

Patsy Hess

Aunt to Scott Althaus

(Althaus is cousin once removed to 2nd Lt. Thomas Kelly, Jr.)

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A testimonial to the Project Recover team attending Heaven Can Wait Family Reunion

To: Pat Scannon, Eric Terrill, Mark Moline, Drew Pietruszka, Harry Parker

Men of great character are limited these days. However, six men with whom I recently shared time, easily led the way. In a group of nearly one hundred, you, graciously, greeted and spoke with most of those present. Over and over you greeted, repeated your stories, answered, probably the same questions, and discussed, probably the same subjects. Each time was as if you were doing it for the first time. In fact, it was the first time . . . for the listener . . . and you must have known that.

Over and over you received thanks and praise for your job, what you had accomplished for all there. Again, you received it all so graciously and humbly. Understanding your accomplishments are monumentally vital to someone else or a lot of "someone elses" and not letting it become overwhelming to your ego is a rare quality. You do not seem to exhibit any inflated egos or haughty demeanor. The immense respect you show seems to be the essence of your very being.

You might have expected that, after having told your story, answered the same questions half a dozen times, you might have included a sigh, a slight eye roll, or even an eye or mouth twitch saying "Okay, I will tell it . . . AGAIN!" After dozens and dozens of times, never an excess exhalation, ocular movement, or tic. Watching from across the room, I observed real smiles, concerned faces speaking with eye contact and riveted attention, with no concern to head off to someone or somewhere else. A rarity, today. Not only at the event, but upon breaking into your private enclave in the hotel common area, and again at breakfast, you remain true to self, exuding grace. Amazing!

With the recent change of name from Bent Prop to Project Recover, I am assuming your "Why We Do It" remains the same. I imagine it will. It should be required reading for all entering adulthood, not just in regards to POW/MIAs, but as a guide for self-examination and a blueprint for life in general. It seems that the essence of the men for whom you search has implanted itself into you, the searchers; time not altering the character sought by those who seek.

Thanks so much to Project Recover for all you do, have done, and will do. So grateful for the privilege of meeting you and spending time with you.