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Fallen Augusta County Marine remembered by foundation


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By BOB STUART
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As soon as he could walk and talk, Daniel Morris wanted to serve in the military.

“He talked about the Navy from the time he was in kindergarten,” said his mother Carol Moneymaker of Staunton. “He knew he would go in the military.”



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Young Daniel showed his maturity. As a Wilson Memorial High senior, he worked three jobs and played trumpet in the high school band.

After graduation, Morris joined the Marines, training at Parris Island, S.C. and was sent to Iraq as a Lance Cpl.

And four years ago today, the 19-year-old Wilson Memorial High School graduate died after finding a landmine in a car while on duty in the Al Anbar province of Iraq.

He was awarded the Purple Heart for his bravery and sacrifice.

Now, the Travis Manion Foundation of Doylestown, Pa., is honoring Morris' memory.

Mike Walsh, the foundation's director of development, said the foundation's goal is to encourage disabled veterans to perform community service in memory of a fallen veteran.

The family of late Marine Corps officer Manion started the foundation after he was killed in Iraq in 2007.

For the next several months, retired Marine Corps Sgt. Dwayne Malone will volunteer at the Smith Recreation Center in Fort Benning, Ga. in honor of Morris.

And each month, Malone will send a 500-word update on his service to Moneymaker.

Malone was struck by a car and disabled after returning home from Iraq. Malone had to learn how to walk and talk again, Walsh said.

"Our motto is to honor the fallen by challenging the living," Walsh said.

Walsh said the opportunity the foundation presents for disabled veterans is also important.

"You can't imagine how many people join the military and get hurt in a year or two," he said. "The challenge is to find gainful employment, get into an educational program or commit to charity work."

Walsh said veterans learn new skills and stay busy.

Moneymaker said it is gratifying to know her son's service is being remembered.

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“That somebody actually remembers my son and that people I don’t even know think about him means a lot,” she said.

Moneymaker said it is still difficult for her to think about her son. She said her mother remembers Morris by releasing balloons on the anniversary of his passing, and on his birthday.






After her son’s death in 2007, Moneymaker told The News Virginian that, “As a mom, you know, I was afraid for him. But he was determined and I raised him to make his decisions.”

She said her son hoped to serve in the Secret Service once his military days were over.

“When he got out he wanted to join the Secret Service and protect the president. That was his long-term dream,” Moneymaker said.

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