

# MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

*Proudly Honors*



## STERLING WILLIAM WYATT UNITED STATES ARMY *as* PURPLE HEART PATRIOT DECEMBER 2024



*Honoring Their Son's Service and Sacrifice  
Sherry and Randy Wyatt  
Sponsored by: Columbian Chapter, NSDAR*

Born September 4, 1990,  
to Sterling R. "Randy" and Sherry (Hawk) Wyatt  
Died July 11, 2012, in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan



While interviewing Sherry and Randy Wyatt, they shared loving memories of their family trips that made an impact on their sons Sterling and Chandler's lives. Sterling was very active in his church youth group where he was the operator of the soundboard at First Baptist Church. Sterling also achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, Troop 706, as well as first-degree Black Belt in Taekwondo.

When asked what led Sterling to go into the military, his father responded, "First of all when we were in Washington, D.C. as a family, we went to the International Spy Museum, and as we left we did like most people and stopped at the gift shop. Sterling decided to take with him at this young age, he was 10 or so, there was this

little book called "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu, which was by a famous war strategist. "So the reason for the trip to Washington, D.C.," continued his mother, "it was Memorial Day and we couldn't find a hotel room, so we ended up staying in Old Alexandria, and unknown to us it was the opening of the World War II monument. Just serendipitous! And the other spark was we went to Disney World in Orlando." Randy was already there and Sherry and the boys traveled on September 10, 2001. "So we were in the middle of "A Bug's Life" when at 9 a.m. 9/11 happened." "And they ushered us all out quickly," said Randy. Sherry continued, "Chandler was too young to realize what was going on; 4 or 5, but Sterling was old enough to realize something bad" had happened. So time went on and he had just finished his first year of college and he came to me and said

“Mom, I want to do something more meaningful. I’m going to finish college, my education, but I’m going to do it on my GI bill.” Oh my God! So we talked about the different services and he decided on the Army. So he finished his first year of college and he wanted to do something meaningful, and that was serving our country.”



*Randy, Chandler, Sherry, and Sterling Wyatt.*

His parents went on talking about Sterling’s accomplishments in scouting and earning his Eagle Scout and how it was beneficial in joining the military.

When attending Oakland Jr. High School, Sterling participated in an exchange program with Japan and the City of Columbia, learning the language and culture. Laughter was shared when Sherry told of Sterling’s involvement in the “Zombie Apocalypse Club,” an exclusive club where members shared all things fun, but stood up for all things right. Sterling found a passion for helping those who were marginalized or chastised by fellow students. He graduated from Rockbridge High School in 2009 and completed his Certified Nurse Attendant certification at the Columbia Career Center. After high school graduation, he took classes from Moberly Area Community College and worked at a convenience store near their house.

Sterling joined the U.S. Army in November 2010. He was assigned as a Gunner to the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington (Jan 2011). His unit was deployed to Afghanistan in December 2011 for Operation Enduring Freedom. While Sterling’s father spoke, “Sergeant Boyd would give Sterling a bunch of trouble because Sterling enjoyed interacting with the Afghanies, having tea with them and he started taking notes to learn the language. And he would get into trouble for spending time with them.”

The event leading up to Sterling’s death as told by his parents was, On Wednesday, July 11, 2012, while patrolling in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, Sterling and his unit were in a Stryker vehicle making a secret movement in the middle of the night. They were one man over; there was supposed to be a driver and 12 men in the back, but they had 13. Sterling was tall and trim and they had been sleeping, so one of the guys offered him the floor to lay on. So when the vehicle ran over the IED, his body took the full impact of the

blast and was killed immediately. The other men in the vehicle survived feeling survivor’s remorse. The Wyatt’s still keep in touch with Sterling’s team and their families routinely getting together to share memories as a way of healing. The Wyatt’s often receive handmade cards and letters from the families and have adopted the children as their own grandchildren.



Sterling was promoted from Private First Class to Specialist four days prior to his death. He has been awarded the Purple Heart Medal (posthumously), Combat Infantry Badge, Medal of Valor, Bronze Star, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with campaign star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon, NATO Medal, and Certificate of Achievement.

Sterling was known for his quick wit, kind heart, loyalty to his friends, and ability to pick people up who were feeling down or sad. Because of his dedication to his country and community, he has been honored through the following actions and dedications.

- Sterling Wyatt Scout Memorial Scholarship Pancake Breakfast with Boys Scouts Troop 706. Fundraising is every year in October and is open to the public for donations.
- Old Highway 63 Roadside Park was renamed Sterling W. Wyatt Park in November 2023. He worked at the Bee Line Convenience store (now Timberlake Engineering) which was close to his residence. City Park with flag plaque with all Boone County Veterans' names killed.
- St. Louis (MEPS) Military Entrance Processing Station on July 17, 2014, had its ceremony room dedication named after Sterling. This was where Sterling took his oath for the Army. "When people take the oath, he or she is going against their own wants and desires for a higher calling. Specialist



- Sterling Wyatt epitomizes the spirit of self-sacrifice and sense of purpose." said Marine Col. William Reinhart, Western Sector United States Military Entrance Processing Command commander.

- U.S. Postal Service (511 E. Walnut, Columbia, MO) dedicated to Specialist Sterling William Wyatt Post Office on May 3, 2019. Spc. Wyatt's dedication to serving his county and community is a testament to his faith and loving parents, Sterling "Randy" and Sherry Wyatt.

