to live with his grandmother.

"Unfortunately, she couldn't afford to move," says Pack of his mother, who worked as a nurse for the city and stayed behind as her son left for better opportunities.

DOWN SOUTH

Two-to-three per bed and sometimes no heat were the new living conditions. Pack moved in with his grandmother and six other grandchildren.

"A lot of times there wasn't food," says Pack. "My grandmother, she did the best that she could but when there was food we ate, but when there wasn't

"THE REAL LIFE EXPOSURE TO DEATH AND SUFFERING IS SOMETHING THAT HUMBLER AND MAKES THE NORMAL AND MUNDANE STUFF IN GARRISON SEEM SILLY."



food you just had to basically fend for yourself."

"One day in Wilmington I was looking inside of a McDonald's," Pack recalls. "I was so hungry. Kind of looking at people as they were eating. There was a family at the table and I was on the outside. I didn't have the money to go in there. I was sitting there looking at this family. To me that was what I would call normalcy. I saw the dad; I saw the mom; I saw the two kids."

Pack was far removed from a normal family life growing up but he did have his uncle to guide him. At this point in his life his uncle, who retired from the Marine Corps, was a big influence for him; teaching him what it takes to be a man, a human being, and to treat people with dignity and respect.

"I got a lot of encouragement from my uncle," says Pack. "If you work hard and you're smart, there's nothing you can't accomplish in life."

Pack left the McDonald's without a Big Mac and an empty stomach. As he headed home, a car of young hooligans sped by and launched a chocolate milkshake on him.

"At first I was just mad," says Pack of the milkshake drive-by. "Then I got kind of happy because the milkshake, it was cold and it was sweet. I started smelling the milkshake and licking a little bit of it."

That day in Wilmington, drenched with the cool, sweet chocolate milkshake, Pack lived a life lesson his uncle instilled in him.

"What it taught me was that in life you don't take anything for granted," says Pack. "Regardless of where you are in life, you have a responsibility to treat people with dignity and respect. It's about being positive, being able to stay calm and keeping a smile on your face."

With the lows of adolescence also came the highs of high school. Wilmington hometown hero Michael Jordan was three years ahead of Pack in school. He got to see the would-be basketball legend play the game once and it left a great impression.

"Everybody who was at that game kind of figured out that he was going to bring a lot of fame, a lot of recognition to the town," says Pack of Jordan. "I look up to him because he made it a reality by showing if you have a good work ethic, if you apply yourself... No dream is impossible to reach. It's just how much do you want it."

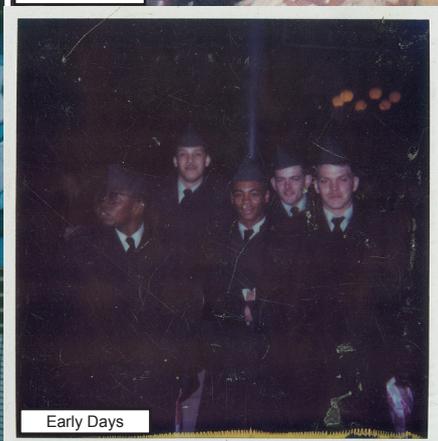
Pack applied Jordan's work ethic throughout his military career leaving him at the top just like one of the greatest players to ever play the game.

UNCLE SAM

Pack enlisted in the Army during his junior year of high school and entered the military service in 1984. He had positive leadership from the get go to guide and mentor him as a young Soldier. He learned from Staff Sgt. Burton Keyser what it takes to be successful. He taught Pack it takes showing up for work at five a.m. before the formation gets there and being prepared to go home late.

"He taught me how to be a leader at the small unit level," says Pack of his former platoon sergeant. "He taught me how to be a Soldier, but he also taught me how to be a man. I just look at how he was as a leader and it just had a big impact on me because he was focused. He was committed to his wife."

Pack attributes the success of his marriage to his wife Lis Jepsen Pack to Keyser's family life. He also attributes his success and progression to important influences throughout life's journey. Leaders like Command Sgt. Maj.



Arthur Peete.

"He set high, high standards," says Pack of his retired mentor. "He wasn't a guy you liked in the beginning. When I first met Sgt. Maj. Peete, I hated him. I told him that and we laugh about it now. If I saw him in the PX or if I saw him in the Commissary I went the other way."

However, the hatred soon turned

"THERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYBODY TO HAVE A LIFE IF YOU APPLY YOURSELF, AND YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THE WORLD IS NOT FAIR"

to admiration once Pack saw the standards and the level of discipline that Peete enforced, which impacted his career and his development as a leader.

"You can't progress in the Army unless you're willing to come in and work hard," says Pack.

His battle buddy Col. Robert J. Lehman can attest to Pack's work ethic after working together in the I Corps G4 transportation shop.

"He's driven," says Lehman. "He has that tenacity, that initiative."

"I'm sure if you find him today he's not just sitting at a desk. He's doing things all the time, morning, noon and night that are always in the interest of the command and the Soldiers."

Lehman calls him the "quiet professional."

"He's quiet but he's not shy," says Lehman. "He's not bringing a lot of lime light on himself, but he's getting it done."

It's that exemplary mentality and leadership style, which Pack's consistently displayed, that got him selected for what would be his toughest deployment. He wasn't supposed to go. His wife and chain-of-command told him he didn't need to go, but when a two-star general makes a phone call to get the guy he wants for the mission, the rest is history, divine intervention as Pack refers to it.

"It was a hard deployment," says Pack who served as the first sergeant for the 66th Transportation Company. "Every time we went out we knew we were going to get hit, and that's pretty much what happened. We either got hit with an IED or we got shot at."

Two of his Soldiers were killed in action during the deployment and eight were wounded. He had six Soldiers receive Purple Hearts

"I will never forget the two Soldiers I lost in combat nor the eight who were wounded in action," says Pack. "The real life exposure to death and suffering is something that humbles and makes the normal and mundane stuff in garrison seem silly."

"The hurt, the pain, the loss of Soldiers," Pack says was the toughest part. "I had tears running down my face. I didn't know where I was going to get the strength. I felt like throwing up my hands and saying I quit."

Though down, he didn't throw in the towel. God spoke to him that day in Iraq at a time when the pain neared victory.

"You're going to make it through this," Pack remembers God saying to him alone in his hooch. "The lesson I take away from this all is that God guides all. I think God is a big influence for all of us."

When his mother passed away in 2008, his mentor and friend Command Sgt. Maj. George R. Manning was there to pick him up, literally.

"Get in," yelled Manning from his vehicle as he pulled up beside Pack. "Call your commander and tell her you're going to be with me the rest of the day."

Manning saw his friend was hurting and took him to breakfast to talk about



SGM Pack with his daughter

life.

"He was there at one of the most pivotal points of my life when I felt like the whole world was against me," says Pack. "I felt like just saying I want to retire."

It was the positive influences in Pack's life that coached, taught and mentored him to success.

SERGEANT MAJOR

"It's a privilege and an honor to serve as a sergeant major," says Pack. "To whom much is given, much is expected. It's not about you anymore. You've made it to the top."

Rising to the top comes with influences along the way. He admires Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice more for their character than their race. It's their intelligence and confidence that inspire him.

"When you are confident in your skill sets the race thing seems to tend to go away," says Pack.

Confidence is what Pack attributes success to. It's a positive attribute society can gain by studying black lead-

**"YOU CAN'T PROGRESS
IN THE ARMY UNLESS
YOU'RE WILLING TO
COME IN AND WORK
HARD."**

ers of our past and present.

"Looking back at Black History, I think it's important that we look at, in regards to as an American society, how we were back then to ensure that we never, ever go back to that type of mentality," says Pack. "I think you have to look back at the past and see how each of the different ethnicities, to include white, have had an impact on who we are today as a society."

Have an open mind. That's what his mother instilled in him.

"I guess I'm an example of that because I'm in a mixed marriage," says Pack. "My wife, she's from Denmark and my kids are mixed, so they have a mixed heritage."

He's been married for 23 years and has two daughters, Marcella, 19, and Natalia, 12. That normal family eating together in McDonald's all those years ago is his today.

"He's a fun guy," says Lehman. "He's a real gentlemen and he's got a great sense of humor. He's got a beautiful family, and you can just tell he's got a heart of gold."

He's been all over Europe, all over the world, met ambassadors, senators, and presidents. So when is he going to hang up his hat and call it a day?

"Sergeants Major always say when you stop having the love and it's not fun any more it's time for you to retire," says Pack. "I still love it. I still enjoy it. I love Soldiers. I love the military, but I know in the next couple of years it's going to be time for me to move to the next phase."

Pack wants to make it an even 30 years of service before he transitions into a life dedicated to giving youth the promise of what he's been exposed to throughout his career.

"There's an opportunity for everybody to have a life if you apply yourself, and you have to remember the world is not fair."

So if you get a chocolate milkshake thrown at your face and you couldn't afford one from McDonald's, don't write it off as a cruel act, lick off your free dessert. Pack did.

TFR