



THE FIFTH IN OUR SERIES FOCUSING ON ISSUES FACING LOCAL VETERANS

## A WIDOW ASKS WHY?

STORY: PAT JOCELYN

**M**y husband died June 16, 2014," Pam Hunt says in a voice that reflects both pain and weariness. "We're never going to know [what happened], which I think is part of the

added frustration with losing somebody to suicide."

According to Pam, the evening of her husband's suicide was like any other. "When my husband went to bed he was talking about the doctor's ap-

pointment he had the next morning," Pam says. "He was telling me not to eat some food that was in the fridge because he wanted it for breakfast."

Within the hour, Tim was dead.

"The bedroom door was closed, but he was sleeping, had the dogs in bed, and the television on. I was watching a movie and fell asleep on the couch not 20 feet away. I woke up to the gun shot. So at some point, he woke up, sat up on the edge of the bed and shot himself."

The 48-year-old Minnesota transplant says she's had two years to theorize why Tim committed suicide, and it goes back to the kind of man he was before being wounded while serving his country.

"He was the definition of physically fit. He was this massive, huge, overwhelmingly physical embodiment of a man," Pam says with

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**SINCE 2001, MORE UNITED STATES TROOPS HAVE DIED FROM SUICIDE THAN WERE KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN.**

—PBS

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quiet pride. "Then he broke his back, had knee injuries, and developed heart failure."

At the time of his injuries, Tim was a noncommissioned officer (NCO) in the National Guard and a leader of men. At the top of his game physically, he was regarded as a man's man. At the time of his death, however, Tim couldn't help his wife carry in groceries.

His physical limitations coupled with a lack of military support, may have contributed to Tim's mental health issues. Pam speculates other important issues