

## Articles about the life and death of Spc. "Dan" Daniel Paul DREVNICK



24 Nov 2009

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Event	Date(s)	Place	Description
Born	13 Apr 1987	St. Paul Ramsey Hosp., St. Paul, RC, MN	
Christened		Woodbury Luth. Ch., Woodbury, WC, MN	
Died	16 Jul 2009	Basra, Iraq	
Buried	25 Jul 2009	Ft. Snelling Nat. Cem., M, HC, MN	
Nickname:		AKA:	Married Name:
Sex:	M	ID:	AFN:
Created:	24 Apr 2000	Last Changed: 24 Nov 2009	

### Parents

Father	Mother
"Ken" Kenneth Joseph DREVNICK	Roberta Jean RYDER

### Notes

OBITUARY: Daniel Paul Drevnick - reprinted from the July 22, 2009 St. Paul Pioneer Press

Drevnick, Daniel Paul Specialist in the Minnesota Army National Guard Loving Son, Brother, Grandson, Friend Age 22 of Woodbury killed in combat action while serving in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom) on July 16, 2009. Preceded in death by grandparents, Robert and Audrey Ryder, George Drevnick; uncle, David. Survived by mother, Roberta (Major Charles) Freese; father, Retired Sgt. Kenneth J. (Julie) Drevnick; grandparents, Charles and Nancy Freese, Josephine Drevnick, Sharon and Donald Fleming, Charles Elg; brothers and sisters, Robert Joseph (Brenda) Drevnick, Rebecca Ann (Casey) Buckles, Shelby Marie Freese; uncles, David, Bernie (Michele), James, Jon (Linda); many cousins and friends. Funeral service 10AM Saturday, 7/25/09, at KING OF KINGS LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1583 Radio Drive, Woodbury. Visitation 3-8PM Friday at WULFF WOODBURY FUNERAL HOME, 2195 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury and 1 hour prior to services at church Saturday. Interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorials preferred to Minnesota Military Family Foundation. WULFF WOODBURY 651-738-9615

Spc. Daniel P. Drevnick, Woodbury, Minnesota, Age 22 - Announcement from the Minnesota National Guards website

Specialist Daniel Paul Drevnick, 22, of Woodbury was killed in combat. He was assigned to the 34th Military Police Company in Stillwater, Minn. Spc. Drevnick was killed when Contingency Operating Base Basra was attacked by indirect fire Thursday, July 16 at approximately 9:15 p.m Iraq time.

Spc. Drevnick was born April 13, 1987 in St. Paul, Minn. He graduated from Woodbury High School and enlisted in the Minnesota Army National Guard March 28, 2005. He graduated from One Station Unit Training as a 31B, Military Police at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. On March 2, 2009, Spc. Drevnick deployed to Basra, Iraq with the 34th Military Police Company in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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Spc. Drevnick, who planned to get a degree in law enforcement, was attending Century College in White Bear Lake, Minn. before the deployment. He was also a drag racing partner with his dad and raced his Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution at tracks all over the Midwest.

Spc. Drevnick felt that his unit was part of his family and when he returned from his R&R, he said that he was happy to back with family. "Drevnick was a great Soldier, but an even greater friend. Dan always had an excellent attitude and an ability to bring people out of bad moods."

Spc. Drevnick is survived by his mother Roberta Freese and his father Ken Drevnick.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon and the Combat Action Badge.

3 Minnesota National Guardsmen killed in Iraq - reprinted from the July 17, 2009 St. Paul Pioneer Press (Updated: 07/18/2009 12:26:08 AM CDT)

Three Minnesota soldiers died in a missile attack near Basra, Iraq, on Thursday. The men were members of the Minnesota 34th Red Bull Infantry Division.

They were Spc. Carlos Wilcox, 27, Cottage Grove; Spc. Daniel Drevnick, 22, Woodbury; and Spc. James Wertish, 20, Olivia, according to an Army spokesperson in Washington, D.C.

The Red Bull Infantry deployed to Iraq in April and is slated to return home in February.

In a statement, the U.S. military said, "Three Multi-National Division-South Soldiers were killed when Contingency Operating Base Basra was attacked by indirect fire."

The attack occurred about 9:15 p.m. on a base near Basra, Iraq's second-largest city.

The deaths of Wilcox, Drevnick and Wertish bring the death toll of Minnesota military in Iraq to 64.

Kenneth Drevnick described his son as "just a 22-year-old kid who wanted to experience things and go straight and wanted to be a police officer." He said Daniel joined the military in a time of war, knowing that he would be deployed.

"He never once complained," Kenneth said. "He thought it was great. He took great pride in it and we took great pride in him. We were very proud that he volunteered to make his country a better place to live."

Kenneth said he learned of his son's death this morning, and has found more information about the accident in online news reports than from the military liaison who visited the family.

He said a funeral is at least a week away, while the family waits for Daniel's body to be shipped home.

Charlene Wilcox said her son graduated recently from Metro State University with a degree in biology and hoped to attend the Army's medical school. He spoke fluent Spanish, was well read and loved to travel, she said.

"I just cannot tell you how proud I am of my son. And how much he loved what he was doing and where he was. He wanted to be part of fighting for freedom," Charlene said. "I have no regrets at all. I'm very proud of my child."

Carlos Wilcox worked security at The Ugly Mug, a bar in downtown Minneapolis. His coworkers and friends gathered there tonight to share their memories.

Bartender Rob Gregg described Wilcox as "just the nicest guy. Very calm, very laid back."

"A lot of times, with security staff downtown, those guys get a lot of attitude. Carlos was the opposite of that," Gregg said. "He was always very professional."

The gathering drew people "out of the woodwork," Gregg said, "which I think is

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kind of a testament to the kind of guy (Wilcox) was."

The Wertish family declined comment and said a statement will be released soon.

Myra Peterson, chairwoman of the Washington County Board, said she was saddened by the news, as two of the men hail from Washington County.

"It's always sad to lose a child, to lose a husband, to lose a brother," Peterson said. "But you have to ... be overwhelmed by the sacrifice they've made for our freedom."

State Rep. Phil Sterner, DFL-Rosemount - where the Red Bull Infantry Division is headquartered - released a statement:

"Our hearts are broken over the loss of these fine young people. The Red Bulls are a deeply rooted part of our community, and all of Rosemount deeply mourns their passing. These Minnesotans willingly faced hardship and uncertainty in order to serve their country. They exemplify the best of our state and of public service."

Last year, Iraqi forces, with U.S. support, routed Shiite militias from their strongholds in Basra.

Col. Butch Kievenaar, the top U.S. military commander in southern Iraq, said in a Defense Department briefing earlier this week that some Iraqi extremists who had gone to Iran have returned to the Basra region.

He said he believed they were pursuing criminal activities such as extortion, and there had been no clear sign that they had a "militia" agenda.

He said some groups were still receiving support from Iran, but "most of the individuals that we see or deal with on a daily basis" are no longer receiving the same level of backing from the Iranians as in the past.

Iran denies links to Shiite extremists.

In Karmah, two bombs exploded around 3 a.m. Friday near the house of police Capt. Bahjat Khawam. The bombs were planted under the police officer's car and near a gate to his house. The police officer's 12-year-old daughter and a 4-year-old granddaughter were killed in the attack. Khawam, who works in Karmah police station, and other six family members were wounded.

In Baghdad, a bomb planted under a bridge killed a married couple who were among hundreds of thousands of Shiite pilgrims heading to a holy shrine to commemorate Imam Mousa al-Kazim, a revered Shiite figure, according to police and medical officials. Later in the day, another bomb killed a pilgrim in a Shiite area southeast of the capital, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to talk to the media.

Iraqi officials say other roadside bombs targeting pilgrims in Baghdad wounded at least 42 people.

At the same event in 2005, nearly 1,000 Shiite pilgrims died in a stampede during a religious procession on a bridge near the shrine. They panicked when they heard unfounded rumors of a suicide bomber, and crushed one another or plunged into the Tigris River.

Under former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, these pilgrimages were severely curtailed. After his fall, they experienced a massive resurgence but have also been targeted by Sunni insurgents. Security in Baghdad was tightened, especially around the shrine in the northern Baghdad neighborhood of Kazimiyah.

Also Friday, residents found a bomb in Tarmiyah, north of Baghdad, and it exploded as Iraqi and U.S. soldiers were cordoning off the area, injuring two Americans, the U.S. military said. Iraqi police said the bomb had been planted at the house gate of a senior leader of a Sunni group that had taken up arms against insurgents.

TwinCities.com will post updates as they are available.

3 Minnesota National Guard soldiers killed in Iraq: The soldiers in Basra, all in their 20s, were from the National Guard's 34th Red Bull Infantry Division - article by SARAH LEMAGIE and BILL MCAULIFFE is reprinted from the July 17, 2009 Minneapolis Star Tribune

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A missile strike in Iraq Thursday killed three Minnesota soldiers, all members of the National Guard's 34th Red Bull Infantry Division, family and friends said Friday.

One of those killed near Basra was Carlos Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove, whose mother said her son asked her to mail him books so he could study for a medical school entrance exam when he got home. "He knew that God had called him to be a soldier and a doctor," said Charlene Wilcox.

Dan Drevnick, 22, a graduate of Woodbury High School, was also killed in the attack. The third soldier, James Wertish, 20, was from Olivia.

"Three Multi-National Division-South Soldiers were killed when Contingency Operating Base Basra was attacked by indirect fire," the U.S. military said, referring to a mortar or rocket attack. The attack happened around 9:15 p.m. on Thursday.

Three Minnesota National Guard members also were killed in a single attack in February, 2005. The three, members of the 151st Field Artillery based in Montevideo, were killed when a roadside bomb exploded under their convoy in Baghdad. That was apparently the costliest combat day for Minnesotans since nine were killed in Vietnam on May 5, 1968.

Carlos Wilcox: Wilcox's father died when he was 7, Charlene said, leaving her to raise four children as a single mother. Her son graduated from Tartan High School in Oakdale and attended Arizona State University and Inver Hills Community College before earning a degree in biology at Twin Cities-based Metropolitan State University, she said. Wilcox, who loved to travel, was fluent in Spanish and spent a semester studying abroad in Granada, Spain, she said.

Wilcox was in the process of applying to extend his tour, his mother said. In e-mails and calls home after his deployment this spring, Wilcox told his mother he was attending church and growing stronger in his faith. Charlene said she hadn't been told the circumstances of her son's death, but said his job in Basra was to help secure the base in case of an attack.

"My son died an honorable death, and I'm very proud of him," she said.

Dan Drevnick: Drevnick's most recent job had been patrolling the inner perimeter of the base, said his father, Ken Drevnick of Woodbury. But he didn't know if his son had been on duty at the time of the attack.

Dan Drevnick had been home for two weeks until returning to Iraq July 8. He had 200 days of service remaining in Iraq and planned to return to get a degree in law enforcement, said Ken Drevnick, a retired Minnesota State Patrol officer.

His son joined the National Guard even after being asked if he was certain that's what he wanted by Ken Drevnick's brother and a friend who was a lifelong military man.

"He said, 'I'm ready to go. I'll be fighting for my country.' He believed in it," Ken Drevnick said, adding that he gave his son his blessing.

Dan Drevnick was a part-time mechanic at Tires Plus in Woodbury and a full-time student at Century College in White Bear Lake before his deployment to Iraq in March. He and his father were also drag-racing partners, winning trophies at tracks all over the Midwest in Ken Drevnick's 1969 Camaro and, more recently, Dan Drevnick's own Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution.

His son made sure to spend time with his family as well as his friends whenever he was home, Ken Drevnick said.

"He didn't leave his elders behind," Ken Drevnick said. "Dan and I had the best father-son relationship I know of."

James Wertish: Wertish, who has two sisters and a brother, wanted to become a police officer but also loved working on his family's farm, said George Schmit, pastor of the family's church in Bird Island, Minn. "Being on a tractor was one of his passions," he said.

Wertish joined the National Guard in 2006, the summer before his senior year at B.O.L.D. High School in Olivia.

Wertish had told his father recently that he was looking forward to coming home,

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Schmit said. On the Fourth of July, the family had a big get-together and talked to Wertish on the phone for more than an hour, Schmit said.

Red Bull duties: The Minnesota National Guard released no information about the deaths Friday but promised a statement when more information became available, said spokesman Paul Rickert.

In February 2009, more than 1,000 Minnesota National Guard troops left on a yearlong mission to Iraq. Among them were 275 military police based in Stillwater, and soldiers from the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division based in Rosemount, Inver Grove Heights, Faribault and Stillwater.

The duties of military police include maneuvering and mobility, area security, internment and resettlement, law and order, and intelligence.

The 34th is providing leadership, command, logistics and communication support for four active-duty brigades of more than 16,000 multi-national coalition forces. Guard officials said they provide both civil and military skills to help move the country toward independence and stability. The Minnesota group operates in the southern third of Iraq. They are expected to return home in early 2010.

Before Thursday's deaths, 12 Minnesota National Guard members had been killed in Iraq.

The security situation in Iraq has improved dramatically in the last two years, though militants still carry out lethal attacks on a regular basis.

Although U.S. combat forces withdrew from Iraq's cities on June 30, thousands of troops remain stationed at bases outside urban areas.

The base struck by mortar rounds on Thursday, Contingency Operating Base Basra, is about 20 miles outside Basra, Iraq's second-largest city.

Britain, which had a large force in Basra, has ended combat operations and begun pulling out its troops. The British bases around the city and the airport were once subject to regular mortar barrages by Shiite militias believed to have received funding and training from Iran.

Last year, Iraqi forces, with U.S. support, routed Shiite militias from their strongholds in Basra.

Col. Butch Kievenaar, the top U.S. military commander in southern Iraq, said in a Defense Department briefing earlier this week that some Iraqi extremists who had gone to Iran have returned to the Basra region.

He said he believed they were pursuing criminal activities such as extortion, and there had been no clear sign that they had a "militia" agenda.

He said some groups were still receiving support from Iran, but "most of the individuals that we see or deal with on a daily basis" are no longer receiving the same level of backing from the Iranians as in the past.

Staff writer Kevin Giles and the Associated Press contributed to this report. [slemagie@startribune.com](mailto:slemagie@startribune.com) o 952-882-9016 [mcaul@startribune.com](mailto:mcaul@startribune.com) o 612-673-7646.

Vigil for 3 fallen soldiers to be held in Stillwater - article by Elizabeth Mohr, [emohr@pioneerpress.com](mailto:emohr@pioneerpress.com) - is reprinted from the July 18, 2009 St. Paul Pioneer Press (Updated: 07/18/2009 01:04:40 PM CDT)

There will be a gathering Sunday night in honor of three Minnesota soldiers who were killed in Iraq on Thursday.

Sunday's vigil, organized by the Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County, is open to the public. It will be held at 6 p.m. at the Stillwater Veterans Memorial, located at Third and Pine Streets in downtown Stillwater.

The three fallen soldiers are: Daniel Drevnick, 22, of Woodbury; Carlos Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove; and James Wertish, 20, of Olivia.

They were members of the Minnesota National Guard 34th Red Bull Infantry Division, which was deployed to Iraq in April and slated to return home in February.

The three men were killed in a missile attack on a base near Basra, Iraq's second-

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largest city.

The Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County was organized earlier this year, after more than 150 Washington County residents were deployed with the Red Bull Infantry Division. The Network aims to "further community awareness of the need to support military families during a deployment and engage in reintegration efforts when our troops return home," according to a statement.

More details emerge on deaths of 3 Minnesota soldiers - article by Elizabeth Mohr and Frederick Melo is reprinted from the July 18, 2009 St. Paul Pioneer Press (Updated: 07/18/2009 03:42:49 PM CDT)

Military officials today released new details about the attack that killed three Minnesota Army National Guardsmen in Basra, Iraq on Thursday, but cautioned that the deaths are still under investigation.

Also, the family of Spc. James Wertish released a public statement in his memory, and a vigil has been scheduled for the three in Stillwater on Sunday night.

The three men killed were members of the Minnesota National Guard 34th Red Bull Infantry Division, which was deployed to Iraq in April and scheduled to return home in February. They were Spc. Carlos Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove; Spc. Daniel Drevnick, 22, of Woodbury; and Wertish, 20, of Olivia.

"It's pretty fresh as far as the incident goes," said Lt. Col. Michael Wickman, Spc. James D. Wertish, 20, hometown: Olivia, 34th Military Police Company, 34th Infantry Division, died July 15th, 2009 in Basrah, Iraq. (Minnesota National Guard)Rear Detachment commander for the 34th Infantry Division. "Due to the proximity of the timing, I'm sure more information will come out."

At a press conference at the Stillwater National Guard Armory, Wickman said the men were assigned to a military police unit at the Contingency Operating Base Basra, otherwise known as COBB.

Located in the country's southern provinces, Basra is Iraq's second-largest city and a nexus for Iraqi oil exports. U.S. military officials had recently touted the area as being all but free of insurgent military forces, and Reuters reported that attacks on Western troops in Basra are rare.

On Thursday, the COBB base received "indirect fire" - a mortar or missile attack - at 9:15 p.m. in Iraq, or 1:15 p.m. in Minnesota. The three men were killed and a fourth man, whose identity has not been released, was injured. He remains in stable condition, Wickman said.

Military officials said bases are routinely fired upon, but they consider the deaths of three soldiers at one location from indirect fire unusual.

"We mourn the loss of these three soldiers; they were truly part of our National Guard family," said Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito, the Adjutant General of Minnesota, in a statement on

Spc. Carlos E. Wilcox IV, 27, hometown: Cottage Grove, 34th Military Police Company, 34th Infantry Division, died July 15th, 2009 in Basrah, Iraq. (Minnesota National Guard)the Minnesota National Guard Web site.

Several other attacks occurred in the region Thursday and Friday, and Iraqi officials reported that at least six bombs exploded in Baghdad and other cities, killing more than 45 people.

In Minnesota, friends and family mourned the three soldiers.

The Rev. George Schmit, the pastor of the Church of St. Mary in Bird Island, said Wertish grew up on a farm with his parents, two older sisters and a younger brother.

He graduated from B.O.L.D. High School in Olivia in 2007, having made up his mind at least a year before about his next steps.

"The National Guard was one of his passions. He enrolled between his junior and senior year in high school," Schmit said.

"His interests basically were snowmobiling, four-wheeling, and also getting on a

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tractor with his iPod or Sirius radio and spending the whole day driving the tractor," he said.

Schmit said family members planned to meet Wertish's body at the Dover Air Force Base in Dover, De.

Wertish's family has declined to speak with the media, but Schmit released a one-page statement they prepared.

It reads: "Please keep James and every fallen and injured soldier and their family members in your prayers. ... We have lost one son and a brother. There are still two other families who have lost a loved one. There are service members right now serving our country in harm's way and we ask that you continue to support them."

Bill Miller, the mayor of Olivia, a city of roughly 2,400 people, said Wertish is the first serviceman from Olivia to be killed in either the Iraq or Afghanistan conflicts. A service will be held locally, Miller said, but he was unsure when.

Drevnick joined the military in a time of war, knowing he would be deployed, his father said. He had returned to Iraq July 8 after a 15-day leave, and enjoyed camping, hiking and working on high-performance cars.

Wilcox worked security at the Ugly Mug, a bar in downtown Minneapolis, and recently graduated from Metro State University with a degree in biology. He spoke fluent Spanish and had hopes of enrolling in the Army's medical school.

The Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County, has organized a vigil for Sunday. It will be held at 6 p.m. at the Stillwater Veterans Memorial, located at Third and Pine streets in downtown Stillwater.

The Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County was organized earlier this year, after more than 150 Washington County residents were deployed with the Red Bulls Infantry Division.

The Network aims to "further community awareness of the need to support military families during a deployment and engage in reintegration efforts when our troops return home," according to a statement.

An anti-war group, Military Families Speak Out, issued a public statement Saturday regarding the three deaths.

"Minnesota wants to know how many more will die in a war everyone knows is wrong?" reads the statement released by Annie McCabe of Minneapolis, the wife of a former Minnesota National Guardsman and Afghanistan war veteran.

"President Obama was elected with a promise to end the war," it continues. "But he has continued the same war, and military families are paying for it."

Frederick Melo can be reached at 651-228-2172. Elizabeth Mohr can be reached at 651-228-5162.

3 Minnesota soldiers die in Iraqi assault: The National Guard members are killed when missiles strike their base near Basra - article by Elizabeth Mohr, emohr@pioneerpress.com is reprinted from the July 18, 2009 St. Paul Pioneer Press (Updated: 07/18/2009 03:44:27 PM CDT)

Spc. Daniel P. Drevnick, 22, hometown: Woodbury, 34th Military Police Company, 34th Infantry Division, died July 15th, 2009 in Basrah, Iraq. (Minnesota National Guard)RelatedMilitary deaths in Iraq

Man arrested for attack that killed 3 Minnesota soldiersMore details emerge on deaths of 3 Minnesota soldiersVigil for 3 fallen soldiers to be held in Stillwater3 Minnesota National Guardsmen killed in IraqMinnesota and Wisconsin military deathsThree Minnesota soldiers have died in a missile attack near Basra, Iraq, the U.S. military said Friday.

The three members of the Minnesota National Guard 34th Red Bull Infantry Division were Spc. Carlos Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove; Spc. Daniel Drevnick, 22, of Woodbury; and Spc. James Wertish, 20, of Olivia, an Army spokesperson said in Washington, D.C. They were killed Thursday.

The Red Bull Infantry deployed to Iraq in April and is scheduled to return home in

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February.

In a statement, the military said the soldiers were killed at their base near Iraq's second-largest city. Their deaths bring the death toll of Minnesota military in Iraq to 63.

Kenneth Drevnick described his son as "just a 22-year-old kid who wanted to Spc. James D. Wertish, 20, hometown: Olivia, 34th Military Police Company, 34th Infantry Division, died July 15th, 2009 in Basrah, Iraq. (Minnesota National Guard)experience things and go straight and wanted to be a police officer." He said Daniel joined the military in a time of war, knowing he would be deployed. "He never once complained," Kenneth Drevnick said. "He thought it was great. He took great pride in it, and we took great pride in him. We were very proud that he volunteered to make his country a better place to live."

Daniel Drevnick returned to Iraq to finish his tour July 8 after coming home for a 15-day leave, his father said.

"When he was home, he saw as many people and friends as he could and even had time for a grandma," said Bernie Drevnick, Daniel's uncle, outside the Drevnicks' Woodbury home Friday.

Daniel "enjoyed fishing, hiking and camping but really liked working with high-performance cars," his uncle said.

Kenneth Drevnick said he learned of his son's death Friday morning. He said a funeral is at least a week away.

Daniel Drevnick is survived by his parents, Kenneth and Julie, one brother, one half-sister and one stepsister.

Daniel's Facebook page was filled with messages of love and sorrow Friday.

One posting, from his brother Bob, read: "You will always be loved, you will (be) missed, you will always be with me. You changed my life and

Spc. Carlos E. Wilcox IV, 27, hometown: Cottage Grove, 34th Military Police Company, 34th Infantry Division, died July 15th, 2009 in Basrah, Iraq. (Minnesota National Guard)opened my eyes in many more ways than I will ever know. Rest in peace my Brother, my hero."

Charlene Wilcox said her son, Carlos Wilcox, attended Tartan High School and graduated recently from Metro State University with a degree in biology, in hopes of attending the Army's medical school. He spoke fluent Spanish, was well read and loved to travel, she said.

"I just cannot tell you how proud I am of my son. And how much he loved what he was doing and where he was. He wanted to be part of fighting for freedom," Charlene Wilcox said. "I have no regrets at all. I'm very proud of my child."

Carlos Wilcox was preceded in death by his father, Charles Wilcox. He is survived by his mother, two sisters and one brother.

He was "a man of God and loved his family," Charlene Wilcox said. He attended Light the Way Church in Cottage Grove.

Carlos Wilcox worked security at the Ugly Mug, a bar in downtown Minneapolis. His co-workers and friends gathered there Friday to share their memories.

The gathering drew people "out of the woodwork," bartender Rob Gregg said, "which I think is kind of a testament to the kind of guy (Wilcox) was."

Gregg described Wilcox as "just the nicest guy. Very calm, very laid-back.

"A lot of times, with security staff downtown, those guys get a lot of attitude. Carlos was the opposite of that," Gregg said. "He was always very professional."

The Wertish family declined to comment and said a statement would be released soon.

Myra Peterson, chairwoman of the Washington County Board, said she was saddened by the news, as two of the men hailed from Washington County.

"It's always sad to lose a child, to lose a husband, to lose a brother," Peterson said. "But you have to ... be overwhelmed by the sacrifice they've made for our

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freedom."

State Rep. Phil Sterner, DFL-Rosemount, where the Red Bull Infantry Division is headquartered, released a statement: "Our hearts are broken over the loss of these fine young people. The Red Bulls are a deeply rooted part of our community, and all of Rosemount deeply mourns their passing. These Minnesotans willingly faced hardship and uncertainty in order to serve their country. They exemplify the best of our state and of public service."

Sen. Kathy Saltzman, DFL-Woodbury, said she expects a formal statement to be released by the National Guard today.

The attack that killed Drevnick, Wilcox and Wertish occurred amid several other attacks in the region Thursday and Friday.

At least six bombs exploded in Baghdad and other cities, killing more than 45 people, according to Iraqi officials.

Bob Shaw and John Autey contributed to this report. This report contains information from the Associated Press.

Man arrested for attack that killed 3 Minnesota soldiers - article by HAMID AHMED is reprinted from a July 18, 2009 Associated Press release (Updated: 07/18/2009 05:32:09 PM CDT)

BAGHDAD - Iraqi authorities have arrested a member of an Iranian-backed militia suspected in an attack that killed three U.S. soldiers in southern Iraq, police said today.

Local police didn't identify the soldiers, but U.S. military officials have confirmed that the three killed were members of the Minnesota National Guard 34th Red Bull Infantry Division. They were Spc. Carlos Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove; Spc. Daniel Drevnick, 22, of Woodbury; and James Wertish, 20, of Olivia.

Maj. Gen. Adil Daham, chief of the Basra provincial police, said the militiaman confessed early today to the attack on a U.S. base near the airport. The soldiers were killed Thursday night in a rocket attack, the U.S. military said, in a rare assault on troops in the comparatively quiet south.

During a search of the house where the suspect and an aide were arrested, Iraqi officials say they seized four Iranian-made rockets and documents listing names of officials to be targeted.

U.S. military commanders believe some Shiite militias have received funds and training from Iran, which denies the charge.

Today, a bomb struck the vehicle of Sheik Naeim Salih al-Halbosi, a Sunni tribal leader, as he was leaving his house near Fallujah, a former insurgent stronghold west of the capital, police said.

Al-Halbosi survived with shrapnel wounds, but his son and two bodyguards were killed, an officer said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Al-Halbosi is a member of a tribal council cooperating with the Shiite-led government on security in the Fallujah region that has helped dramatically reduce insurgent activity in the area.

In another area near Fallujah, a bomb hidden beneath a heap of straw exploded next to a goal post as children were putting on sports clothes to play football. Two children died and eight others were injured, police and hospital officials said.

In Baghdad, vast numbers of pilgrims ended several days of commemorations for a Shiite saint in what was seen as a security test for Iraqi forces following the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from urban areas at the end of last month.

The event was a relative success, despite bombings that killed several people and injured dozens. At the same event in 2005, nearly 1,000 Shiite pilgrims died in a stampede during a religious procession. They panicked when they heard unfounded rumors of a suicide bomber.

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Also today, government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh said the Iraqi Cabinet approved a measure to confiscate the assets of the family of toppled dictator Saddam Hussein and 52 former close aides who had used their powers to take over or misuse public properties or funds.

The government said a committee had been formed to investigate and decide whether to exclude some Iraqis whose assets had been unjustly frozen since the 2003 ouster of Saddam, who was executed three years later.

Parliament must approve the bill.

Supporters honor fallen soldiers at vigil - article by Hank Long was reprinted from the July 20, 2009 Woodbury Bulletin

American flags and yellow ribbons were not in short supply at the Veterans Memorial in Stillwater Sunday evening where a few hundred military supporters gathered to show their silent respect for the three Minnesota National Guard soldiers killed Thursday during an attack near their base in Iraq.

Some family members and friends of Dan Drevnick, of Woodbury, Carlos Wilcox, of Cottage Grove, and James Wertish, of Olivia, also attended the event that the Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County organized in about 48-hours after the public learned of the deaths of the three members of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division.

The soldiers unit was based in Stillwater, and the vigil took place at the Veterans Memorial, just a few blocks away from the downtown National Guard Armory.

At the event supporters kept a moment of silence for the fallen soldiers and then a few members of the community spoke about the sacrifice each of the soldiers made during their service to their country.

Members of the Woodbury American Legion and VFW were also on hand to support the family and friends of Drevnick, a 2005 Woodbury High School graduate.

Woodbury soldier laid to rest - article by Amber Kispert is reprinted from the July 27, 2009 Woodbury Bulletin

Spc. Dan Drevnick, of Woodbury, was laid to rest on Saturday July 25 when friends and family came out to say their goodbyes at the fallen soldiers' funeral at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Woodbury.

"We come here today with humble and grateful hearts," Pastor Timothy Hackbarth said. "Dan faced his life head on and fearless - and he will forever be remembered."

Drevnick, 22, died on July 16 in Basra, Iraq, while serving as part of the National Guard Red Bull 34th Infantry Division, when their unit was attacked by indirect fire.

Two other soldiers from Minnesota, Carlos E. Wilcox IV, 27, of Cottage Grove and James D. Wertish, 20, of Olivia, Minn, were also killed in the attack.

Many people came out to pay their respects to Drevnick, including friends, family, his comrades in the Army National Guard, the Patriot Guard Riders, the State Troopers, other military personnel and veterans, Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

Prior to the funeral services, a slideshow was shown that showcased who Drevnick was and the type of life that he lived.

During the funeral services, Hackbarth spoke of knowing that there is always light at the end of the tunnel, despite the darkness that the world may find itself in.

"In these dark moment like this when we struggle to see the light, God's light is there, he said. "The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness -is not overcome."

There was no eulogy during the funeral services.

Towards the end of the funeral services, Drevnick's family were given the many medals that he has received - the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

Following the funeral, internment was held at the Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

"Dan met his call with that fearlessness that he lived his whole life," Hackbarth

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said.

Council honors soldiers with moment of silence - article by Hank Long is reprinted from the July 27, 2009 Woodbury Bulletin

The city of Woodbury took time out of its July 22 council meeting to honor three soldiers with local ties who were killed earlier this month in an attack in Iraq.

The Woodbury City Council observed a moment of silence in remembrance for Daniel Drevnick, Carlos Wilcox and James Wertish who were all members of Stillwater-based military police unit affiliated with the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division.

Drevnick, was a 2005 Woodbury High School graduate. Wilcox was a resident of neighboring Cottage Grove and Wertish grew up in Olivia, which is about two hours west of the Twin Cities. All three men had spent time training at the Minnesota National Guard armory in downtown Stillwater.

Woodbury Mayor Bill Hargis said soldiers are to be honored for their "unwavering courage and commitment to their country."

"While we mourn the loss of these three brave men we know many in our community are specially affected by the loss of Daniel Drevnick," Hargis said.

Hargis also commented on the city's recent move to enter into the Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County, which is an organization founded earlier this year with an aim to build up a community support network for families of deployed military members.

Injured Minn. Soldier Remembers Fallen Friends - reprinted from an August 25, 2009 article by James Schugel, WCCO news

A Minnesota soldier thinks it's important for everyone to know just how great his three fellow soldiers were. They were killed in Iraq during an insurgent's attack, but they're certainly not being forgotten.

Dan Drevnick was from Woodbury.

James Wertish was from Olivia.

Carlos Wilcox was from Cottage Grove.

The fourth young man in that group of Red Bulls looked back on the night they were killed in Basra, Iraq, at the U.S. base there.

Jacob Benson's with the 34th Military Police Company with the 34th Infantry Division.

He says he has a lot to live for.

"It [that day] was actually one of the funnest days of our lives," he says, recalling the night of July 16 this year.

Jacob and his three army buddies were planning their lives, anticipating a better place.

They knew they'd someday be back home with those they love.

They were smoking, talking and laughing the night of July 16 when everything changed: lives, relationships and planned futures.

"Wrong place, wrong time," Jacob remembers about the attacks.

Two rockets insurgents fired hit the base in Basra.

"The rocket landed so close to us," he recalled.

Shrapnel hit Jacob's arm and back. However, he was still the lucky one.

Dan, James and Carlos, all men that Jacob considers his brothers, died in the attack.

Jacob helped memorialize them in Iraq soon after the attack.

"It's absolutely a miracle that I'm here talking. That I'm here with you," he said.

He doesn't want to talk specifics of the attack now, in respect to the families, but he is very open about how much all three young men meant to him.

He remembers Carlos' smile, Dan's big heart, and James' good attitude.

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Jacob came home to see their families and see his own.

His daughter Avery is just 10 weeks old, too young to understand what her dad's going through, but he's certainly not shy about it.

"It's hard. It's really hard," Jacob said. "I wake up sweating, thinking they'll be there together but knowing they're not."

Jacob talked about escaping death many times before. Escaping it this time gives him new perspective and a new chance to live like his buddies planned to do the night he lost them.

"I can only go on living in their honor," said Jacob.

He doesn't know yet what his goals in life are or what his purpose is besides being a husband and father.

Jacob thinks he might like to become a police officer or work for the Coast Guard someday after his tour in Iraq ends this winter.

Lest We Forget: A Tribute to Spc. Daniel Drevnick by Chris Falteisek - November 7, 2009

As we near Veterans Day, we are so honored that you would join us to recognize our loved ones in the military, both past & present.

Tonight is a celebration of the lives of our many courageous military personnel who have generously given of their lives to protect each one of us and the freedom we so highly value.

When Mo, Jodi & I were planning the concert, it was our wish to recognize someone in our lives who deeply touched us through their love, character, and military service to our country. Along with all military personnel, these are the loved ones we pay special tribute to tonight.

On July 16 of this year, my cousin, Specialist Daniel P. Drevnick, was killed during a missile attack in Basra, Iraq.

Dan was a member of the Red Bull's, 34th Military Police Company of the Minnesota Army National Guard & was serving in "Operation Iraqi Freedom" at the time of his death.

A death in time of war is always sad, but when a young man in his twenties is taken from us, we are confronted, especially in this day & age, with the devastating reality of terrorism.

Dan's dad Ken relayed that Dan had "joined the military in a time of war, knowing that he would be deployed. He never once complained. Dan took great pride in his decision and we take great pride in him. We are very proud that he offered his life to protect our freedom and make his country a better place to live."

Tonight, celebrating Dan's life with us, are his father, Ken Drevnick & his wife, Julie.

We thank you for sharing your son with us, and for coming tonight to honor him. Know that you will continue to be held in our thoughts & prayers.

The next song Jodi will sing, "Goodbye My Friend," is lovingly dedicated to Specialist Daniel Drevnick - may his memory be kept alive and may his life story continue to be told. It is a great blessing for us, and for the world, to have so many brave young men and women serve in our military forces, and daily lay down their lives to protect our freedom.

Dan, Thank you for giving the ultimate sacrifice of your life. "Goodbye, my friend. I know that we will see you again."

Thank you.