

# Snyder honors his father in historical book 'Shot Down'

By Andrew Pacholek  
Laramie News-Gazette

Steve Snyder has been to Europe and back researching his book, "Shot Down," a nonfiction chronicle of events surrounding his father, Capt. Howard Snyder, and his crew after being shot down over enemy territory during World War II.

Snyder's father was the pilot of a B-17 bomber, colloquially referred to as " Flying Fortress." After his plane crashed, he managed to evade capture by the Nazis and joined with Dutch freedom fighters, the Belgian Marquis, as well as the French White Army, to fight the German Nazis through guerrilla battles. Both France and the Netherlands were occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II.

Snyder's father survived the war and Snyder believed the story was more interesting than others he had heard about the war, so he put it to paper.

"After I finished, I started going to different Air Force museums. I would hear veterans talk about their experiences," Snyder said. "I thought, 'Gosh, the experiences of my dad and his crew were more compelling than any of the others,' so I thought I'd write a book about it."

The first step for Snyder was compiling all the information he had gathered.

"I had so much information at my fingertips," he said.

Snyder is not an author by trade, though he said his organizational and research skills were up to the task.

In 1998, Dr. Bill DeLaney founded a Hispanic American Foundation in south Belgium and a donation to Snyder's dad and his crew. DeLaney was instrumental in Snyder's research.

Snyder said his father would occasionally talk about his tour of duty, but upon visiting the cemetery with three surviving crew members and their wives, his father really opened up.

"My mother kept the letters he had written her during the war, where he talked about a lot of things, too," Snyder said.

DeLaney then provided Snyder with access to many of the interviews he had conducted with

veterans after the war. Snyder also found the author of an unpublished book which also contained many of the details in his own book.

"I even found the Luftwaffe pilot who shot down my dad's plane," he said. "He was 90 years old, living in Munich, but he spoke perfect English. He provided me great insight from a totally different perspective. He was shot down by my dad's plane, but he parachuted out and made it through the war."

Snyder said he hopes readers will realize the importance of the service of not only his father, but all veterans of World War II.

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*Author*

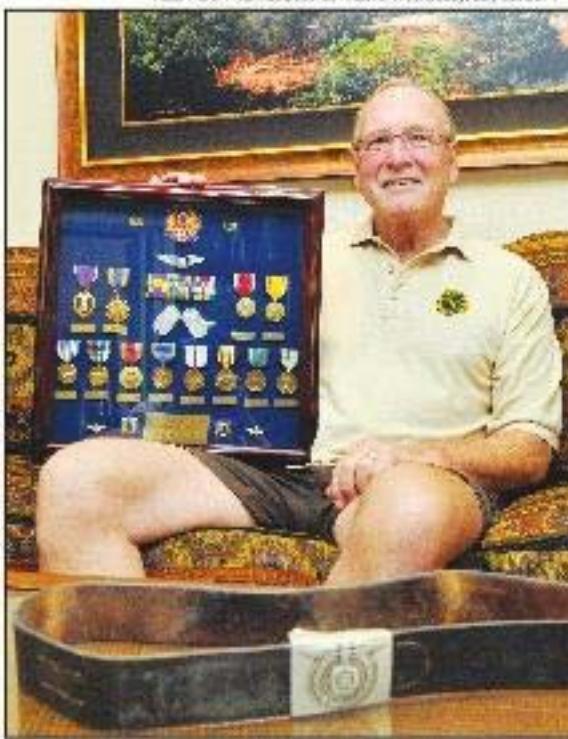
celebrates."

Snyder's book will be available through Amazon in both hardcover and ebook formats. He decided to self-publish the book for several reasons. He said traditional publishing only services those authors who have made a name for themselves in other ways. He also noted that his 378-page book includes 200 photographs, something a publisher would never do.

The book is currently available for pre-order. The book's official release is Friday, Aug. 15. Snyder said he plans to have the book available at local book stores as well.

"It was a wonderful experience," he said, of writing "Shot Down." "My ultimate goal with the book would be to make it into a movie."

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Jordan Roush/Sedona Voice-Press

**STEVE SNYDER** holds a display of 52 medals from his father, including a Purple Heart and an Air Medal for his achievements for aerial flight as well as a belt that his father, Capt. Howard J. Snyder, took off his seatbelt in the event his aircraft went down in World War II. Steve Snyder will be releasing his book, "Shot Down," telling the story about his father's service.

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