

*Letter
from
Michal Scott Speicher*



CAPTAIN MICHAEL SCOTT SPEICHER, USN (deceased)

Michael Scott Speicher was born 12 July 1957 in Kansas City, Missouri, the son of a World War II fighter pilot. His family moved to Jacksonville, Florida when Scott was fifteen and Scott attended Nathan Bedford Forrest High School, now Westside High School. After completing a degree in accounting and business management at Florida State University, Scott joined the United States Navy and attended Aviation Officer Candidate School at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida. His wife Joanne and he were parents to two children.

Lieutenant Commander Speicher flew A-7 Corsair II's and F/A-18 Hornets and was assigned to FVA-81, Cecil Field. During his deployment aboard USS Saratoga his plane was lost 17 January 1991 during the first mission of Operation Desert Storm.

Scott Speicher became the face of those missing during times of war not only from his home town of Jacksonville, Florida but to many around our nation. The efforts of his family and "The Friends of Scott Speicher" brought national attention to efforts to bring military missing in action home. The story of his days between 1991 and 2009 are shrouded in mystery. Much of the efforts to recover Scott from Iraqi are detailed on the internet.

On 13 August 2009 the remains of Captain Speicher arrived at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and his interment took place at Memory Gardens in Orange Park.



The message below is shared by Scott Speicher's friend and fellow pilot, Dennis Gillespie, in effort to bring reality to the service of the U.S. Military with the plea for support for the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial.

I AM CAPTAIN DENNIS GILLESPIE, USN RETIRED. I SPEAK FOR MY FRIEND WHO CANNOT SPEAK FOR HIMSELF, OR THE 560,000 AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY.

LETTER FROM LT. SCOTT SPEICHER, USN

- HOW MUCH CAN ONE MAN GIVE TO HIS FAMILY, HIS FRIENDS AND HIS COUNTRY
- HOW MUCH GRIEF AND EMPTINESS IS THERE WHEN HUSBAND, FATHER OR SON WILL NEVER COME HOME AGAIN
- HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO REMEMBER THE ENORMOUS PAIN, SUFFERING, LONELINESS AND HOPELESSNESS A WARRIOR ENDURES TO DO HIS PART TO FIGHT FOR THE FREEDOM WE ENJOY
- THESE SACRIFICES NEVER END.....EVER...IT WAS MY JOB AS A NAVY CARRIER STRIKE FIGHTER PILOT
- FROM THE MOMENT I TAXIED TO THE CATAPULT, I KNEW THAT THIS WAS REAL...THIS WAS NOT TRAINING FOR A GAME..THERE ARE NO GIMMIES OR DO-OVERS

- AT FULL POWER, AMID THE FLAMES,
THUNDEROUS NOISE AND VIBRATION WHEN I
SALUTED TO BLAST DOWN THE CAT TRACK I
KNEW THAT IT MAY BE THE LAST TIME
I LIVED AMONG FRIENDS....AND WAS FREE
- AIRBOURNE, JOIN UP, INFLIGHT REFUEL..NO
TIME TO THINK OF FAMILY OR HOME.
...AHEAD JUST DANGER..AN ENEMY WHO WILL
DO ANYTHING TO STOP ME
- AS I WATCHED MY RADAR, LOOKING FOR
FIGHTERS..I LISTENED TO AWACS FOR THE
DEADLY THREATS AHEAD
- ONCE OVER ENEMY TERRITORY, THERE IS NO
TURNING BACK..AS MISSILES AND GUNS TRAIN ON
ME THERE IS NO TIME TO WONDER IF I WOULD BE
REMEMBERED, OR WHO WOULD CRY FOR ME
- MY HEART POUNDED MY BRAIN IS RUNNING
AT SUPERSONIC SPEED..MISSILES LAUNCHED
AT ME..GUNS FIRED AT ME .EXPLOSIONS AND
FLAK EVERYWHERE..I WAS ABSOLUTELY
ALONE...WEAPONS ARMED AND READY, GOD
DONT LET ME BE A COWARD...DONT LET ME
FAIL..THE TARGET IS IN SIGHT
- MISSILES AWAY..TURN AND CLIMB..EYEBALLS
OUT.....I MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED..I BEAT
THE ODDS AND SUDDENLY A HUGE

THUNDEROUS CRASH, FLAMES EVERYWHERE,
MY BLOOD EVERYWHERE

- AT 40000 FEET, AT 600 KNOTS I HAD NO CHOICE..EJECT OR DIE
- THE BLAST OF AIR WAS HORRIFIC, BATTERING EVERY INCH OF MY BODY, RIPPING OFF MY HELMET..BREAKING ARMS AND LEGS..BLOODIED..PAIN IN EVERY INCH OF MY BEING
- THE LONG DESCENT IS AGONY, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.. NO FRIENDS BELOW, TORTURE, SUFFERING AND DEATH.....AT GROUND IMPACT I UNBUCKLED MY CHUTE..GOT MY GUN..AND RAN TO COVER..HOW LONG CAN ONE HIDE FROM A COUNTRY OF SOLDIERS WHO WANT TO PUNISH AND KILL YOU
- BE QUIET..DONT MOVE..DONT BREATH..CLOSE YOUR EYES AND PRAY...GOD SAVE ME PLEASE..TAKE ME HOME....BACK TO MY FAMILY...I HAVE TO SURVIVE
- SCREAMING MEN APPROACH, KICK, PUNCH, SPIT..YOUR FREEDOM IS GONE..YOU ARE A PRISONER...YOU WILL NEVER SEE HOME AGAIN..BLINDFOLD, CHAINS..THIRST..HUNGER FOR AS LONG AS IT LASTS..FOR SOME A QUICK

DEATH IS MERCIFUL ,...NOT
ME..ENDURE...SURVIVE OR DIE IN A DESOLATE
CELL

- ALONE..ALONE..ALONE..DOES ANYONE
REMEMBER ME..WILL I DIE HERE AND BE
DUMPED IN A HOLE
- DAYS, MONTHS, YEARS GO BY....NO
LETTERS..LITTLE FOOD..NO HOPE
- ITS OVER...GOD, WHERE ARE YOU TODAY..I
HOPE PEOPLE DONT FORGET THAT I EVER
LIVED.

THE LUCKY GET BACK..CHANGED
FOREVER..NOTHING IS EVER THE SAME

- WIFE, CHILDREN AND PARENTS HAVE
ENDURED WITH YOU, NOT KNOWING IF YOU
ARE DEAD OR ALIVE
- HOW MUCH DOES A MEMORY COST..HOW
LONG DOES IT LAST
- WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE FUTURE
GENERATIONS REMEMBER YOU AND FEEL
YOUR PAIN AND SUFFERING, AND
UNDERSTAND THE COST OF FREEDOM,
BOURNE BY MILITARY FAMILIES.....WHAT CAN
YOU DO TO REMEMBER THAT WE LIVED,...

AND WERE FREE, BEFORE WE GAVE UP OUR
FREEDOM....AND LIVES FOR YOU

- THIS PROJECT OF RESPECT AND HONOR
STARTED BY PICKING UP STICKS AND RAKING
LEAVES AT THE ABANDONED FORMER CECIL
FIELD MEMORIAL PARK LAST YEAR. IT WAS
NOT ENOUGH.. EVERY PERSON IN THIS
NATION OWES THESE MEN AND FAMILIES THE
LOVE AND RESPECT TO REMEMBER..AND
KEEP REMEMBERING..FOREVER. ITS NOT
ABOUT MONEY..IT IS ABOUT HONOR...ITS
ABOUT COMMITTMENT..ITS ABOUT
COURAGE..FOR THOSE WHO KNEW THEY
WERE GIVING EVERYTHING..THE MOMENT
THE CATAPULT FIRED. I GAVE EVERYTHING
THAT I HAD..FOREVER.
- IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REMEMBER,
EDUCATE AND HONOR
- IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR JACKSONVILLE TO
LEAD THE WAY TO LEAD THE NATION
- I AM A MEMORY FROM THE PAST...ITS TIME
TO BELLY UP TO THE BAR AND MAKE THIS
HAPPEN.