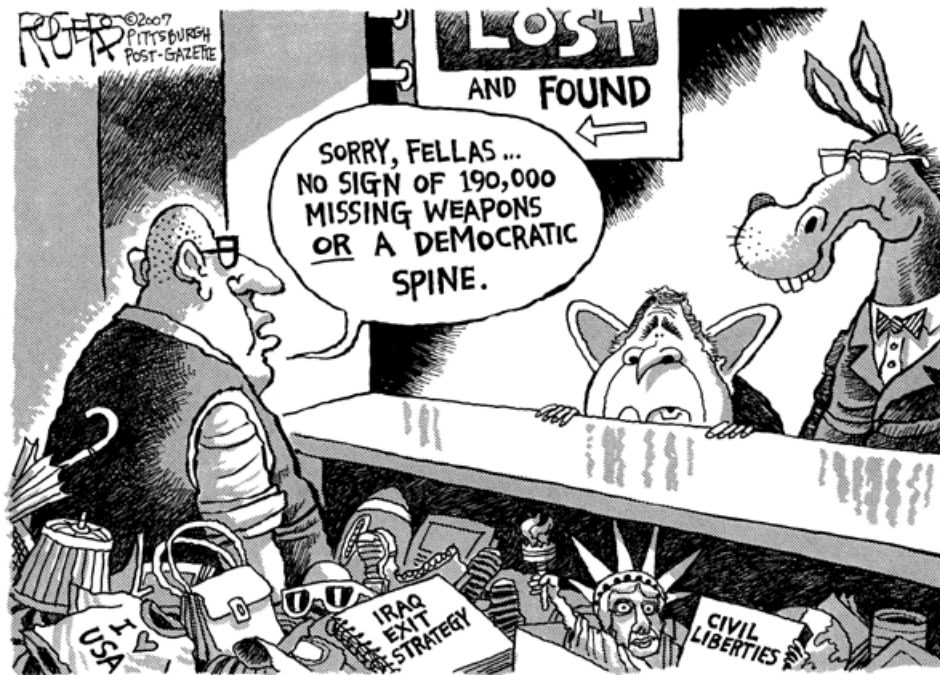


## GI SPECIAL 5H19:



# The Radio

## “This August 24th, Remember Jeremy King”



07/25/2007 by Justin C. Cliburn  
[Iraq Veterans Against The War] [www.ivaw.org]  
Branch of service: Army National Guard of the United States (ARNG)  
Unit: 1st Battalion 158th FA Oklahoma ARNG

Rank: SPC

Home: Lawton, Oklahoma

Served in: LSA Anaconda: MSR Patrol, one month. Camp Liberty, Baghdad: PSD/IP Training, ten and a half months.

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When I was in Mrs. Riner's junior English class at MacArthur high school, we were required to read a short story titled "The Radio."

The premise was simple. A couple in the 1930s were given a special radio that allowed them to hear all their neighbors' conversations. At first they were elated, but, ultimately, they were haunted by the miracle of their ability. They could hear all the horrors of society that usually go unnoticed or are covered up and sterilized . . . and they couldn't turn it off.

They couldn't change the channel.

It took seven years, but I eventually went back to that story in my head and felt their horror.

August 24th, 2006 was a routine day for my squad in Baghdad. We had gone to Traffic Headquarters and I had gotten to visit with Ali. Business taken care of, we started to make the familiar trek back to Camp Liberty.

It was a hot day, over 120 degrees, and I stood up just a little higher than usual with my sleeves unbuttoned to let the air circulate inside my body armor and clothing. It had been a good day.

Back on Route Irish, we were on the home stretch when the call came out over the radio:

"Eagle Dustoff, Eagle Dustoff, this is Red Knight 7\* over"

"This is Eagle Dustoff, over"

"Eagle Dustoff, I need MEDEVAC; my gunner has been shot by a sniper."

The voice went on to recite the nine line MEDEVAC report and I marveled at how cool, calm, and collected he sounded. My squad leader plotted the grid coordinates and found that this had occurred only a couple blocks away from one of our two main destinations on Market Road.

"Cliburn, go ahead and get down; someone might be aiming at your melon right now", CPT Ray said. Sergeant Bruesch concurred and I sat down, listening intently to the radio transmissions that I couldn't turn off if I wanted to.

Five minutes in, the voice on the radio was losing his cool.

"Have they left yet?! He's losing a lot of blood; we need that chopper now!"

In the background, you could hear other soldiers yelling, screaming, trying to find anyway to save their friend's life. At one point, I swear I heard the man gurgle.

Ten minutes in, the voice on the radio was furious.

“Where’s that fucking chopper!? We’re losing him! He’s not fucking breathing! Where the fuck are you!?”

Every minute to minute and a half the voice was back on the radio demanding to know what the hold up was. Every minute to minute and a half the other voice on the radio, a young woman’s voice, tried to reassure him that the chopper was the way from Taji. She was beginning to tire herself; I could hear it in her voice. She was just as frustrated as he was.

All the while, there I sat.

Sitting in the gunners hatch, listening life’s little horrors with no way to turn the channel.

No one in the truck was speaking.

The music was on, but no one heard it. There was just an eerie silence.

All I heard was the radio transmissions; I watched as the landscape passed me by in slow motion.

I didn’t hear wind noise or car horns or gunfire or my own thoughts. I was only accompanied by the silence of the world passing me by, interrupted only by the screams of the voice on the radio.

At this point, I was as frustrated as I had been all year. Where the fuck was that goddamn chopper and why was it taking so long?! What if it were me?

Would I be waiting that long? Would this pathetic exchange be included in the newscast if the guy dies?

I was angry, upset, frustrated, and anticipating the next transmission in this macabre play by play account. Forget about TNT, HBO, and Law and Order: THIS was drama. This was heart wrenching.

Seconds seemed like hours; minutes seemed like days.

Finally, after several more non-productive transmissions where Eagle Dustoff attempted to reassure the voice, after twenty minutes and a few more frantic, screaming transmissions by the voice, the man’s voice was calm again.

“Eagle Dustoff, cancel the chopper. He’s dead.”

. . . and that was that. The voice had gone from being the model for the consummate soldier (cool, calm, collected, professional) to the more human screams and frantic pleading for help to solemn resignation.

Now, the voice was quiet.

“Eagle Dustoff: requesting recovery team. We can’t drive this vehicle back; we need someone to come get the vehicle and body. Over.”

“Do you have casualty’s information?”

“Yes. SGT King, over.”

I sat in that gunners sling in a fit of rage that I couldn’t let out.

I had to be a soldier; I had to keep my cool.

We all did.

I was so angry, I still am, about being an unwilling voyeur, forced to listen to the gruesome play by play of another soldier’s life and death.

**We had been told that the insurgency was in its last throes, that they were just a bunch of dead enders. No, not this day.**

**Today, SGT King was in his last throes, and I was there to listen to the whole thing, whether I liked it or not.**

**A soldier’s death isn’t anything like the movies. There was no patriotic music; there was no feeling of purpose. It’s just . . . death.**

**I wasn’t there physically; I didn’t see him, but I was there.**

Any sane person would have wanted to turn the channel. No one wants to hear the screams of a man losing his friend, but I couldn’t turn it off. We were required to monitor that channel.

Either way, it didn’t take long to become emotionally invested in it; was he going to make it? I hung on every word until I got the final, sobering news.

My truck was the only one in the convoy monitoring that net. When we got back to base, no else had heard it, and SSG Bruesch, CPT Ray, and I didn’t discuss it. I don’t think we ever did.

A few days later, I felt like I had to find out more about his soldier. I felt like I had lost a friend, yet I didn’t know anything but his name and rank.

Looking back on it, I should have just let it go, but I didn’t. Using the miracle of the Internet, I found out all I needed to know about the young man.

SGT Jeremy E. King was 23 years old. He was from Idaho, where he played high school football. He had joined the army to get out of Idaho and see the world.

He was one year younger than I was, and he was dead. He sounded like any of a number of teammates I played high school football with.

I’ve replayed that scene in my head more times than I’d ever want since that day.

I don't believe in fate or karma or any type of pre-destined events, but I often wonder what made that sniper hole up on North Market Road instead of South Market Road, where I often found myself.

I was fortunate enough in my time there to never have to call in MEDEVAC.

**I didn't bury any of my comrades, but I will always remember what it was like listening to the miracle of modern communications, the radio, and for the first time in my life being terrified, much like the couple in the story over eighty long years ago.**

**This August 24th, remember Jeremy King:**



Jeremy King

Wednesday, August 30 2006 @ 04:20 AM EDT

Contributed by: River97

Views: 621

Star Telegram -- KILLEEN, Texas - A Fort Hood soldier from Idaho has died in Iraq of injuries sustained when troops came under fire during combat, the Department of Defense said Friday.

Sgt. Jeremy E. King, 23, of Meridian died Thursday in Baghdad.

He was assigned to the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood.



## IRAQ WAR REPORTS

# **U.S. Occupation Command Has Lost Control Of Iraq's National Electricity Grid:**

**“They Would Shut Down One Area Of  
The City, Turn It Dark, Attack Us  
From There, And Then Switch Off  
Another One And Come At Us From  
That Direction”**

**“What They Did Was Very Well Planned”**

August 23, 2007 By JAMES GLANZ and STEPHEN FARRELL, The New York Times  
[Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Aug. 22 — Armed groups increasingly control the antiquated switching stations that channel electricity around Iraq, the electricity minister said Wednesday.

The development adds to existing electricity problems in Baghdad, which has been struggling to provide power for more than a few hours a day because insurgents regularly blow up the towers that carry power lines into the city.

The government lost the ability to control the grid centrally after the American-led invasion in 2003, when looters destroyed electrical dispatch centers, the minister, Karim Wahid, said in a news briefing attended also by United States military officials.

The briefing had been intended, in part, to highlight successes in the American-financed reconstruction program here.

But it took an unexpected turn when Mr. Wahid, a highly

But it took an unexpected turn when Mr. Wahid, a highly respected technocrat and longtime ministry official, began taking questions from Arab and Western journalists.

Because of the lack of functioning dispatch centers, Mr. Wahid said, ministry officials have been trying to control the flow of electricity from huge power plants in the south,

north and west by calling local officials there and ordering them to physically flip switches.

But the officials refuse to follow those orders when the armed groups threaten their lives, he said, and the often isolated stations are abandoned at night and easily manipulated by whatever group controls the area.

This kind of manipulation can cause the entire system to collapse and bring nationwide blackouts, sometimes seriously damaging the generating plants that the United States has paid millions of dollars to repair.

Such a collapse took place just last week, the State Department reported in a recent assessment, which said the provinces' failure to share electricity resulted in a "massive loss of power" on Aug. 14 at 5 p.m.

It added that "all Baghdad generation and 60 percent of national generation was temporarily lost." By midnight, half the lost power had been restored, the report said.

With summer temperatures routinely exceeding 110 degrees, and demand soaring for air-conditioners and refrigerators, those blackouts deeply undermine an Iraqi government whose popular support is already weak.

In some cases, Mr. Wahid and other Iraqi officials say, insurgents cut power to the capital as part of their effort to topple the government.

But the officials said it was clear that in other cases, local militias, gangs and even some provincial military and civilian officials held on to the power simply to help their own areas.

With the manual switching system in place, there is little that the central government can do about it, Mr. Wahid said.

"We are working in this primitive way for controlling and distributing electricity," he said.

Mr. Wahid said the country's power plants were not designed to supply electricity to specific cities or provinces. "We have a national grid," he said.

He cited Mosul and Baquba, in the north, and Basra, in the south, as being among the cities refusing to route electricity elsewhere. "This greatly influenced the distribution of power throughout Iraq," Mr. Wahid complained.

At times the hoarding of power provides cities around power plants with 24 hours of uninterrupted electricity, a luxury that is unheard of in Baghdad, where residents say they generally get two to six hours of power a day.

Mr. Wahid said Baghdad was suffering mainly because the provinces were holding onto the electricity, but he said shortages of fuel and insurgents' strikes on gas and oil pipelines also contributed to the anemic output in the capital.

Although a refusal by provincial governments to provide their full quotas to Baghdad could easily be seen as greedy when electricity is in such short supply, many citizens

near the power plants regard the new reality as only fair; under Saddam Hussein, the capital enjoyed nearly 24 hours a day of power at the expense of the provinces that are now flush with electricity.

Keeping electricity for the provinces, said Mohammed al-Abbasi, a journalist in Hilla, in the south, "is a reaction against the capital, Baghdad, as power was provided to it without any cuts during the dictator's reign."

Other Iraqis are just grateful for anything that brings more comfort to their families and neighborhoods.

"We support any step that provides us with power," said Ahmed Abdul Hussein, an ironsmith in Najaf, in the south.

**The precision with which militias control electricity in the provinces became apparent in Basra on May 25 when Moktada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army carried out a sustained attack against a small British-Iraqi base in the city center, and turned that control to tactical military advantage.**

**"The lights in the city were going on and off all over," said Cpl. Daniel Jennings, 26, one of the British defenders who fought off the attack.**

**"They were really controlling the whole area, turning the lights on and off at will.**

**"They would shut down one area of the city, turn it dark, attack us from there, and then switch off another one and come at us from that direction.**

**"What they did was very well planned."**

The electricity briefing began with Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, commanding general of the Gulf Region Division of the Army Corps of Engineers, saying the United States had finished more than 80 percent of the projects it planned for rehabilitating the Iraqi grid. **[No doubt the resistance is most appreciative.]**

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## **UH-60 Downed In Tamim Province: 14 Soldiers Killed**

August 22, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070822-03 & By STEVEN R. HURST, Associated Press Writer

TIKRIT, Iraq – Fourteen Task Force Lightning Soldiers died when the aircraft they were riding went down in northern Iraq Wednesday.

Two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters were on a night operation when one of the aircraft crashed.

That helicopter had been carrying four crewmembers and 10 passengers on a nighttime mission in the Tamim province that surrounds Kirkuk



The military said those killed included four air crew members based in Fort Lewis, Wash., and 10 passengers based at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

**MORE:**

## **Iraq Crash KIA Came From Across U.S.**

Aug 23 By CHERYL WITTENAUER, Associated Press Writer

Nathan Hubbard came from a family of soldiers that had already lost one son to the war. Ricky Bell was due to fly home in less than a month. Michael Hook couldn't wait to get back to the states — his fiancée is pregnant.

They were among 14 U.S. soldiers aboard a Black Hawk helicopter when it crashed Wednesday in northern Iraq.

The 14 came from across the country: California, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington. Some were based in Hawaii; others in Washington state.

Garrett Ian McLead, 23, was a surfer from Rockport, Texas, who was on his second tour in the Middle East and looking forward to coming home in October, said Rockport Police Chief Tim Jayroe, a family friend who was asked to speak on family's behalf Thursday.

He didn't know McLead's rank but said the young man had joined the Army shortly after high school because he liked the challenge.

"He was never quiet in his life. Garrett was very enthusiastic, always finding something to do," Jayroe said. "Garrett was a fun-loving kid who grew up to be a really dedicated young man."

The helicopter's two pilots and two flight crew members were based at Fort Lewis in Washington state, base spokesman David Kuhns said.

The Black Hawk had just picked up the other troops after a mission when it crashed, said Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly, a military spokesman in northern Iraq.

Bell, 21, was due to come home to Caruthersville, Mo., on leave Sept. 13, his aunt, Glenda Overbey, told The Associated Press. He had been in Iraq since June, where he turned 21.

"I knew him when he was a little boy," said J.J. Bullington, his former middle school principal. "I taught him swimming. This is a real small community of about 7,000. Everybody knows each other."

Josh Harmon, 20, of Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio, about 25 miles northeast of Cleveland, was a combat medic in the Army, said Tim Serazin, a lieutenant at the nearby Willoughby Hills Fire Department, where Harmon's father, Richard, serves as chief.

Earlier this year, Harmon married a woman he had met while training in Hawaii, Serazin said.

"It's horrible, and obviously there are other families going through this as well," he said after military officials contacted the Harmon family Wednesday night. He said the family has a tradition of public service.

Hook, 25, of Altoona, Pa., had been in Iraq for almost a year on his first tour, said his father, Larry Hook of Atlantic City, N.J.

"He died doing what he wanted to do," Larry Hook told the Altoona Mirror in Thursday's editions. "But it's been pretty devastating." He said Hook's fiancée is pregnant.

"It was his dedication that I remember," said Hook's former football coach at Altoona Area High School, Phil Riccio.

For Hubbard's family in Clovis, Calif., the 21-year-old's death was the second tragedy from the war, the Fresno Bee reported. One of his brothers, Marine Lance Cpl. Jared Hubbard, was killed by a roadside bomb in Ramadi in 2004.

A third brother, Jason Hubbard, will be returning home from Iraq to be with his family, said Clovis police spokeswoman Janet Stoll-Lee.

Phillip J. Brodnick's death was announced by Burbank, Ill., Mayor Harry Klein during a village board meeting Wednesday night, The (Tinley Park) Daily Southtown newspaper reported.

The 27-year-old's father is police officer there, Burbank Police Chief Bruce Radowicz said.

Capt. Corry Paul Tyler of Puyallup, Wash., was identified as one of the Fort Lewis-based helicopter crew members by pastor William Warnock, who spoke for the family in an interview with KING Television of Seattle.

Jessy Pollard, 21, of Springfield, Mo., died doing something he believed in, said his stepfather, Alan Dewitt.

"He was fighting for our American freedoms that we enjoy," Dewitt told the Springfield News-Leader. "After high school, he really got into wanting to do that. He prayed about it a lot before he joined."

Pollard's aunt, Sandy Kaufman, said her nephew had been excited to pursue a military career.

"He just really embraced it," she said. "He'd come home and regale us with stories about jumping out of planes at night."

**MORE:**

# U.S. Soldier Heads Home After Both Brothers Are Killed In Iraq



Nathan Hubbard: The second of the brothers to die in Iraq

23rd August 2007 By DAVID GARDNER, Associated Newspapers

An American soldier was returning home from Iraq last night after his two brothers were killed in action.

In a tragedy that has echoes of the Hollywood movie *Saving Private Ryan*, 31-year-old Jason Hubbard was sent home following the death of his brother Nathan, 21, in northern Iraq.

Nathan was among 14 U.S. soldiers killed in a Black Hawk helicopter crash on Wednesday.

Their brother Jared, then 22, died in a roadside bomb blast in Iraq three years ago.

Jason, who is married with a two-year-old son, only joined up in 2005 because he felt guilty he wasn't there to help Jared.

Jason and Nathan made a pact that they would serve in tribute to their brother.

Their mother, Peggy, said Jason also wanted to protect Nathan. The two brothers were allowed to serve together under the army 'buddy' system.

Mrs Hubbard, her husband Jeff and their remaining son were said to be taking Nathan's death 'very, very hard'.

Family friend Keith Butterfield said the Hubbards, from Clovis, California, were worried for their sons but proud because they knew they were committed to going to war on behalf of their fallen brother.

“There is nothing anyone can say to make it better, but it’s good to know that there are other families that can help you cope,” said Mr Butterfield, whose own son died in Iraq last year.

Nathan was part of a group of infantrymen on board for a night mission in Tamim province, which surrounds the oil-rich city of Kirkuk.

**He was the fifth former student from the same high school to die in Iraq.**

At the time Nathan and Jason joined up, Nathan said: “We are getting on with our lives.

“My brother - my parents’ son - will always be in our hearts, and we’ll always remember him and we’ll always think of him and all that, but we’ve got to move on, and that’s what we are doing.”

Nathan added that they didn’t worry about dying in the war. “People are going to be hurt, and people are going to be killed,” he said. “That is a reality you have to accept, but not dwell on.”

Jason is returning home under the U.S. military’s sole survivor policy, brought in after the deaths of the five Sullivan brothers of Waterloo, Iowa, who were killed when their ship was sunk in 1942.

Since then, a surviving brother is allowed home if his siblings are killed in combat.

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**MORE:**

## **Ohioan Among 14 Killed In Black Hawk Helicopter Crash In Iraq**

8.24.07 Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) - An Army medic who was the son of a northeast Ohio fire chief is among 14 U.S. soldiers killed in a Black Hawk helicopter crash in Iraq.

Willoughby Hills fire Lieutenant Tim Serazin says 20-year-old Josh Harmon of Mentor-on-the-Lake died in the crash. Josh Harmon’s father, Richard Harmon, is Willoughby Hills’ fire chief.

Yesterday’s crash was part of the Pentagon’s worst single-day death toll in Iraq since January. The military said it appeared the aircraft was lost by mechanical problems and not from hostile fire.

Serazin says the Harmon family has a tradition of public service and that the elder Harmon was proud of his son, and vice versa.

Josh Harmon was a 2003 graduate of Mentor High School and wanted to go to medical school after leaving the military.

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## **U.S. Soldier Killed, Three Wounded By Something Or Other Somewhere Or Other In Iraq**

August 22, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070822-06

BAGHDAD —A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed and three others were wounded during combat operations in an area west of the Iraqi capital Aug. 22.

U.S. Soldier Killed, Four Wounded By Something Or Other Someplace Or Other In Iraq

August 23, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070823-05

BAGHDAD —A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed and four others wounded during combat operations in an area west of the Iraqi capital Aug. 22.

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## **Isolated Outpost Attacked In Baghdad: 11 U.S. Soldiers Wounded, 8 Collaborator Troops Killed Or Wounded**

August 23, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070823-01

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – A Coalition Outpost in northern Baghdad was attacked by two Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices August 22.

The COP is manned by U.S. soldiers from 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division and Iraqi soldiers from 3rd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division.

The attack wounded eleven U.S. soldiers and four Iraqi Army soldiers.

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed.

Eight of the U.S., wounded were transported to Camp Taji. The remaining three U.S. and four Iraqi soldiers were evacuated to a medical facility.

Eight local Iraqis suspected of having information concerning the attack have been detained.

[Wow! Now you've read this, you have "information concerning the attack" too, along with thousands of other people. So expect to be detained? What a pack of useless fools in command.]

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## Reality Of War Comes Calling: '05 GVS Grad First Casualty From Gunnison



8.15.07 By Chris Dickey, Gunnison County Times

The war in Iraq has claimed the life of the first U.S. soldier known to have strong connections to the Gunnison Valley. Alun Howells, a 2005 graduate of the Gunnison Valley School, was killed in action earlier this week.

Howells, a Private First Class in the Army, was serving as a combat engineer in his first deployment to the war-torn country. He'd been in Iraq since June.

Little is being publicly released about the circumstances surrounding his death at this time. Howells reportedly was on patrol in Baghdad when the Humvee he was traveling in was attacked.

Gunnison resident and family friend Kathy MacAllister confirmed that Howells' parents, who now live in Wisconsin, were officially notified of his death on Monday.

"They're obviously shocked," MacAllister said of Gwen and Jaena Howells.

The Howells are British citizens who spent many years living in Gunnison. They formerly owned and operated Island Acres Motel in Gunnison and Treasury Liquors in Crested Butte. Gwen is a former soldier in the British military.

Alun Howells, who maintained dual citizenship, spent grade school through high school here. He was good friends with MacAllister's son, James Beda, who is also in the military and stationed in Iraq.

"They did everything together growing up," she explained. "They were in 4-H together. They bought horses together. They raised sheep together."

And, along with another friend, Nick August, they dreamed of one day being in the military together, MacAllister explained.

"The boys, all of them, wanted to do this since they were little," MacAllister said. "All three enlisted the summer after they graduated from high school."

"I told Gwen that Alun was with his friends and doing what he wanted to be doing."

GVS teacher Neil Coen called Howells an "extraordinary kid" who went through a huge transformation during high school.

When he started GVS, Coen recalled, Howells "was into this bizarre stuff trying to define himself." He dressed in all black, even black lipstick and fingernails, trying to look like a vampire.

"Alun pushed those edges to find himself," Coen said. "Then one day, he comes to school in a pair of corduroys, a white button-up shirt and tennis shoes."

"He said, 'Ah, I'm over it.' That was all he said. And from that day on he was a committed student leader and a tremendous advocate for the kids who came in (to GVS)."

It was March of his senior year when Howells informed his teachers of his plans to enlist in the military. Coen admits quizzing him to make sure the decision "wasn't some ego, stability thing."

"He gave all the right answers," Coen said. "This was a path he chose for himself."

On Howells' MySpace.com Web page, he talked of his future and how he'd like to travel, finish college and eventually move back to the U.K. He spoke of how he couldn't wait to meet up with his family and friends again, "and be grateful for their presence and humor and all the other things I took for granted before I left."

In addition to his parents, Howells is survived by three siblings. He was 20 years old.

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# City Soldier 'Wanted To Fight For His Country'

August 15, 2007 By Bryan Dean, Staff Writer; NewsOK

When most kids were dreaming of being an astronaut or professional football player, William Scates knew he would be a soldier.

Moreana Whitson, Scates' mother, said she's not sure why her son had such an attraction to the military, but it never wavered from the time he was 5 or 6 years old until he died Saturday in Iraq.

Scates, a 31-year-old staff sergeant from Oklahoma City, died in Arab Jabour, Iraq, when he was hit by a roadside bomb. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga. Three other soldiers also were killed by the blast.

## **Scates is the 57th Oklahoman killed in Iraq since the U.S. invasion in 2003.**

"He wanted to fight for his country when he was just a little boy," Whitson said. "He used to draw pictures of soldiers. It's just what he always wanted to do."

Scates attended Western Heights High School. The Eagle Scout joined the military after graduating, serving in the Oklahoma National Guard before joining the active-duty military.

Scates met his wife, Raquel, while stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas.

The couple had a 9-year-old daughter, Jade, and a 7-month-old daughter, Kendra.

Raquel Scates said the family had lived near Fort Stewart, Ga., for the past four years.

Whitson said her son was a career military man who had already served two tours in Iraq. She spoke often and candidly with her son about the war.

"He knew how dangerous it was," Whitson said. "He was a little afraid this time. He kind of had a feeling that he might not make it back this time, but he was a brave guy and he loved his country."

Whitson said the same instinct to be protective of his two sisters when he was a boy drove Scates to protect his country as an adult. "He always felt a sense of duty," Whitson said. "He was a hero to all of us."

Whitson said her son wanted to be buried near his wife's home in Texas. Services have not been set.

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## **Pee Dee Soldier Killed In Iraq**



Aug 15, 2007 By Jamie Rogers, WBTW

Tina Criss' life changed forever Tuesday when she received word that her only son, a U.S. Army private serving in Iraq, died in combat just four days after his 23rd birthday.

Juan Manuel Lopez Jr. died Monday, making him the first Florence resident to die in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He enlisted in the Army on Feb. 14, 2006, and was sent to Iraq in September.

Criss said she received the news about 10:30 a.m. during a business trip in Greenville.

"They called me ... and told me I needed to come home as soon as possible and when I got here they were waiting outside," she said. "We came upstairs and they sat me down and told me the news."

Criss said officials did not disclose the cause of her son's death.

"I don't want to know," she said. "I just know he died for a great cause."

Lopez attended South Florence High School and graduated from Poynor Adult/Community Education Center in 2005.

His maternal grandmother, Bertha Gamble, said Lopez's grandfather retired from the Air Force after 21 years.

"It might have played a part in his decision (to join the Army)," she said. "His father was in the Air Force too."

Criss said she heard from her son just two days before his death.

"He told my daughter he would see us in December, he said he would be home for Christmas," she said.

Lopez's sister, Cassandra Lopez, said she has fond memories of her brother and said he always wanted to be a hero.

"He loved wrestling," she said with a smile. "When we were younger he always wore a (wrestling) belt and he would say he was the champion of the world. He always tried all his wrestling moves out on me first."

Juan Lopez Jr. was always extremely proud of his hometown, his sister said.

"He would want Florence to know that he loved where he was from. He would have wanted everybody to know he died for us," she said. "He wanted to be a hero since he was little and this was his chance.

"It hurts that it was like this, but he loved what he did and he wanted the world to know that he loved what he did."

To date, 48 soldiers from the Palmetto State have died during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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## San Jose Soldier's Death Follows Younger Brother's

08/14/2007 By Mike Swift, San Jose Mercury News

They were two sons of a single mom, who grew up close in San Jose. They played sports together and were best friends, their mother said. And both of them aspired to the proud military footsteps of their older brother, who was using his Navy career to become a doctor.

Daniel F. Reyes enlisted in 2006, becoming an Army paratrooper just a few short weeks after he got married, and later shipping out for Iraq.

His younger brother Roberto Esparza planned to join the Army, too. He just needed to fulfill a basic academic requirement and was on his way to a math tutoring session when he was killed after his bicycle was hit by a car in San Diego.

Now, they are together again. This past week, Reyes came home - when the 24-year-old soldier's body was laid to rest in the same grave at Oak Hill Cemetery where his younger brother was buried last year. "He didn't want his family and friends to be in danger," their mother, Rosalia Hernandez of San Jose, said of Reyes' decision to fight against terrorism. "He felt very strongly about it. Even though he knew he was in harm's way, he wanted to do that."

**Spec. Reyes, who most recently lived in San Diego, was serving as an artillery observer at Forward Operating Base Kalsu near Tunis, a neighborhood of Baghdad, when enemy projectiles rained down July 31. Eleven soldiers were injured, and two, Sgt. Bradley W. Marshall of Little Rock, Ark., and Reyes, were killed.**

The Army did not release news of the deaths for about a week, because of difficulties in notifying next of kin, according to an Associated Press report.

Reyes had told his mother that if the worst happened, he wanted to be buried with his brother.

"Every time, I told him to take care of himself. When he went over there he was very enthusiastic, but toward the end they felt like they were doing all this, but they didn't feel like they were accomplishing anything," she said Monday. "He still kept his chin up. He told us not to worry about him, but I knew he was in harm's way."

Among his duties, she said, was the dangerous job of clearing Iraqi roads of the improvised explosives that have killed and injured so many of the more than 3,600 U.S. soldiers who have died in Iraq.

Both Reyes and Esparza revered their older brother, Antonio Rodriguez, 31, who has been serving in the Navy for almost 12 years and is based at a hospital in Naples, Italy.

"I'm a single parent," and the two younger boys had always looked up to Antonio, "who was the man of the house," Hernandez said. "They really looked up to their brother a lot, they had a lot of respect for their brother, and they wanted to do the same thing."

Hernandez last spoke to her son the day before he was killed. Reyes told her he missed his 2-year-old son, Daniel, and his wife, Rebekah, and was looking forward to coming home when his tour in Iraq ended near the end of the year.

**The tour of his unit - the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, based in Fort Richardson, Alaska, already had been extended three months beyond its initial one-year term, said Lt. Col. Jonathan Allen at Fort Richardson.**

Hernandez remembered a caring son who helped around the house as he was growing up, helping her to raise a much younger nephew. In fact, Reyes had planned to adopt his nephew once he got out of the Army, his mother said.

He attended public schools in San Jose, including Peter Burnett and Hoover middle schools. Although he did not graduate from high school, he earned a GED before enlisting in the Army.

Reyes was already in Iraq when Esparza was killed, and came home for his brother's funeral. He took Esparza's death hard, his mother said. It was his last visit to San Jose, until he came home for the final time.

"Everybody that knew my son loved him," Hernandez said of Reyes. "He'd give you the last dollar he had in his pocket."

"I am very proud of him."

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## **Decorated Corporal Remembered At Funeral As Young Man Of Valor Inspiring Others On Their Tough Tour In Iraq**

August 18, 2007 BY LAURA RIVERA, Newsday

During six months in Iraq, Staff Sgt. Jerry Stuart and Cpl. Juan M. Alcántara searched homes, patrolled streets, and came under fire together. In treacherous war times, it was Alcántara who pressed on fearlessly, pushing the men in his unit to fight with valor, Stuart said.

"He was a great man and a hero," he told scores of mourners gathered to honor the fallen soldier at Alcántara's funeral Mass at the Church of St. Elizabeth in Washington Heights Friday.

The tearful eulogy appeared to be of little consolation to the soldier's mother, María Alcántara, who collapsed in the front pew as Army officers announced her son was posthumously awarded a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star, and an Army Commendation Medal for his military service.

When the Rev. Luis Saldaña finished his homily, dozens of relatives and friends embraced María and the soldier's grandmother, Librada Disla, who arrived Thursday from the Dominican Republic.

Alcántara, 22, and three other infantrymen were killed Aug. 6 when an improvised explosive device detonated as they searched a house in Baqouba, according to Army officials. Alcántara, who was deployed to Iraq in June 2006, was part of the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, based in Fort Lewis, Wash.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Alcántara moved to Washington Heights with his family at age 5 or 6.

After graduating from Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School in 2004, he enlisted in the Army, hoping to earn money to enroll in college after his service, his family said.

**His tour of duty in Iraq was extended four months past the date he was to return, June 28 - the day before his daughter, Jaylani Marie, was born.**

At the burial in Long Island National Cemetery, Pinelawn, only the sobs of the deceased soldier's mother broke the silence in the graveyard as grieving onlookers watched six Army soldiers fold the American flag over the coffin.

"My only son, Mariel," María cried, calling her son by his middle name, as a soldier began to play "Taps" on his trumpet.

Family members placed white spider mums on Alcántara's coffin and said their final goodbyes.

As Sayonara Lopez, his fiancée, neared the coffin with the couple's 6-week-old daughter cradled in her arms, the baby began to cry. Lopez handed the baby to another mourner, then draped herself over the silver coffin, pounding fists on it, screaming "No!" before relatives pulled her away.

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## **U.S. Patrol Bombed; Casualties Not Reported**

August 21, 2007 Xinhua

A roadside bomb detonated near a U.S. patrol in Baghdad's northern district of Kadhimiyah, according to the source.

There was no word on casualties among the U.S. soldiers as the troops immediately cordoned off the scene, he added.

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## **THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; COME HOME, NOW**



Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO. He writes: Pics showing what happens when US bases get mortared/rocketed. Obviously taken by a GI. I found them online, and don't know who took them.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Two Canadian Soldiers Killed In Afghanistan, Another Wounded**

Aug. 23 2007 CTV

Two Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when a roadside bomb exploded during a patrol in southern Afghanistan. Another soldier and two Canadian journalists were injured in the same blast...

Both Canadian soldiers killed after a roadside bomb struck their LAV-III armoured vehicle in southern Afghanistan have now been identified.

Master Warrant Officer Mario Mercier, a member of 2nd Bataillon, Royal 22nd Regiment and Master Cpl. Christian

Duchesne, of the 5th Field Ambulance, were both killed in Wednesday's incident -- which occurred at 6:19 a.m. local time. An Afghan interpreter was also killed.

The deaths came following the first major combat operation in Zhari district -- about 50 kilometres west of Kandahar city -- conducted by Bravo Company of the 3rd Battalion, part of the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment popularly known as the Van Doos.

Canadian troops then discovered a massive IED that created a 20-metre-high fireball when detonated. Another undiscovered IED caused the deaths.

That blast also injured another soldier and a reporter and his cameraman.

Radio Canada reporter Patrice Roy, 44, spoke to CTV News following the incident and said he had been writing his report before the blast occurred.

"I was writing my standup just seconds before the blast and it was a huge, huge blast... I was pushed," he said. "It's a scene that's difficult to imagine, people were not panicking but it was so serious."

Roy is suffering from nervous shock and his cameraman, Charles Dubois, has had to undergo surgery for a serious leg injury.

Roy and Dubois and the injured soldier have been flown to Germany for treatment.

**MORE:**

## **Reporter Blown Up By IED Says: They Told Us, The Taliban "Will Run" "They Didn't Run"**

August 23, 2007 CBC News

A visibly shaken Radio-Canada reporter on Thursday struggled to describe a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan that killed two soldiers and an Afghan interpreter and injured two others, including his friend and fellow journalist.

**Patrice Roy, the well-known Ottawa bureau chief for the CBC's French-language network, told reporters how he was sitting in the third seat of the light armoured personnel carrier when a huge blast pushed him forward and tore the vehicle apart, killing the medic seated in front of him.**

A second soldier and the interpreter were also killed, while Roy said another soldier suffered a head wound. Roy's colleague, Charles Dubois, suffered a serious leg injury.

"We were at the end of a very difficult mission," Roy said in the first eyewitness account to emerge a day after the blast.

**"They told us, 'The Taliban won't shoot because we're so many tanks. It's a demonstration of force, so they will run,'" he said, often sighing and casting his eyes downward during the interview.**

**"They didn't run."**

Roy recalled how the group of vehicles moved back and forth and circled a small village for several hours trying to find a way to get to the objective on the mountain, about 50 kilometres west of Kandahar.

The veteran journalist described soldiers around him remaining calm while receiving fire from insurgents.

**They were told the road to the objective had been cleared by a minesweeper, he said.**

"I was writing my stand-up just seconds before the blast," Roy said. "It was a huge blast. It's a little bit difficult to describe."

Roy planned to leave his six-week assignment early and accompany Dubois to Germany for treatment. **[How nice for him. Let's put in the same rules for the troops.]**

**Roy said he just wanted to be near his own family, who he initially feared would hear rumours circulating of a journalist wounded in Afghanistan.**

"I felt terribly bad and was worried for my children to see the news in Canada," he said.

**[Gee, guess it never occurred to him that the troops' families go through that over and over and over and over and over and it never ends. "Two soldiers killed in Afghanistan today," or "in Iraq today," for example, before the names are announced.]**

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## **11 Foreign Occupation Soldiers Wounded By Successful Attack In Force On Nuristan Base**

August 22, 2007 (AFP)

Taliban militants wearing Afghan army uniforms raided a NATO base in the mountainous northeastern province of Nuristan on Wednesday, killing two Afghan soldiers and injuring 11 NATO troops, capping a day of deadly violence, officials said.

In Nuristan, the raid on the base "resulted in two Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers killed and 11 ISAF soldiers wounded," the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said in a statement.

"The Taliban extremists who attacked were wearing ANA uniforms, which allowed them to approach the base," it added.

An ISAF spokeswoman, US Major Christine Nelson-Chung, told AFP that several Taliban fighters were killed in the attack but could not give a precise figure. [Meaning the resistance completely controlled the battlefield from start to finish. Otherwise, just count the dead, and be very "precise." Duh.]

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## Major Attack On Convoy From Occupation Air Base To Kandahar

24 August 2007 FOCUS News Agency

Kandahar. Taliban militants attacked Thursday a convoy carrying supplies for international troops in Afghanistan, killing 10 Afghan guards, officials said.

The convoy of trucks was attacked by dozens of militants on the main highway between Kabul and southern Kandahar city in Zabul province.

About 80 private security guards escorting the convoy fought the militants near provincial capital Qalat, an official from the security company said.

"I've lost 10 guards," official Mohammad Saleem said.

"It was very intense fighting. It lasted two hours and we were under siege by Taliban," Saleem said.

Another company employee, who identified himself only as Abdullah, confirmed the fighting occurred after the rebels ambushed their convoy.

The convoy had earlier left Bagram Air Base -- the main US-led military base -- north of the capital Kabul and was heading to Kandahar.

A highway police officer, Ghulam Jailani, said police reinforcements had been sent to the area after the fighting.

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# **Assorted Resistance Action; “Taleban Attacks In General Are On The Rise, And Fighting Continues Throughout Much Of The Country”**

August 22, 2007 Reuters & (AFP) & 23 August 2007 By Benjamin Sand, Islamabad,  
VOICE OF AMERICA

**Taleban attacks in general are on the rise, and fighting continues throughout much of the country.**

In Southern Afghanistan, a provincial police chief narrowly escaped a roadside bomb Thursday.

KHOST, Afghanistan - The governor of Afghanistan's southeastern province of Khost survived an assassination attempt on Wednesday when a car bomber struck his convoy, witnesses and officials said.

**Jamal was returning from a ceremony to mark the opening of a new road built under the supervision of NATO-led forces when the bomber hit his convoy, according to a NATO spokeswoman, US Major Christine Nelson-Chung.**

At least three of governor Arsala Jamal's bodyguards were killed in the attack and injuring five police, which occurred close to a base for Western troops just outside Khost town, they said.

Minutes after the attack, Jamal told Reuters he was fine.

“The attack was against my convoy. I am fine, but I see some people in flames in cars ahead of me.”

Also on Wednesday, Taliban and Afghan forces clashed in two separate districts of Ghazni province which lies to the southwest of Kabul, the two sides said.

In other clashes, two policemen and four militants were killed in fighting in the eastern province of Paktika.

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**TROOP NEWS**

# **Bush Rats Fighting Educational Benefits For Troops That Would Really Cover Cost Of Education: They're Frightened The Benefits Might Get Used!**

August 13, 2007 By Rick Maze, Army Times [Excerpts]

Lawmakers pushing for dramatic improvements in veterans' education benefits can expect no help from the Bush administration.

**While defense and veterans' officials representing the administration acknowledge the value of having GI Bill benefits that help pay for college or vocational education, the administration does not support generous increases that would raise benefits to fully cover the cost of tuition and fees plus provide a \$1,000 monthly stipend for living expenses.**

Service members trying to attend college "are faced with the daunting task of taking multiple jobs to raise the money, attending a less prestigious institution, taking out student loans and/or living on mama's couch to cut expenses," said Patrick Campbell, legislative director for Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans.

Officials who testified July 31 before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee said the possibility of receiving an average of \$2,400 a month — which includes the stipend plus average college costs — would be enough to cause serious harm to the military at a time when it is hard to get and keep good people.

"The potential benefits of a higher benefit level to recruiting must be carefully evaluated in light of the difficulties some of the services are experiencing in the recruiting market," said a joint statement submitted by Tom Bush, the Defense Department's principal director for manpower and personnel, and Curt Gilroy, its director of accession policy.

**"Attracting qualified recruits using large, across-the-board basic benefits incurs the risk that many who enter for the benefits will leave as soon as they can to use them," the statement said.**

## **Troops Invited:**

**What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org). Name, I.D., withheld unless you**

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## IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

**Thousands Take To The Streets  
Demonstrating Against The U.S.  
Occupation Of Iraq And Recent  
Raids, Arrests And Killings Of Iraqi  
Citizens In Sadr City By Occupation  
Troops**



Thousands take to the streets in Baghdad August 20, 2007 demonstrating against the U.S. occupation of Iraq and recent raids, arrests, and killings of Iraqi citizens by occupation troops. (AFP/Ahmad Al Rubaye)

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## Assorted Resistance Action

21 Aug 2007 Reuters & 22 Aug 2007 Reuters & AP & Aug 23 By STEVEN R. HURST, Associated Press Writer & Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers

**U.S. troops arrested nine policemen two days ago on suspicion they were involved in a roadside bombing near a checkpoint they controlled in east Baghdad's Rasheed district, according to a military statement on Thursday.**

At least 18 police were killed and 20 wounded when a bomber rammed a fuel tanker into Baiji police station, 180 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, the Interior Ministry said.

Guerrillas captured Sameer al-Aatar, deputy minister of science and technology, on Monday in Aarasat al-Hindiya district in southern Baghdad, police said. Al-Aatar is a member of the secular Iraqi National [pro-occupation] List headed by former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.

Insurgents killed Colonel Othman Chachan, the police chief of Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, after storming his home, police said.

Eight police recruits were wounded when a bomber wearing an explosives vest targeted a queue outside a police station in Falluja, 50 km (35 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

Gunpersons killed an off-duty policeman in a drive-by shooting near his house in Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed two policemen and wounded eight in Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A car bomb exploded near a convoy carrying the head of Hawija city council, wounding two of his guards, in Hawija, 70 km (40 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

A roadside bomb exploded near workers laying water pipes, killing two and wounding five, on Tuesday in a village near the town of Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad, police said.

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

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

***Good News For The Iraqi  
Resistance!!***

**U.S. Occupation Commands'  
Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even  
More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**

**BEFORE**



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division kick down an Iraqi citizens door in a home invasion in the Amariyah neighborhood of west Baghdad, Aug. 1, 2007. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

## AFTER



An Iraqi family sits and watches as the occupation soldiers from the 2nd battalion, 32nd Field Artillery brigade raid their home in Baghdad August 8, 2007. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj (IRAQ)

**[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.**

**[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]**

**The women and children were moved into a room, where they huddled together in silence. The men had been forced down onto their knees wherever they were apprehended, their hands secured behind their backs with plastic handcuffs and their eyes covered by makeshift blindfolds. YOCHI J. DREAZEN, Wall St. Journal, 3.12.07**

**"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."**

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION  
BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!**

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