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Use of Foley Civic Center for Purple Heart Repatriation

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Good afternoon,

Before the Christmas break, Foley High Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) was contacted by a parent of one of our cadets about some WWII paraphernalia found in an abandoned storage facility in Elberta, Alabama. Turns out, the items found included a Purple Heart, an unfolded American flag, and letters belonging to a fallen Marine killed in action at Iwo Jima. The cadet corps decided to take on repatriation of these items with next of kin as a community service project. Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Justin Henson, whose father is in possession of the items, was selected as the project leader.

Cadet Henson spent numerous hours searching databases to fully identify the fallen Marine. As a result of his searches, he learned the fallen Marine was Samuel Lewis Brock, born 11/10/26 in Amarillo, TX and was killed in action February 28, 1945, at Iwo Jima. Pvt Brock was buried at Memorial Park Cemetery in Amarillo, TX.

Armed with this information, cemetery staff was contacted and was able to reach Pvt Brock's next of kin, providing them with contact information for Foley AFJROTC.

Lonnie Brock, Pvt Brock's younger brother who currently resides in Amarillo, TX, told us that Sam was only 17 years of age when he volunteered to enlist in the Marine Corps. He explained their mother was against Pvt Brock enlisting but reluctantly signed parental consent. Pvt Brock enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1944, turned 18 in November of the same year and was KIA three months later.

AL-791 at Foley High School, Foley, AL is planning a repatriation ceremony to present the Purple Heart and other coveted items, located in an abandoned storage unit in the local area, to the family of Private Samuel Lewis Brock on February 21, 2016, the place and time to be determined. Because this was not a planned event for this year's calendar, we lack funding to procure a venue worthy of the occasion and therefore, request the approval of the Foley mayor and council to use the facility for approximately four hours, February 21, from noon to 3:00 pm. News outlets have begun to highlight our story so the expectation is for nationwide focus on Foley. Your assistance would be a win-win for the school, the AFJROTC program, and the City of Foley.

The family has already made arrangements to travel to Foley for the event; traveling will be Private Brock's brother, Lonnie Brock, wife Avis, along with their two daughters and son. The family has expressed immense gratitude to AL-791 cadets for all they've done to make this event worthy of the ultimate sacrifice Private Brock made in service to his country.

Foley High AFJROTC is soliciting support from the community to assist with this and other projects that focus on community service as well as citizenship. AFJROTC is an incredible program and our mission is "To develop citizens of character dedicated to serving their nation and community." AFJROTC works to teach important skills and reinforce personal traits to help make students successful in life, no matter what type of career they choose following high school. Our goal in AFJROTC is to develop self-confidence, discipline, respect for authority, a good fitness regimen, lasting friendships and a sense of belonging to something larger than themselves. The repatriation of such coveted items to the Brock family epitomizes what cadets gain from participation in AFJROTC.

Use of the Foley Civic Center would allow us the space to accommodate Foley citizens and others who would like to pay their respects to the Brock family and witness this historic well-meaning event! Thanks in advance for your

consideration of this request.

Please contact me should you have additional questions or concerns.

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