

CHRONICLE

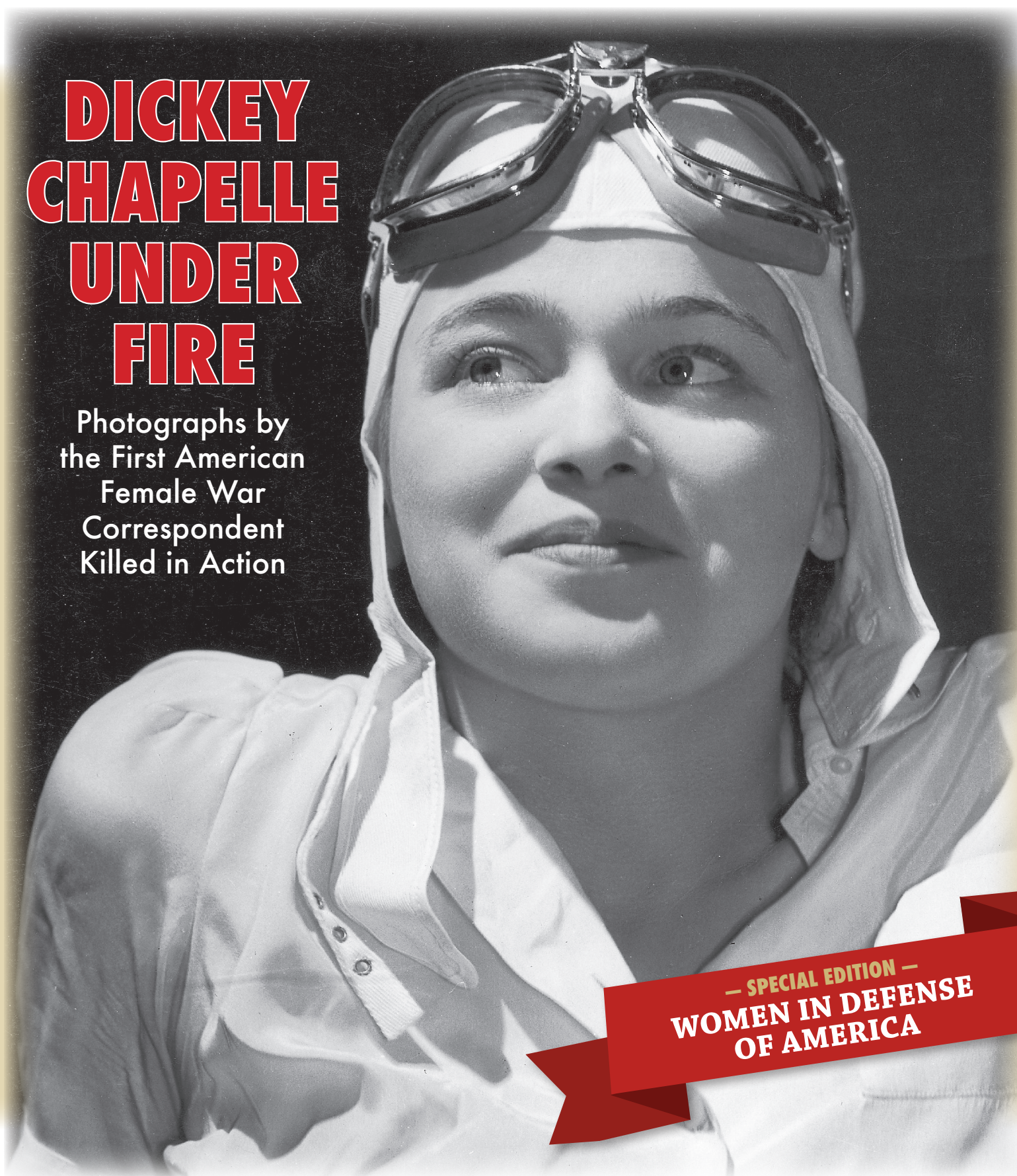
The Newspaper for Veterans and All Who Love Them.

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DICKEY CHAPELLE UNDER FIRE

Photographs by
the First American
Female War
Correspondent
Killed in Action



— SPECIAL EDITION —
WOMEN IN DEFENSE
OF AMERICA

“The worst nightmare I ever had about Vietnam was that I had to go back. I woke up in a sweat, in total terror.” — *Oliver Stone*

By John H. Tidyman, editor

PTSD. What a terrible casualty of war. It is silent and relentless. One of its worst symptoms is the inability to sleep.

Drugs can induce sleep. Same with booze. Neither eliminates the symptoms, and both can be detrimental to health.

We can be sympathetic, but sympathy can't help our wounded warriors. Their nights are not blessed with deep sleep; many know that going to sleep means going to the land of nightmares they can hardly describe.

There is nothing new about PTSD. In America, some troops come home from war confused and frightened. They are unable to live normal lives. A tragic number of those veterans commit suicide. Many more will.

It is the wound that hides, the wound that never heals.

The rest of the country, notably the VA and the health community, didn't officially recognize or attach



a diagnosis of PTSD until 1980.

On August 3, 1943, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton slapped a soldier who was hospitalized for psychoneurosis, accusing him of cowardice.

Patton understood war, but he didn't understand the many wounds suffered by his troops.

PTSD is not completely curable,

but the symptoms can be alleviated. Transcendental meditation has had notable success and appears a worthwhile treatment.

So does a normal sleep, when bodies and brains are recharged.

When Scott Armbruster called, we were interested. His company, Armbruster Enterprises, Inc., de-

signed Sound Pillow. He said his patented Sound Pillow goes a long ways to helping veterans sleep better.

Oh, yeah, Scott? Tell us more.

The more he talked and answered questions, the more interested we became. When he asked if he could send a sample, our thoughts went immediately to a close friend who suffers PTSD. He was a medic in Vietnam, attached to the 101st Airborne Division. Being twenty years old and having to stuff the guts back into the stomach of a comrade ... I can't imagine the horror.

By all means, we said, send it.

You might not believe our friend — whom we'll call Doc — suffers PTSD. He is articulate, kind, generous, and retired. A loving father and grandfather.

That's Doc's sunny side. He hopes that is the only side you see.

His shadowy side is marked with alcoholism, a fear of travelling

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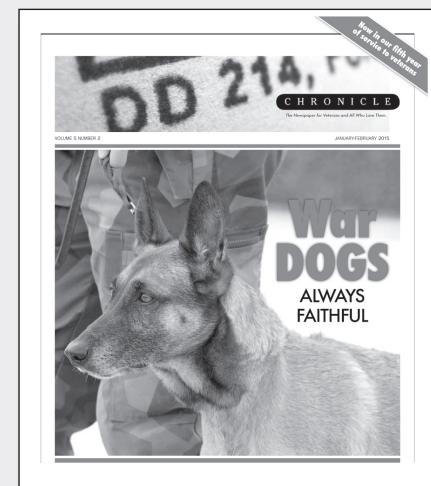
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across county lines, only moderate success with psychotherapy, drugs for his condition, and nights filled with sleeplessness and fears, both natural and unnatural.

So Scott Armbruster sent us a Sound Pillow.

We first talked with Doc's wife, also a longtime friend. We talked about Doc, of course, but we also talked about her and the effects of loving a man with PTSD.

It's not easy.

She didn't hesitate when we told her what the Sound Pillow was designed to do. She said, "What the hell, we've tried everything else."

Her remark reminded us the pain and confusion is not limited to its sufferers; its effects on friends and loved ones are different, but there just the same.

So off we went to see Doc. Our sales pitch couldn't have been more brief. We told him the pillow was not a magic pill, but something that might help. Talk about your easy sale.

Inside the box were the pillow and the player, which is a small, rectangular box with a few arrows. The control box doesn't have to do much: turn it on, enter the music file, change the music or sound tracks, and raise or lower the volume. Very nice pillow, too, designed so the user can't feel the speakers inside.

Doc didn't know it until he read the accompanying literature, but it turns out the pillow has been used by lot of troops who suffer PTSD. More important, it has been, for many, successful in what it seeks to do: Provide a device that promotes healthy sleep.

He said he would try it that night.

Another folder in the box had results and ratings from troops who used it. The numbers aren't high enough to qualify as academic research, but they are noteworthy.

The pillow was tested in Wounded Warrior detachments in Tampa, San Antonio, and Minneapolis. Couldn't ask for better test subjects than Marines.

In each test, volunteers used the pillow for two weeks, followed by detailed interviews. In one review, consisting of 19 reviewers, more than 20 percent rated the overall experience as excellent. Another 50 percent-plus thought it was good. Twenty percent thought it was satisfactory and rest thought it was unsatisfactory.

More than 70 percent said they would recommend it to others.

Back to Doc. He tried it for ten days before we stopped by and asked him for his review.

The first couple nights, he said, the pillow helped, but not much. Instead of throwing it out, he kept at it. By the sixth night, he was convinced.

One of the best features is, he said, "I'm not afraid to go to bed."

Doc sleeps six to seven hours every night. He is freed from the horror of nightmares. He used to get up every four or five hours for a cigaret and glass of cheap whiskey. Today, the only reason he gets up in the middle of night is to take a leak.

He hopes he'll be able to enjoy uninterrupted sleep for an extra hour. That might sound like a trivial goal to most of us. But coming from an old combat medic, it makes perfect sense.

R. Scott Armbruster - CEO
Sound Pillow®
1123 Patricia
San Antonio, Texas 78213
Phone: 877-846-6488
Fax: 210-798-2210

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"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat. You ask, what is our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea, and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs - Victory in spite of all terrors - Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival."
— Winston Churchill

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