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ANNUAL

CHEVY CHASE
IN OUR 09.01.2011 ISSUE



MRS. CONGENIALITY
OUR INTREPID REPORTER SHOWS THAT IT'S
NEVER TOO LATE TO BECOME A **BEAUTY QUEEN**



› AUGUST 01, 2012

AMERICAN WAY

AMERICAN AIRLINES + AMERICAN EAGLE

BE THERE
Navy vs. Notre Dame
LIVE
from Dublin (Page 42)

Born Tough

JEREMY RENNER
is the perfect
torchbearer for the
Bourne franchise

+

Spend a weekend in
one of DFW's best-kept secrets:

GRAPEVINE, TEXAS



PLUS

This soccer ball
can light up your life
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TWICE MONTHLY



Walking Tall

THE OTHER DAY, I was at my friend Scott's house and I saw something there that was decidedly not Scott. Sitting on the hearth was a pair of genuine Army combat boots. Now Scott's a patriot — of that I'm well aware — but other than sneakers and flip-flops, I didn't think he had a thing for shoes. Something else must have been at play.

"Did you enlist and forget to tell me?" I asked.

"No, those are from the Boot Campaign," Scott replied.

"The Boot Campaign? What's that?" My question was the exact question that the combat boots and the Boot Campaign were designed to elicit.

"I'm glad you asked," Scott said. "These five Texas women started a grassroots movement a couple years back that tries to raise money and attention for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. You're supposed to wear your combat boots to work or to fancy functions so that people ask you about them. Or I guess you're supposed to keep them perched on your fireplace so that editors ask you about them."

I stared at the boots for a few more moments. "Brilliant," I said as Scott went into the other room. "Absolutely brilliant," I said again, this time to the boots. I decided I wanted to know more about this campaign, and I wanted to participate, which I clearly did, as you can see by the picture above. I thoroughly love drawing attention to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Coast Guard and Marines. We've covered soldier initiatives extensively in *American Way*, and the Boot Campaign is the next magnificent measure that we're thrilled — nay, proud — to highlight, as well as what some companies, like SKYY Vodka, are doing to get the word out about the boots (see page 22).

While researching the Boot Campaign, I revisited all of the pro-military initiatives that American Airlines supports and sponsors. I've long said — even before becoming the editor of *AW* in 2008 — that American Airlines is the most patriotic airline in the sky. And I'm even firmer in my stance today. There are so many pro-military programs — in addition to the philanthropic work that AA does with other charities, like Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Miles for Kids in Need, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Something mAAgic Foundation — that I don't know where to begin. And of course, there is Operation: Grandma Sally, an initiative started by AA passenger Lorri Briggs of Parkland, Fla., where travelers are encouraged to buy a meal for a service member in uniform either at the airport or onboard. (See "Air Mail" in the Sept. 15, 2011, issue of *AW* for a more detailed explanation and to read comments

from passengers who've responded to the call to action, and turn to page 14 for an update.) Visit Joinus.aa.com/military to see why you made the right choice for your travel needs. The patriotic choice. After all, it's no wonder AA is the official airline of the USO. Which brings us back to the boots.

I reached out to Sherri Reuland, one of the five women who started the Boot Campaign in 2009. Sherri is the real deal. Speaking about how the five women, dubbed the Boot Girls, came together to start the Boot Campaign, she says: "We were a group of friends who read Marcus' story. It woke us up. We wanted to find a new way for people to show and act on their patriotism."

Marcus is none other than Marcus Luttrell, a Navy SEAL who was the lone survivor of Operation Redwing in 2005 in the mountains of Afghanistan, and is the author of *Lone Survivor* and *Service*. He and three fellow SEALs fought the Taliban on a narrow ridge for several hours. Luttrell watched his friends/teammates die in battle. He sustained a barrage of injuries in the process, including a broken back, a broken nose and shattered vertebrae; shrapnel penetrated his body and he couldn't stand up. He crawled to safety before being rescued by the Marines five days later. And he's one of the torchbearers for the Boot Campaign.




"The first time I heard about the Boot Campaign, I said, 'This is the best idea I've ever heard of for supporting the military,'" Luttrell told *American Way*. "I had heard about what the Boot Girls in Texas were doing, and I knew I had to get involved. Today, I consider them family, and together, we have committed to continue to spread the word of this new act of patriotism. It's a monumental way of helping raise money and awareness for veterans transitioning back home. It's such a simple concept: Buy a pair of boots, and through that purchase, you can literally put yourself in our shoes and show your support. And the proceeds from the purchase fund much-needed programs that help our heroes. It's a win/win."


ADAM PITLUK
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-  **Want to talk to Adam?**
Reach him at editor@americanwaymag.com
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at www.aa.com/roadwarrior
 by Aug. 31, 2012, at 11:59 p.m. CDT.

-  **For more about the Boot Campaign**, visit www.bootcampaign.com
-  **For more about Marcus Luttrell** and his Lone Survivor Foundation, visit www.marcusluttrell.com
-  **For more about AA's Miles in Support of All Who Serve** campaign, visit Joinus.aa.com/uso-care-packages