

For God and Country

MILWAUKEE (November 20, 2003) – Sometimes expressed without a sense for the true spirit of the saying and exploited for commercial gain, the words, “For God and Country,” have found a rightful place in the motivations of three young men. For Luke Peshman, 19, and brothers Ian Anderson, 18, and Alex Anderson, 17, service to country is not only a career path, it is a calling.

“I felt like it was something God would want me to do,” explained Alex as he spoke about his decision to enlist in the Army. As he spoke, brother, Ian, and friend, Luke, nodded their heads in agreement. Home-schooled and surrounded by the love of Christian families, the three have an obvious vision of becoming men of principle. They view service in the Army as a building block, a step in the journey toward that goal. The reassuring remarks of Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Pat Dolan helped to cement their decision to enlist, explaining that God’s Will was present in their decision. Staff Sgt. Dan Wirsing of the Menasha Recruiting Station also inspired Ian, Alex and Luke by sharing that he considers God to be his best friend. Such input has helped the young men realize that they can love God and the duties of the uniform.

The three also share a sincere love for their country. “I have wanted to serve my country, make a difference, since I was little,” said Ian. Luke agreed, speaking of his enlistment, “this is something I always felt I should do.” But, the principled young men with clear expectations for themselves, may never have enlisted without a boost from Alex, the youngest of the three. Alex explored the Army’s job options with Wirsing and then Station Commander of the Menasha Recruiting Station, Sgt. 1st Class Steven Jansen. Then, he phoned his brother, Ian, who was working for their father’s business in South Dakota. Motivated by his brother’s call, Ian drove overnight from South Dakota to go to MEPs with Alex the next day. Luke would join them too, following a call from Alex. Of no surprise, Alex hopes to participate in the Army’s Hometown Recruiting Program.

Ian and Alex will receive advanced individual training as Airborne Calvary Scouts where they will jump out of airplanes instead of piloting them even though both brothers are working toward their private pilots licenses and have already soloed. Ian has a future interest in Warrant Officer Flight Training while Alex has expressed interest in languages and journalism. In whichever direction they go, they will add to what are already well-rounded backgrounds. Alex

is an accomplished musician and both Alex and Ian are certified scuba divers, well-traveled, versed in Latin, and skilled ballroom dancers.

It is a ballroom dancing class where Ian and Alex first met Luke three years ago. In contrast to the two brothers, Luke describes himself as someone who never talked about leaving home. “I wasn’t the typical 18-year-old who wanted to leave my hometown after high school.” But, it appears that Alex spotted a quality recruit before Luke had much of a chance to contemplate life after high school. Luke will receive advanced individual training as a Calvary Scout.

The vision of service to God and country would not be complete without the contributions of Wirsing and Jansen. “I wouldn’t want anyone else as my recruiters,” affirmed Ian. “Both have been an inspiration to the boys, especially to Ian,” said Louise Anderson, mother of Ian and Alex. In fact, Ian was so impressed with Jansen – the person he is – that he said he hopes one day to be like him.