

Thought for the Week: Monday, May 28th, 2012

Memorial Day 2012

Honoring those brave men and women overseas who are putting their lives on the line to defend our country has become a Global Financial tradition. Although we feel a strong sense of commitment to the trust our clients have put in our ability to oversee their investments, nothing compares to the dedication and sacrifice put forth by our armed forces.

This Memorial Day, we highlight Capt. Barry Crawford who recently received the rarely awarded Air Force Cross for coordinating airstrikes and medical evacuations during a 14-hour Afghan firefight.

As a barrage of bullets erupted around him during an attack by 100 enemy snipers, Capt. Barry Crawford Jr., an Air Force combat air controller in an Army Special Forces unit, watched as his own radio antenna was shot off “inches from his face.”

In spite of this, he continued to evacuate soldiers who had been wounded in battle and provide cover for US Special Operations Forces during a May 2010 helicopter assault in the violent mountainous region east of Kabul.

In the 14-hour-long firefight that ensued, Captain Crawford’s unit was ambushed and pinned down in the open by “multiple enemy fighting positions, some as close as 500 feet away and occupying the high ground.

Crawford was on the ground in the thick of the fight, coordinating air cover and fire between Air Force fighter jets, Apache attack helicopter strikes, and the Army US Special Operations Forces positions.

“Without regard for his own life, Captain Crawford moved alone across open terrain in the kill zone to locate and engage enemy positions with his assault rifle while directing” strafe attacks. He also called in fighter jet runs along with 500- and 2,000-pound bomb and hellfire missile strikes.

The Air Force Cross is one of the service’s top military commendations for bravery; it is second only to the Congressional Medal of Honor.

It is only the fifth time the medal has been given since the 9/11 attacks. Crawford, who spent eight years on active duty before joining the Maryland Air National Guard last June, is the third living recipient of the award since America’s decade-long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began.

