



KENTUCKY HEROES
Soldiers honored for service in Iraq.

18



WINTER STORMS
Guard battles ice and snow.

20



SOUNDTRACK FOR PROGRESS Red Bull band goes to Iraq.

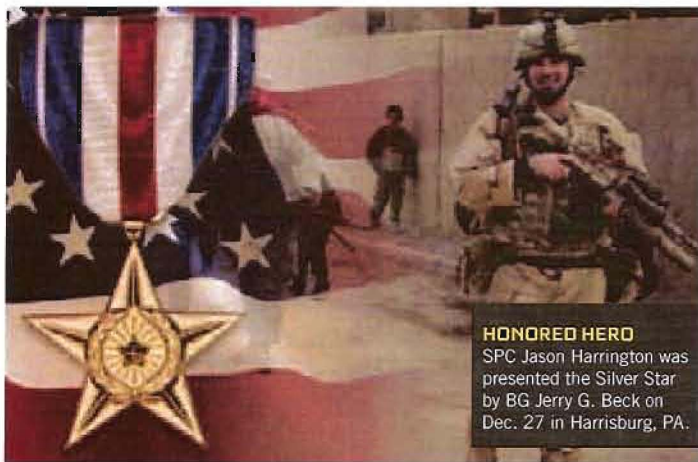
24



PRESERVING FREEDOM Guard active in historic inauguration.

28

THE SILVER STAR IS THE THIRD-HIGHEST DECORATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES, AFTER THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS AND THE MEDAL OF HONOR.



HONORED HERO
SPC Jason Harrington was presented the Silver Star by BG Jerry G. Beck on Dec. 27 in Harrisburg, PA.

Honored For Heroism

SILVER STAR AWARDED TO PENNSYLVANIA SOLDIER

By SGM Walter S. Zapotoczny / HARRISBURG, PA

TRAINING IS WHAT GOT SPC Jason D. Harrington into Iraq, and training is what got him out alive.

"I was just doing what I had to do," said Harrington, who was presented the Silver Star in a ceremony held in Harrisburg, PA, on Dec. 27. "I think any other Soldier would have done the same thing," he added. His actions were credited with saving the lives of fellow Soldiers during an incident in Iraq in September 2005.

Harrington joined the Pennsylvania National Guard to pay for college after graduating from high school in 2000. But once

he had completed all of his individual training, "I was kind of itching to go over there," Harrington told his hometown newspaper, the Lancaster (PA) *Intelligencer Journal*. He got his chance in June 2005, when he was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 172nd Armor, as a member of a long range surveillance and sniper team.

On Sept. 19, 2005, three of Harrington's platoon members, including his platoon leader, were attacked with an improvised explosive device (IED).

According to his award citation, Harrington immediately volun-

teered to be part of a reaction force to respond to the scene. Along with another platoon, he left his base and moved into a known high-threat area with little friendly presence.

As the two Humvees in his group were moving to the scene, the vehicle in which Harrington was riding struck an IED, tearing off the front of the vehicle. "I was pretty fortunate to be able to walk away from that," Harrington told the *Intelligencer Journal*.

Disoriented from the explosion, not knowing the extent of his own injuries and suffering from a possible concussion, Harrington's training took over. First, he physically checked the crew in his Humvee for injuries. "There were 10 of us in my Humvee, and we all walked away," Harrington told the *Harrisburg Patriot News*.

out of the vehicle. Harrington helped a medic begin first aid on the wounded platoon sergeant.

With both Humvees now disabled and without communications, Harrington grabbed a radio out of his bag and established communications with headquarters. "If I had not had my radio, who knows what would have happened," Harrington told the *Patriot News*.

After the recovery effort was completed, he again assumed additional risk to himself by helping sweep the unsecured area for insurgents. According to his award citation, "SPC Harrington's calm under fire and personal courage were directly responsible for saving lives on a day when many more lives could have been lost."

Harrington, who left the Guard in 2006, is only the third 28th Infantry Division (ID) Soldier to

"SPC HARRINGTON'S CALM UNDER FIRE AND PERSONAL COURAGE WERE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING LIVES." >> Silver Star award citation

After everyone was checked, he exited the destroyed vehicle and began to engage the enemy positions, fully exposed to small arms fire.

The platoon sergeant hooked a tow strap to Harrington's vehicle and began to pull it away from enemy fire. At that point, both Humvees were struck by a second IED, knocking the platoon sergeant

be awarded the Silver Star since World War II.

"The Silver Star is not something that is given out lightly," said BG Jerry G. Beck, the 28th ID commander, who described Harrington's actions as "a real hero's story."

"Every day, I know how lucky I was to make it out," he told the *Patriot News*. **GX**