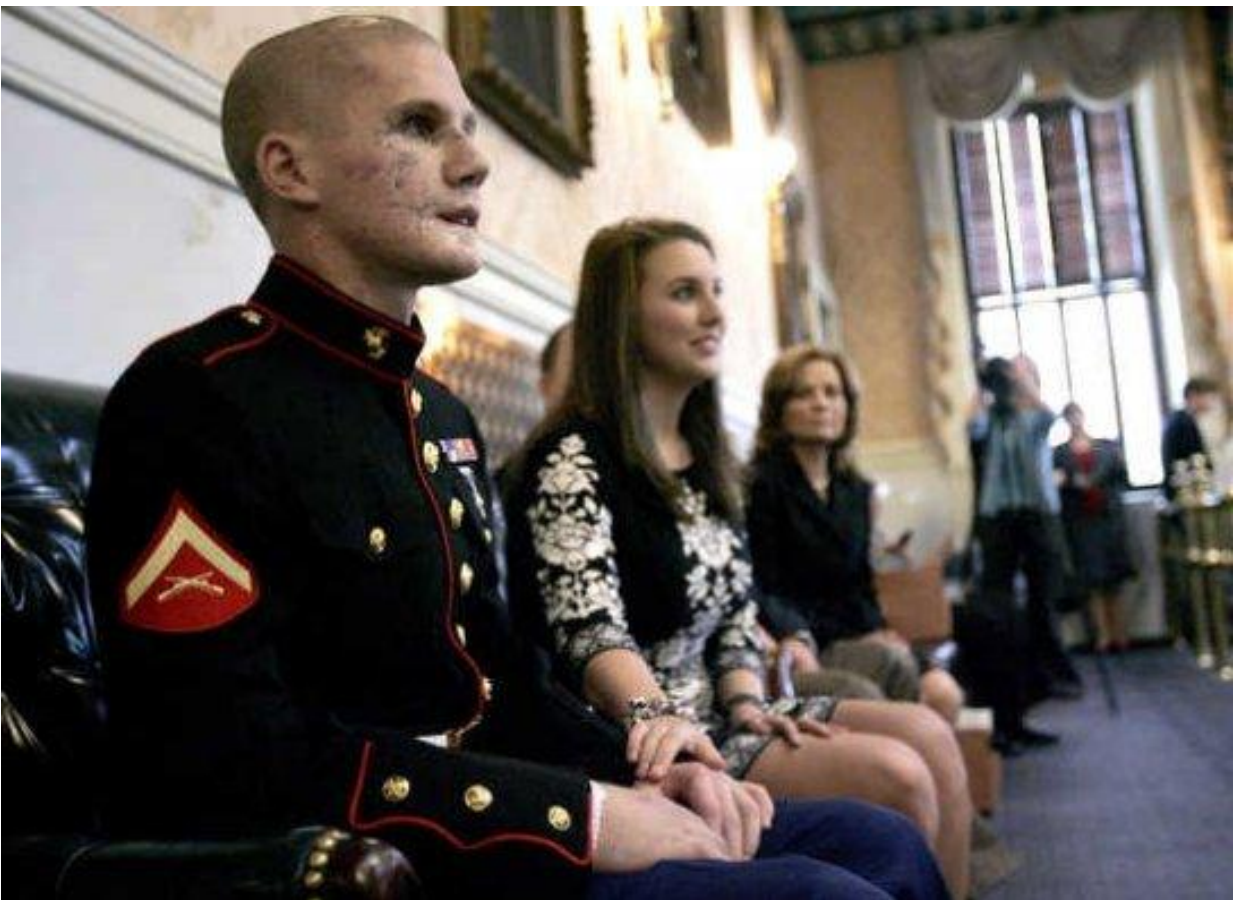


Marine Lance Cpl. William Kyle Carpenter Honored

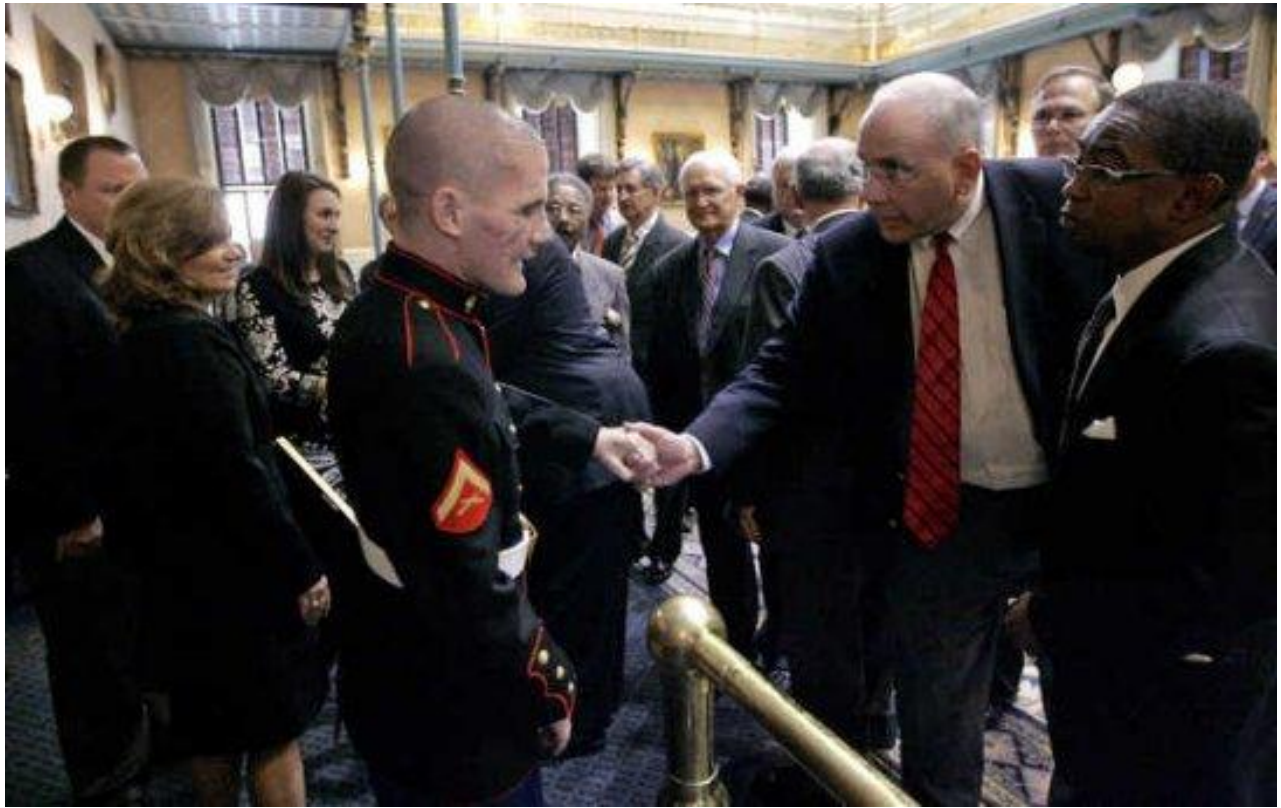
Received: April 4, 2011

Posted: April 5, 2011

In a society that too often uses the term “Hero”, I pass this along to put things in the proper perspective.



Marine Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, gets support from his fiancé Jordan Gleaton, in the state senate chambers, where Sen. Jake Knotts, R-Lexington, presented a proclamation honoring Marine Lance Cpl. William Kyle Carpenter



Marine Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, flanked by his parents, Robert and Robin Carpenter of Gilbert, recounts his experience of being injured in a combat zone in Afghanistan during a press conference Wednesday at the statehouse.



Marine Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, flanked by his parents, Robert and Robin Carpenter of Gilbert, laughs during a press conference.

Jordan Gleaton helps her fiancé, Marine Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter with a sip of water after a press conference.



See Military.com Story at, <http://www.military.com/news/article/marine-corps-news/heroic-marine-honored-.html?ESRC=marinenews.RSS>.

Marine Lance Cpl. William Kyle Carpenter, his face missing an eye and crisscrossed with deep scars, stood on the floor of the S.C. Senate on Wednesday to receive the thanks of his state. Carpenter, 21, of Gilbert lost the eye, most of his teeth and use of his right arm from a grenade blast Nov. 21 near Marjah, Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

Friends and family say he threw himself in front of the grenade to protect his best friend in Afghanistan, Cpl. Nick Eufrazio. Carpenter just remembers seeing the grenade. Then a white flash. Then a fellow Marine telling him he would be fine. Then, four weeks later, he woke up in a hospital in Germany. "The second I woke up, I saw my family by my bedside," he said.

The Senate resolution noted Carpenter “suffered catastrophic wounds in the cause of freedom” and “has shown himself worthy of the name Marine.”

Carpenter shook almost every senator’s hand - with his left hand - after the reading. He said his experience was nothing unusual in war. People back home, worried about the economy and gas prices, he said, should remember Marines and soldiers are still being maimed and killed. “The light is on me right now,” he said. “But I’m hoping what happened to me will help remind people that things like this happen every day and people don’t see it. I’m proud of what my fellow Marines have done there and are doing there now.”

Helmand Province is one of the most dangerous places in the world. Carpenter and a 12-man squad from his 9th Regiment, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, were on patrol outside Marjah. They were in the fifth month of a seven-month deployment. They were in a village they called Shadier, between two other villages they named Shady and Shadiest. They had been in hard combat, he said, as the Marines were pushing out farther from their base, expanding the territory they controlled. “For two days we had been hit pretty hard,” he said. “We moved into (enemy) territory, and they didn’t like it.” He was fighting on a rooftop when the grenade hit. “I took 99 percent of the blast,” he said. “But one little piece of shrapnel got by me and went into (Eufrazio’s) brain.”

According to Sen. Jake Knotts, who sponsored and read the proclamation, Eufrazio suffered a serious brain injury and is recovering in Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. He is now speaking and talking. Carpenter also spent most of his recovery time - which so far has included 25 surgeries and more than 100 hours of physical therapy - at Bethesda. There, he said, he was inspired by the other patients, many of whom had no legs or no eyes or no arms. “I’m lucky,” he said.

Knotts said that Carpenter has been nominated for the Medal of Honor, adding, “And I think this kid deserves it.” But Carpenter said that, “people saying they are proud of me is enough.”

That doesn’t surprise his 20-year-old fiancé, Jordan Gleaton. “I haven’t heard him complain one time,” Gleaton said. “I would be a mess.” “It’s been a tough three months,” she added. “I don’t feel like I’m 20 anymore.”

Carpenter’s parents, Robert and Robin Carpenter of Gilbert, say they are proud of the way their son has handled his horrific injuries. They call him “our miracle.”

This is a far cry from the way you Viet Nam vets were received. Thanks for your service.