

GI SPECIAL 5F6:

3,500 GONE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The casket of U.S. Army Reserve Specialist William Bailey at Bellevue Cemetery, Bellevue, Neb., June 5, 2007. Bailey was providing security for military convoys with the 755th Chemical Company near Taji, Iraq, when an explosive device struck his vehicle. He was killed May 25. The 29-year-old Bellevue man was a five-year veteran of the fire department. He leaves behind a wife and five children. (AP Photo/Nati Harnik)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed In Diyala

June 6, 2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Casualty Reports RELEASE No. 20070606-10

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Multinational Division-North Soldier died of wounds sustained from enemy gunfire in Diyala Province, Tuesday.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

June 5, 2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Casualty Reports RELEASE No. 20070605-05

BAGHDAD — A Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldier was killed when his patrol was attacked with small arms fire in a southern section of the Iraqi capital June 5.

Illinois Soldier Killed In Iraq



Jeremiah Costello, 22, of Bunker Hill, Ill., a truck driver with the U.S. Army, was killed June 2, 2007, in a roadside bomb explosion in Iraq. (AP Photo/Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn's office)

Baghdad IED Kills One U.S. Soldier, One Wounded

June 6, 2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Casualty Reports RELEASE No. 20070606-19

BAGHDAD — Multi-National Division – A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed when a roadside bomb detonated during combat operations in an eastern section of the Iraqi capital June 6. One other Soldier was wounded in the attack.

Bayji IED Kills U.S. Soldier

June 6, 2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Casualty Reports RELEASE No. 20070606-18

LSA Anaconda – One 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Soldier was killed by an improvised explosive device at approximately 5 p.m. June 6 while executing a combat logistics patrol in the vicinity of Bayji, Iraq.

Texas Soldier Killed In Iraq



Army Cpl. Jonathan A. Markham, 22, of Bedford, Texas, died May 29, 2007, in Iraq of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near him. (AP Photo/Markham Family via Fort Worth Star-Telegram)

Roadside Bomb Kills Soldier From Illinois

Jun 4, 2007 (AP)

ALTON, Ill. A roadside bomb in Iraq has killed a soldier from Illinois.

Twenty-two-year-old Jeremiah Costello, who lived in Greenfield and Carlinville, died Saturday.

He was a truck driver for the U.S. Army.

His mother Debra Costello, who lives in Bunker Hill, says Jeremiah was happy-go-lucky and very caring.

Jeremiah Costello is also survived by his four-year-old daughter, who lives in Alton.

Funeral arrangements are pending. However, the owner of the Davis-Anderson Funeral Home in Carlinville says Costello will be buried at Mayfield Park Cemetery in Carlinville.

Macoupin County Man Dies In Iraq

June 05, 2007 By AMANDA REAVY, STAFF WRITER; The State Journal-Register

CARLINVILLE - When Elayne Willis first saw Jeremiah "Jeremy" David Costello walk into her classroom at Greenfield High School in Greene County, she immediately noticed his distinctive hair.

"He was my first student to have colored hair. It was either green or blue all the time," the sophomore English teacher recalled Monday afternoon. "I thought, 'Oh, my!'"

She said she soon realized the kind heart that lay beneath the seemingly outlandish appearance.

"He was the nicest boy, and he always had a smile," she said.

Costello attended the high school for at least two years, eventually lost the brightly colored hair and went on to join the Army. The 22-year-old Carlinville native was deployed to Iraq last fall and lost his life there over the weekend.

The Alton Telegraph reported Monday that Costello was an Army truck driver and died Saturday when a roadside bomb exploded.

He left behind a 4-year-old daughter, Lillian Costello, who lives in Alton, the newspaper reported.

"He loved his daughter more than anything. She was the light of his life," Costello's mother, Debra Costello, who lives in Bunker Hill, told the Telegraph. She said her son had moved to Bunker Hill with her recently.

Willis said she and many others in Greenfield, a small community about 65 miles southwest of Springfield, learned of his death Sunday after it was announced at a church service.

She recalled Costello's relationship with his daughter, who she said looked just like him.

Willis described Costello as a "special boy" who was always polite in class. "He was just a good friend to everybody. He had a smile for everybody," she said.

"His father passed away the year before I met him. He was so dedicated to his father and his memory. He was very close to his family. He would just always talk about his dad, and do things for his dad and mom."

Costello grew up in Carlinville, but he made many friends at Greenfield High, a tight-knit school of about 150 students, teachers and staff say.

Dan Bowman, a longtime football coach and dean at the school, called Costello “a very likable young man.” “I remember talking to him a lot of times. (He was) just kind of quiet. A very solid student,” Bowman said.

Evelyn Wellenkamp said she was Costello’s guidance counselor and described him as a mild-mannered, pleasant young man.

She could not recall Costello expressing military aspirations in high school but said it’s not unusual for Greenfield students to join the armed forces.

“Many of our students do look to the military to either further their education or continue one with some type of career,” Wellenkamp said.

Though Willis is proud of Costello’s choice to join the Army, she said it’s difficult losing a former student. It’s the first one we’ve lost, so it’s pretty tough,” she said. “I’m just real proud of him. I wish I could have told him that.”

Costello will be buried at Mayfield Park Cemetery in Carlinville, said Brent Davis, who is handling the funeral arrangements at Davis-Anderson Funeral Home. Details were pending.

Albuquerque Soldier Killed In Baghdad

June 6, 2007 By ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBUQUERQUE — A New Mexico soldier who had aspirations of one day becoming president of the United States has been killed while serving in Iraq.

Army Sgt. James C. Akin, 23, was killed over the weekend in Baghdad when his Humvee was destroyed by a bomb, family spokesman Victor Raigoza told the Albuquerque Journal in a copyright story published Wednesday.

Raigoza said Akin’s wife, Syreeta Akin, was notified of the soldier’s death Sunday.

The U.S. Department of Defense hasn’t confirmed Akin’s death.

Akin graduated from Valley High School in 2001 and joined the Army in 2004. Raigoza said the soldier had been in Iraq since last summer and was scheduled to return home on leave later this month.

Akin was a self-professed politics and sports junkie. He worked on Raigoza’s campaign when he sought the Democratic nomination for then state Sen. Ramsay Gorham’s seat in 2004.

Raigoza said Akin was able to connect with people and was loyal.

“James had a goal and a desire to one day serve as president of the United States,” Raigoza said. “He would even introduce himself and he would tell you, ‘One day I’m going to be president of the United States.’”

In addition to his wife, Akin is survived by his father, James W. Akin of Albuquerque. His mother, Marianne, passed away in October, Raigoza said.

Eagle River Soldier Killed In Iraq

06/06/07 AP

A young soldier from Eagle River has lost his life in Iraq.

The family of 21-year-old Tyler Kritz says he died on Sunday serving his second tour of duty as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Kritz had been stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington.

Schofield Soldier Dies After Roadside Bombing

May 27, 2007 By Gregg Kakesako and Helen Altonn, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

A 22-year-old Schofield Barracks soldier who was a leader and an athlete in his community of Coleman, Mich., died in Iraq.

Pfc. Casey P. Zylman, 22, of Coleman, Mich., died of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle Thursday in Tallafar, the defense department said in a statement.

Zylman was the 17th member of the 25th Infantry Division to die in Iraq since the unit arrived there in late August.

The Pentagon said Zylman was injured Thursday in Tallafar when a roadside bomb was detonated near his vehicle and he died Friday of the wounds. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

The soldier's father, Randy Zylman, said in a telephone interview from Coleman that his son attended Northwood University, a business college in Midland, Mich., for two years after high school and then went to a community college.

"He just didn't know what he wanted to do and asked me one day about joining the Army," Zylman said. As an Army veteran who served in Vietnam, Zylman said he wasn't keen about the idea, but his son joined the Army in July 2005.

The family, including Casey's mother, Jamie, and sister, Amie, last talked to him about a month ago, Zylman said. "We talked to him every two weeks on the phone, then I think he got a little busier.

“He was always upbeat. He never talked much about the war. It was always just chitchat. We told him what was going on and he told us about his friends.”

Zylman said his son was on the honor role from the first grade through 12th and was a good athlete. He planned to return to college after leaving the service in 2008.

Coleman High School Principal Mary Pritchford said Casey was “an excellent student and very fine athlete,” according to a story from the Associated Press. He was a student-council member, “a true leader in his class and just an excellent person,” she said.

Joe Albaugh, Coleman High football coach, told the Detroit News fellow students looked up to Casey Zylman, who was a motivator. “He wouldn’t let you quit,” he said.

Albaugh introduced him to the crowd at a Coleman basketball game when he was home from the military and he received an ovation.

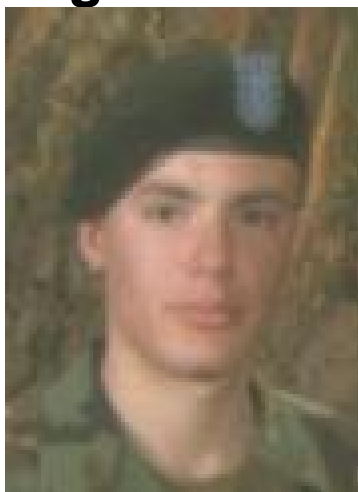
The senior Zylman said his son was home last Thanksgiving. “He used up his R and R, so probably wouldn’t be due home for a visit until November or December.”

The family was talking about coming to Hawaii when their son’s unit returned to Schofield Barracks, Zylman said. “We still might. We still have to support those kids. We can’t dictate what the government does but we sure can support the kids that are helping us.”

To date, 53 soldiers, three sailors, 79 Marines, one Air Force personnel and one civilian with Hawaii ties have been killed in Iraq since the war started in March 2003.

The 25th Division’s 3rd Brigade’s Iraqi deployment, which was supposed to have ended in August, was extended into October.

Kingman High Grad Died In Iraq



Coty J. Phelps

May 24, 2007 Las Vegas Review-Journal

KINGMAN, Ariz. -- Flags are flying at half staff at Kingman High School this week in honor of a 2004 graduate who was killed in the war in Iraq.

Coty J. Phelps, 21, was a legal specialist who joined the Army in September 2004 and was assigned to Fort Richardson in Alaska in 2005.

Phelps and two other soldiers were killed May 17 when a roadside bomb detonated near their vehicle in Iskandariya, according to news releases issued by the military.

Principal Pat Mickelson said teachers remember Phelps as “a good kid with a lot of heart and a lot of energy.”

Biology teacher Tony Braxton recalled speaking with Phelps at a convenience store the day before he left Kingman for deployment.

“He was a little scared but said he would try to keep low. You cannot fight an object that’s set to blow up.”

Phelps was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 725th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

Phelps is survived by his father, Robbie; stepmother, Regina; brothers Ryan and Robbie; and his sister, Trisha.

Guam Soldier Dies



May 27, 2007 By Lacey A.C. Martinez, The Pacific Daily News

Just as Guam prepares to commemorate those who gave their lives in military service, the island has lost yet another son to the war in Iraq.

The family of Army Sgt. Iosiwo Uruo received word late Friday afternoon that the soldier had died in Iraq. He was 28.

Men dressed in military uniforms visited the family home in Agana Heights to relay the tragic news to the family, but when they tried to share the details of his death, Uruo's father, Isaoshy Uruo, said they were too distraught to listen. The servicemen said they would return later.

Isaoshy Uruo said he just couldn't bear to hear the details of his son's death, which marks the 21st casualty for the Micronesia region in the ongoing war on terror

"All I remember hearing them say was, 'Sorry, we understand how you feel,'" Isaoshy Uruo said yesterday as he held his head and rubbed his eyes.

Iosiwo Uruo joined the Army soon after graduating from George Washington High School several years ago, his father said. "I wanted him to go to school because he was good in architecture, but he told me, 'Dad, I'm sorry but I want to join the service,'" the elder Uruo said.

From then on, the family supported his decision, although it meant being apart.

The last time the soldier was on island was about two years ago for a short vacation, his father said. The family had also last spoken with the soldier late last year, while he was in Kuwait.

The Uruo family came to Guam from Chuuk in 1987 for Isaoshy Uruo to receive training for his job in Chuuk. Then an elementary school teacher in Chuuk, the father had decided he'd keep his family on Guam so his children could have a chance at a better education.

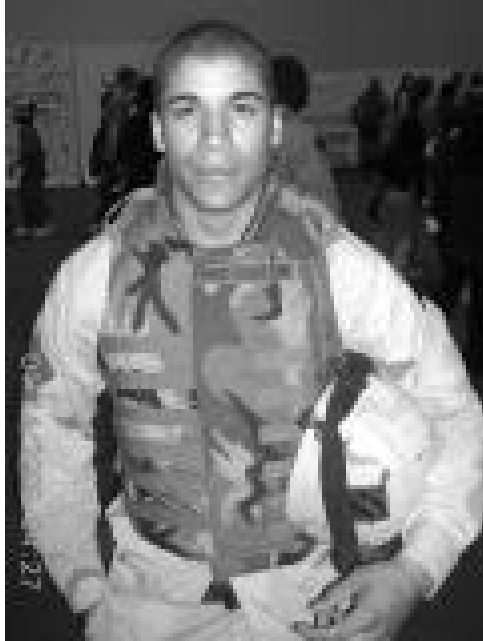
The family became longtime residents of Agana Heights, even staying with village Mayor Paul McDonald and his family before settling just two homes away.

Patricia Terlaje said she was shocked when she heard the news of another soldier from the region -- this time, the son of close family friends. Her brother, the village mayor, was not on island to hear the news, although he has offered to have the rosaries at his home.

"He just kept crying on the phone. It's like losing a son for him," she said.

"You keep hearing about all these other families and their sons and now it actually hits home," Terlaje said.

FCHS Class Of '03's Cpl. Jonathan Winterbottom, Medic, Killed In Iraq



31 May 2007 By Jeff Dooley, Falls Church News-Press

Cpl. Jonathan Winterbottom, a Class of 2003 graduate of Falls Church High School, was killed in Iraq May 23 when a roadside bomb exploded near the vehicle in which he was riding. Winterbottom was 21 years old.

Winterbottom, who was known as Jon to his friends, enlisted in the Army after graduating high school. Friends say that he originally enlisted with the intention of becoming an Army ranger, but found his true calling as a medic, as he had always wanted to help people. Genevieve Makris, a fellow class of 2003 FCCHS graduate who says she had known Winterbottom since the two of them “were in diapers,” said Winterbottom most enjoyed taking care of the Iraqi children.

Winterbottom, who was stationed out of Fort Benning, Ga., was on his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was killed.

In high school, Winterbottom participated actively in sports, joining the wrestling, track, cross country, football and lacrosse teams. Friends say he was unsure of what he wanted to do with his life following graduation, which led him to enlist in the Army. While in high school, Winterbottom also had to endure the loss of his mother, Evelyn, who passed away from lung cancer.

Winterbottom’s friends remembered him for his friendship and personality.

“He was probably the most unique person I’ve ever met,” Danny Omana said. Omana was also a class of 2003 FCCHS graduate and a member of the “Fab Four,” the name given to the close-knit quartet of Omana, Winterbottom, Tony Hayduk and Jeff Newell. Hayduk called Winterbottom an “amazing friend,” adding that he could “depend on him

for pretty much anything.” Close friend Jana Kuwano described Winterbottom as being “very funny” and having “a good head on his shoulders.”

Robert Winterbottom, Jon’s father, who described his son as a “wonderful, loving, energetic guy,” says that Jon would not want his loved ones to be sad for too long.

“If he were here to speak for himself, I’m sure he’d say ‘Don’t spend a lot of time grieving. Get on with your life. I always enjoyed life, and you should too.’”

Winterbottom leaves behind a younger sister, Sarah, 19, and a younger brother, J.J., 17.

On Friday, May 25, the day that Jonathan Winterbottom would have turned 22 years old, his friends assembled at the Winterbottom home to pay tribute to and celebrate the life of the friend and family member that they all loved. They brought cards, lit candles, exchanged stories of their favorite moments with Jon, sang “Amazing Grace” and “Happy Birthday.” Winterbottom’s father said it was “very moving” to see his son’s friends come out and show their love and support.

While his friends said that the vigil was obviously a very sad occasion, Kuwano said that there were happy times as well.

“It wasn’t just sad because we all talked about why we were there,” Kuwano said. “And why we loved him so much.”

Hayduk saw it as an opportunity to repay his loyal friend. When Hayduk turned 21, Winterbottom, who was in Iraq at the time, still managed to call and wish his buddy a happy birthday. Hayduk said that this is a prime example of the type of friend Winterbottom was.

“We all owed him something,” Hayduk said.

Winterbottom’s funeral Mass will be held at the Word of Life Assembly of God Church (5225 Backlick Rd., Springfield, Va.) on Saturday, June 2. He will be buried with his mother at the Oakwood Cemetery in Falls Church. There will also be a viewing Friday, June 1 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the National Funeral Home (7482 Lee Highway, Falls Church).

As sad as his friends are at the loss of their loyal and good friend, Winterbottom’s memory still brings joy to their lives.

“Even now, you can’t help but smile when you think about him,” said Kuwano. “Because that’s what he was always doing.”

GI Saw Georgia As His Real Home; Iraq War Victim Planned Life As Civilian

05/27/07 By Ron Martz, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Army Staff Sgt. Shannon Weaver lived in Alabama, Alaska and Missouri, but considered himself a Georgian first and foremost.

“He always thought of Georgia as his home. He just loved the mountains here,” his wife, Desiree, said Saturday as she recalled the young man who was an avid hiker, hunter and rock climber.

Weaver, 28, of Cedartown, died Monday in Iraq with two other soldiers, including another from Georgia, when a series of roadside bombs exploded near their vehicle in Baghdad.

Weaver’s death brings to 102 the number of Georgia fatalities in the Middle East since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003.

Fifteen Georgians have been killed in Iraq this year, including three in the past seven days, compared to 19 for all of 2006.

He and the two soldiers killed with him were assigned to the 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division out of Fort Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska.

Desiree Weaver said her husband was born in Rome and lived with his grandparents, David and Joan Weaver, in Cedartown. He had attended Cedartown High School for a time before graduating from Piedmont (Ala.) High and then moving to Missouri.

Shannon and Desiree met in Kansas City in 2001 when they were preparing to join the active Army after he had served in the National Guard and she in the Army Reserve. They were married a year later.

They served together in Germany and later in Kuwait in 2003, prior to the invasion of Iraq. Shannon, a combat engineer, was with a unit attached to the 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and was among the first across the border, she said.

She left the Army in 2006 after serving nine years, she said, “because he didn’t want me to deploy again. He said he was going to re-enlist if the war in Iraq was over but that if it wasn’t he was going to get out in 2008 when this enlistment was up.”

In addition to previously serving in Iraq, Shannon had been deployed to Kosovo and the Dominican Republic during his 10-year Army career, his wife said.

The couple had recently purchased five acres just across the state line near Gadsden, Ala., and were planning to build a home and start a family.

She was going to open a pet boarding and grooming business while he became a park ranger in the Talladega (Ala.) National Forest. “We talked about building our home from the ground up and were about to get the blueprints for the house,” she said. “I’m still going to honor what he wanted to do.”

Funeral services are incomplete pending the return of Weaver’s remains from Iraq.

Bird Springs Man Paid The Ultimate Sacrifice

May 26, 2007 By Natasha Kaye Johnson, Diné Bureau, Gallup Independent

BIRD SPRINGS — The late Sgt. Christopher Neil Gonzalez of Bird Springs, Ariz. gave the ultimate sacrifice for his country. He was killed in action on May 14.

Gonzalez, 25, was one of two soldiers who died in Salman Pak, Iraq, of wounds suffered when his unit came under attack of enemy forces with I.E.D. and small arms fire.

On Friday, family, friends, and his community gathered together to mourn his death, but also to remember his life as a husband, father, and son. Over 500 people were in attendance as Pastor Brad Hicks delivered a eulogy over a video cast shown on two giant television screens at the Bird Springs Full Gospel Church.

Pastor Hicks spoke of Gonzales legacy as a man and his devotion to his Christian beliefs. He spoke of the love he had for his wife, Tonita Gonzalez, and his six-year old son, Breenen.

He recalled how he and his wife got married on December 31, 2001, and how he was deployed the following day. The memory made him smile, but he became serious and solemn when he spoke of Gonzalez's service to the Navajo and American people.

"He was proud to be an American," said Hicks. "He was willing to pay the ultimate price."

After six years of being in the Army, Gonzalez was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. In his time as a soldier, he volunteered with the Ronald McDonald House and was a volunteer with the Special Olympics among other things. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, in Ft. Benning, G.A.

Those who knew him best didn't hesitate to use words like "committed," "courageous," and "sincere" to describe his character.

"He was always positive," said one fellow soldier in the video cast. "He was like a breath of fresh air."

The delivery of the eulogy via-video cast was a request made by Gonzalez before he passed.

Emotions ran strong when a 25-minute slide show of Gonzalez was shown. Music played in the background depicting each segment of photographs. The pictures served almost as a timeline of Gonzalez's life. There were pictures of him as a young boy, others from teenage years as a student at Sanders High School where he was wearing his basketball uniform and taking pictures at home before going to prom, and some where he was fishing or just being goofy at family cookouts.

But the most intimate of the photos were of him spending time with his son as a newborn, toddler, and young boy.

The picture show was followed by a reading out of Gonzalez's journal by Brenda Long, a friend to Gonzalez and his wife. A tearful Long explained to the audience how she and she husband, who also served in the Army in Ft. Benning, G.A., became good friends with Gonzalez and his family after they met at a store. Gonzalez's journal entry's expressed his love for God. "I want to show what beautiful things he has done for my family," he had written. "It's amazing how he built the Earth for us, for me."

His entries shared the emotions he felt when leaving for Iraq.

"Today was a hard day. I had to say good-by to my family," he had written.

Gonzalez wrote that he thought he would have been more prepared to leave, but shared how he was not at all prepared.

"I'm starting to understand combat vets and why they're so proud," he wrote. "It's because they made so many sacrifices."

In a letter to his wife, he began with "Happy Monday" as his opening greeting, and talked about the dentist, horses, and how he wish he were home to see his son's graduation.

"Happy Mother's Day," he continued in a recent letter to his wife. "Go spend some money on yourself!"

The Air Force National Guard, the U.S. Army, the Arizona National Guard, the Arizona Patriot Guard Riders, and Navajo Nation Honor Riders presented awards and honors to Gonzalez's wife and mother, Judy Nez. They were given the Purple Heart and Bronze Star among a number of other distinguished honors and awards for Gonzalez's injuries and his dedication to the War on Terrorism.

Representatives from the Speaker's Office and Office of the President and Vice-president expressed their condolences on behalf of Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan and Joe Shirley, Jr..

"We cannot forget that what is best about our country lies on their shoulders," said T.C. Tso, of the President's office, after asking the veterans in attendance to stand-up. He told Tonita that she wasn't alone.

Wahpeton Soldier Killed In Iraq

May 24, 2007 By Dave Kolpack

FARGO, N.D. (AP) - The family of an Army soldier from Wahpeton has confirmed his death in Iraq, saying, "we prayed this day would never come."

Staff Sgt. David Kuehl, 27, was killed during combat operations, his family said Wednesday in a statement. Kuehl was serving his third tour of duty overseas, friends said. His family was notified of his death Tuesday.

Kuehl was “a wonderful son, husband, father, brother and uncle and will be dearly missed,” the family statement said.

Kuehl is a 1999 graduate of Wahpeton High School. His wife, two children and his parents live in Wahpeton.

Kuehl’s family was told he was killed by a roadside bomb in the Baghdad area.

Clark Gripentrog, the principal at Wahpeton High School, said Kuehl was a good student who was quiet and easy to get along with. Kuehl enjoyed drawing and painting, he said.

“I remember him as a hard worker and a very nice person,” Gripentrog said.

Mary Ann Kostuck, Kuehl’s high school art teacher, said she still tells students about his artwork during an annual project on designing dream homes.

“His was so beautiful, so simple,” Kostuck said. “Everyone else would have these extravagant, elaborate ideas, but he was going to have a smaller house than most people.

“He had a very realistic approach to life in his compositions,” she said.

Kuehl also had a good sense of humor, Kostuck said.

“He was very kind. Just a nice kid to be with,” she said.

Family members declined to comment other than their statement, which expressed “our sincere appreciation for the kind thoughts, prayers and condolences we’ve received from family, friends and neighbors during this very difficult time.”

Kuehl’s death brings to 16 the number of U.S. service members from North Dakota or serving with North Dakota military units who have been reported killed while on duty in Iraq. Four others were killed in Afghanistan.

North Dakota National Guard spokesman Rob Keller said the Guard has been assisting the family even though Kuehl was not a Guard member.

“The active duty (military) called upon us to assist in that notification,” Keller said. He had no other information about Kuehl’s death, saying that would have to come from the Defense Department.

Maine National Guard Member Injured By Roadside Bomb

June 6, 2007 The Associated Press.

SABATTUS, Maine -- A Maine Army National Guard member is returning to the U.S. after being injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq.

A Guard spokesman said Spc. David Saucier was injured Sunday while on convoy duty. There is no word on the extent of Saucier's injuries, but Maj. Mike Backus of the Guard said he is recovering.

Saucier is a gunner with a field artillery unit stationed in Kuwait.

U.S. Soldier Wounded In Kabat

6.6.07 Reuters

BAQUBA - U.S. and Iraqi troops, backed by attack aircraft, attacked insurgents in Kabat village near Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, on Tuesday, the U.S. military said. Two Iraqi soldiers died in the operation, during which a U.S. soldier and a civilian were also wounded.

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



4.23.07: Foreign occupation soldiers of U.S. Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment prepare an Iraqi citizen for an arrest during a large operation launched in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. (AFP/Mauricio Lima)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed; Nationality Not Announced

Jun 6 (AFP)

Two NATO soldiers were killed in new clashes in southern Afghanistan Wednesday.

NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) did not give details of its latest fatalities, which follow another in the eastern province of Kunar on Tuesday.

"Two ISAF soldiers were killed in separate engagements with enemy fighters today (Wednesday) in southern Afghanistan," it said in a statement.

The US-led coalition said separately that at least one of the deaths was in Helmand province, where most of Britain's deployment of 5,200 soldiers is based.

Geneseo Soldier Wounded In Afghanistan



Tyler Hoogerwerf. Photo: Submitted

June 6, 2007 By Anthony Watt, Moline Dispatch

A local soldier had only been in Afghanistan two weeks when he was wounded in an ambush during the weekend.

Pfc. Tyler Hoogerwerf, 19, Geneseo, is a paratrooper in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, his father, Rob Hoogerwerf, said. He was on his first patrol some time Friday or Saturday when the Humvee he was riding in was struck with multiple rocket-propelled grenades.

"It was supposed to be a routine patrol," Mr. Hoogerwerf said. "They weren't on a specific mission at the time."

Mr. Hoogerwerf said his son is not sure exactly what happened, but believes his Humvee might have been struck by as many as eight RPGs after the patrol traveled into an enclosed space, possibly a canyon or ravine.

Pfc. Hoogerwerf suffered shrapnel wounds and fractures in his legs and his eardrums were burst by the explosions, Mr. Hoogerwerf said.

His son also may have nerve damage, because he can't feel anything in his left leg, though he can wiggle his toes and doctors can detect a pulse in it, Mr. Hoogerwerf said.

Pfc. Hoogerwerf was being treated Wednesday in a hospital in Germany, his father said. They last spoke that morning.

"Most of the time we just...tell him how many people are praying for him," asking for him or calling about him, Mr. Hoogerwerf said. "Letting him know people care."

He said his son's attitude was "pretty good" Wednesday.

Another paratrooper in the brigade, Pfc. Jacob Michael Lowell, of New Lenox, died Saturday, according to the Associated Press.

Mr. Hoogerwerf said his son and Pfc. Lowell were in the same patrol when it was attacked. Pfc. Lowell, was the gunner in Tyler's three-man machine gun team, Mr. Hoogerwerf said. Pfc. Hoogerwerf served as the ammunition bearer.

Pfc. Lowell was manning a machine gun in another Humvee and began returning fire once the ambush started, which may be why he was killed.

Mr. Hoogerwerf credited Pfc. Lowell with helping to save his son's life with his actions.

Another soldier, a sergeant, put a tourniquet on Pfc. Hoogerwerf's leg to stop bleeding that might have killed him otherwise, Mr. Hoogerwerf said.

Geneseo High School principal Mike Haugse saw Pfc. Hoogerwerf in May and he was "highly motivated to serve his country. He loved his country and was looking forward to serving."

As a student, Pfc. Hoogerwerf played soccer for the school. Mr. Haugse described him as "a very fine young man, very competitive and very focus driven" and very supportive of others.

In the high school yearbook, Pfc. Hoogerwerf selected the quote, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Mr. Hoogerwerf said his son has wanted to join the military since he was a child, and signed up when he turned 18.

"I was scared to death," his father said of Tyler's decision to enlist. "But I had to respect what he wanted to do. It came as no surprise."

British Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

6 Jun 07 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of a soldier from 1st Battalion The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters in southern Afghanistan today, Wednesday 6 June 2007.

The soldier was killed at around 0645 (local time) while taking part in an offensive patrol with his company aimed at disrupting Taliban forces in the Upper Gereshk Valley area of Helmand Province, eight kilometres north east of the town of Gereshk.

The company was moving forward to clear a Taliban compound when they came under fire and the soldier was shot. He was taken to an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) patrol base. From there he was flown by helicopter to Camp Bastion for medical treatment where, sadly, he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Eight Foreign Occupation Soldier Wounded In Kandahar Province; Nationality Not Announced

Jun 4 (AFP)

NATO's International Security Assistance Force said that eight of its soldiers were injured after Taliban-led insurgents ambushed them in the southern province of Kandahar Sunday.

"It was an ambush (which) included small arms fire. Eight soldiers were wounded," Lieutenant Colonel Angela Billings told AFP in Kabul. She did not give the nationalities of the soldiers.

Khost IED Wounds Occupation Soldier, Interpreter

Jun 4 (AFP)

A soldier with the US-led coalition and an Afghan interpreter were wounded when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in the neighbouring province of Khost Monday, a spokesman with the separate NATO-led force told AFP.

Assorted Resistance Action

June 3, 2007 AMIR SHAH, Associated Press Writer & Jun 4 (AFP) & Jun 6, (AFP) & (Xinhua)

In eastern Khost province, militants attacked a police checkpoint in Yaqubi district on Saturday

Also Saturday, police clashed with Taliban militants in neighboring Paktika province's Shakin district.

In Zabul province, an Afghan army soldier was killed and another was injured by a remotely-controlled Taliban bomb, army general Rahmatullah Raufi said.

A roadside bombing killed a district police chief in Paktika province of eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday morning, provincial governor Akram Khapalwak told Xinhua.

A bomb struck a vehicle carrying the police chief of Yahya Khil district, killing him on the spot, the governor said. He said the vehicle was totally damaged and blamed militants for planting the bomb.

The governor of the southeastern province of Paktika said a district police chief was killed by a bomb near the district police headquarters.

The official, Jalad Khan, and his team were trying to defuse the bomb as it exploded, governor Mohammad Akram Khepelwak told AFP.

"Khan was initially wounded in the head and later died in hospital," he said.

The ISAF media office in the region said Khan's men had tried to defuse two bombs before the NATO bomb-disposal unit arrived.

"One of the police shot the bomb from a distance, attempting to defuse it. Shrapnel wounded the police chief in the head. He was evacuated immediately but he later died in hospital," it said.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said the bombs were planted by his organisation.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Insurgents Killing Pro-Bush Collaborators



Somalis lower the body of Howlwadaag district Chairman, Hassan Ali Sa'id, into a grave, June 2, 2007 in Mogadishu, Somalia. Insurgents killed him in the capital's southern neighborhood late Saturday as he was about to enter his house, a neighbor said. Sa'id is the second district commissioner killed in Mogadishu in the past month. Many officials have voiced concerns over the increase of turmoil in the capital. (AP Photo/Mohamed Sheikh Nor)

U.S. Government Orders Military Attack On Somalia Resistance; “The Insurgency Appears To Be Spreading To Other Parts Of Somalia”

Stupid Collaborator Had Declared Victory In April, Imitating His Stupid Boss

02 June 2007 By Mohamed Olad Hassan, The Associated Press

A U.S. warship pounded Somalia's remote coastal northeast, targeting Islamic militants officials said Saturday.

The fighting late Friday, which the provincial government said included an American militant, appeared to mark the opening of a new front against Islamic militants in Puntland, a semiautonomous region that has remained relatively peaceful through Somalia's anarchy.

The government [the Bush Buddy collaborators set up after the invasion] declared victory in April against insurgents in the Somali capital, which is in the south.

Since then officials of the government and Ethiopian troops sent to prop it up have been targeted in bomb attacks.

"The insurgency appears to be spreading to other parts of Somalia," said Ted Dagne, specialist in African Affairs at the Congressional Research Service in Washington.

Mohamoud said the Puntland government had requested the U.S. navy to help fight the militants.

Muse Gelle, a regional governor, said the militants arrived in the area near the port town of Bargal by speedboat on Wednesday. He said a U.S. destroyer attacked late Friday.

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman, could not confirm U.S. involvement in Friday's fighting, but added: "The very nature of some of our operations, as well as the success of those operations is often predicated on our ability to work quietly with our partners and allies." **[Hey dumbfuck, everybody else already confirmed it. So much for that "work quietly" bullshit.]**

Somalia: Ethiopian Occupiers Carry Out U.S. Policy In The Horn Of Africa; A War Of Resistance Unfolds

By DAVID WHITEHOUSE, INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW, MAY-JUNE 2007
[Excerpt]

The Pentagon's obsession with "urban warfare," which dates back to its last retreat from Mogadishu in 1993, has "spin-off" benefits to states that have rebellious slum populations of their own.

U.S. training offers poor states the world's most advanced weapons and tactics for repressing urban rebels, while building proxy forces for the U.S. in places where its own troops might become special targets. Even if the Ugandan mission [in Somalia] "fails," President Yoweri Museveni's troops are gaining experience that will be useful to him when they get home.

In addition to military assistance, projects of construction and aid delivery by the Pentagon's Djibouti task force cement the ties of African clients to their imperial patron.

As New York Times writer Nicholas Kristof gushed in a column titled "Aid workers with guns," written after chatting with the counterinsurgency specialists at Camp Lemonier, these "good works" are also calculated to send the message that the U.S. government is helping Africa's poor instead of helping to repress them.

For now, there is a division of labor between the Ethiopian occupiers, which carry on offensive operations, and the Ugandan "peacekeepers," which defend the TFG [the Somalia collaborator regime set up by U.S. government intervention.] But this could change, since the insurgent militias have vowed to treat the AU [African Union] force as part of a hostile invasion force.

Other AU countries that have pledged peacekeeping troops are holding back to see whether they'd become targets in a more generalized war of Somali resistance.

A War Of Resistance

Such a war is possible.

The Transition Federal Government, which was weak and poorly rooted to begin with, has become even more isolated as resistance grows and key figures defect.

The TFG is the product of a 2004 conference in Kenya that was dominated by Ethiopia. Its leadership is skewed to favor the north's Darod clan with which Ethiopia's Meles has cultivated close ties. TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf, a career army officer from the northern Puntland region, spent much of the past two decades in Ethiopia.

The resistance is centered in the Hawiye clan, which dominates in Mogadishu and formed the original base of the Islamic courts movement.

Courts militias, reconstituted since their initial rout in the invasion, are prominent in fighting the Ethiopians and the TFG.

But now, warlords of two Hawiye subclans have joined the fight. What's more, some businessmen of disfavored subclans have thrown their own militias into battle; forces that have, until now, never picked fights except to defend the businesses themselves.

For those that remain in Mogadishu, conditions are getting worse. Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) reports 800 cases of cholera since March 19, the largest outbreak since MSF set up shop in the city fifteen years ago. A spokesman said that the outbreak is probably much bigger, but the fighting has prevented residents from seeking care.

Meanwhile, food prices have jumped 50 percent because of the return of warlord "taxation" of street traffic, a practice that ended under UIC rule.

The TFG's clan-based outlook has framed its view of a future national government, as Yusuf seeks to convene 3,000 clan representatives in Mogadishu for a constitutional conference. European Union officials, Somalia specialists, and even some American officials see this as a recipe for a return to perpetual warlordism. But Yusuf, backed by his Ethiopian friends, has refused to include non-clan political forces and religious forces such as the non-jihadist wing of the UIC.

The Islamic courts were clan-based themselves but possessed a unity in religion that allowed them to transcend clan divisions.

Each had a jurisdiction within a specific sub-clan, starting with the Hawiye. But this structure started last year to be cloned into other clans and stitched together as the UIC, the umbrella force that governed the south in the second half of last year. The courts movement first rose in the chaos of clan warfare that the U.S. left behind in the early 1990s. The courts received support from Mogadishu businessmen who wanted to be able to enforce commercial contracts and sought protection from thieves and warlord extortion.

The decentralized structure of the movement allowed significant diversity in the severity of court judgments, based on different political-religious tendencies, from traditional Sufi mysticism to Salafist concepts of jihad.

Most Somalis are Sufis, a wing of Shia Islam. Salafism is a Sunni fundamentalist movement that began in the Persian Gulf monarchies. It seems to have taken root among Somali exiles who found work in the Gulf during Somalia's early chaos years.

According to the International Crisis Group, the Salafists gained in influence as the movement turned to military organization. This began in 2005 when courts activists perceived a threat of U.S. intervention through its backing of the TFG.

Militarization accelerated at the beginning of 2006 when the CIA cobbled together a warlord force in hopes of destroying the courts and clearing the way for the TFG.

After four months of fighting, the better disciplined courts militias, centered around a unique multiclan unit of 400 fighters, defeated the warlords in June. In the vacuum left by the retreat of the warlords, the UIC began to exert control as a political force for the first time.

The Ethiopian invasion broke up the courts themselves and sent many of the moderate leaders into exile, who are now presented as the “political wing” of the movement, while others, particularly the Salafists, dug in for a fight in Somalia.

Despite the distinctions, both wings are united against the presence of Ethiopian troops and the pretensions of the TFG to legitimacy. And most residents of Mogadishu seem to agree with them.

While the occupation is drawing the resistance together, it's dividing the TFG itself.

Early in the year, Yusuf ousted the speaker of the parliament for favoring talks with UIC moderates, and now the former speaker has turned against the Ethiopian occupation.

In April, Hussein Aidid, the deputy prime minister, also turned against the, Ethiopian presence. Aidid is the U.S.-educated son of Muhammad Farah Aidid, the warlord bogey-man of the U.S. occupation of the early 1990s.

Hussein actually re-entered Somalia as a U.S. Marine in the 1990s and has since posed himself as a U.S.-friendly powerbroker within the country.

The Aidid family is from the Habr-Gedir sub-clan of the Hawiye, which took the brunt of attacks during the U.S. occupation and today is the main target of the Ethiopians. Given his clan roots, Aidid had to renounce the connection to the Ethiopians. But that's something the TFG's Yusuf can't do, since they keep him in power.

Most of these outcomes were foreseeable; slaughter by the invading force, a flood of refugees, the resurgence of clan warfare, and the splintering of a rootless stooge government. It's hard to avoid the thought that Ethiopian and U.S. officials did foresee these outcomes and concluded that they would be just fine.

Maybe these results wouldn't be as good as stabilizing a puppet government in Somalia; a long-shot bet they could still hope to win; but the disaster of failure would be much better than allowing the stabilization of a UIC regime that would be hostile to both the U.S. and Ethiopia.

In other words, it's better to wreck a place than to permit the growth of an order that disrupts the grand U.S. scheme for a string of pliant states.

It may be true that some in the Bush administration actually believe the stuff they've put out about the dangers of al-Qaeda in Somalia. They seem to believe some incredible stuff.

In philosophical terms, the U.S. policy of atrocities in Somalia would thus be “overdetermined” - when the paranoia of the war on terror converged with the simple imperial imperative to dominate a region that's rich in resources.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

GET THE MESSAGE? “DEMONSTRATORS PROTESTED AGAINST U.S. FORCES BREAKING INTO THEIR HOMES



Iraqis March during an anti-Occupation demonstration in the Al-Mishkhab area, 30 km south of Najaf, 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of Baghdad, Iraq, June 5, 2007. Anti occupation demonstrators protested against U.S. forces breaking into their homes and called for a timetable for U.S. withdrawal. In addition, the demonstrators called on the government to improve the worst services in the area. (AP Photo/Alaa al-Marjani)

Assorted Resistance Action

June 5 (Xinhua) & Reuters & AP & (Xinhua) & 06 Jun 2007 Reuters & VPO & AP & (Xinhua)

Fighting in Baqouba, the Diyala province capital 35 miles north of Baghdad, erupted a day after the Iraqi army formally opened a new operations center.

That meeting Tuesday was punctuated by blasts from four mortar rounds landing outside, apparently fired by guerrillas opposed to the occupation

On Wednesday, Iraqi and U.S. troops were deployed along the city's main streets as U.S. helicopter gunships fired on what were described as resistance strongholds in four Baqouba districts, police said. At Baqouba hospital, a medical source said the bodies of eight unidentified guerrillas had been brought in.

A roadside bomb went off near a police patrol near the Iskandriyah town, some 50 km south of Baghdad, damaging a police vehicle and wounding four policemen aboard, the source said.

Three police commandos were wounded when they shot dead a female bomber who was trying to detonate herself near a recruitment centre in eastern Baghdad, police said. The policemen were wounded when the bomber's vest exploded.

Four policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol on Monday in Doura district in southern Baghdad, police said.

A bomber struck a gathering of anti-insurgent tribal leaders in Anbar province on Tuesday, blowing up his car as they met, killing at least 15 people, police and hospital officials reported.

The elders belonged to the al-Buissa tribe, a majority of whom have joined in an alliance, the Anbar Salvation Council, against militants fighting the occupation.

Police said the car bomb exploded in their midst as they sought to solve a tribal dispute in a market in Amiriyah, 65 kilometers (40 miles) west of Baghdad.

As many as 18 people were killed and 15 wounded, according to police and Dr. Ahmed Hussein of Fallujah hospital. A U.S. military spokesman in the area, Marine Maj. Jeff Pool, put the number of dead at 15 and the wounded at 13.

As the mourners later buried the dead in the cemetery of the town that is near Fallujah, four mortar shells landed in the cemetery, but there were no casualties, police said.

Ahmed al-Issawi, the 40-year-old owner of a food store in the market said the driver of the pickup said he needed to buy some watermelons as a pretext to gain permission to take his vehicle into the market area.

"We told him not to stay long in the market," al-Issawi said, adding the driver did stop to buy some watermelons. Then, he drove very fast toward the sheiks and exploded the pickup. There was a hot storm that sent several stalls and bodies into the air."

A bomber blew up his car at a police checkpoint in the al-Sofiyah area of eastern Ramadi city, 115 kilometers (70 miles) west of Baghdad, killing six policemen and wounding three others.

In the morning, outside an Iraqi army headquarters in Anah, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) northwest of Baghdad, an army Humvee leaving the base came under rocket-propelled grenade fire that set it ablaze and killed all the soldiers inside, an army officer reported, speaking on condition of anonymity since he was not authorized to speak with the media.

The number of dead was not immediately reported.

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed and two more injured in a roadside bomb attack in southern Baghdad on Tuesday, an Interior Ministry source said. A roadside bomb went off in the afternoon near an Iraqi army patrol in the al-Amil neighborhood, killing three soldiers and wounded two others.

An attack targeted a recruitment center in northern Baghdad, wounding three guards, according to another Interior Ministry source.

Insurgent soldiers killed a police officer in a drive-by shooting in the oil refinery city of Baiji, 180 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad on Tuesday, police said.

One police officer was killed and another wounded when freedom fighters attacked their patrol in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Police Maj. Enad Khattab was shot and killed along with his brother about 10 p.m. Tuesday as they drove in central Baiji about 155 miles north of Baghdad, a local police officer reported.

Gunmen killed a police officer in a drive-by shooting in the oil refinery city of Baiji on Tuesday, police said.

One police officer was killed and another wounded when gunmen attacked their patrol in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas in military uniforms abducted a senior official of an Iraqi ministry in central Baghdad Wednesday, an Interior Ministry source said.

“Guerrillas in four sport utility vehicles, usually used by Iraqi security forces, stormed in the afternoon a building affiliated to the Ministry of Immigration and Refugees in the Palestine Street,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The Guerrillas abducted Tofan Abdul Wahab, director-general in the ministry and fled the scene, the source said.

Militants wearing police commando uniforms captured a departmental director in the Ministry of Public Works from his office in Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol in the northern city of Kirkuk killed two police officers and wounded three others, police said.

Guerrillas killed two policemen in Balad, 80 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**



An oil pipeline after a resistance bomb attack near Baiji, north of Baghdad, June 5, 2007.
(Nuhad Hussin - /Reuters)

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