



About Us

Send to a Friend

News

Deaths, Lottery, Regional, State

Sports

College, High School

Opinion

Columns, Editorials, Letters

Entertainment

Crossword, TV, Wordsearch

Business

Business Directory, Enterpriser

Lifestyles

Calendar, Kids, Restaurants

Classifieds

Auto, Home, Jobs, Personals

Services

Contacts, Help, NIE, Sitemap

©, Peoria Journal Star

Peoria Journal Star, The (IL) April 15, 2004 2004- STATE All A11
 JESSICA L. ABERLE Galva-based soldiers injured after ambush
 GALVA - Three soldiers with the Galva-based Illinois National Guard's Battery F were injured, and at least one is on his way back to the United States, after an ambush of their Humvee last week.

Lt. Jason Celletti, a National Guard spokesman, said Battery F Gunner Jeremy Wrotny, Specialist William McDaniels of West Peoria and Sgt. John Arneson of Dixon received non-serious injuries when their Humvee was ambushed last week in Iraq. Staff Sgt. Martin Gibson of Battery F said it is his understanding that McDaniels and Arneson have returned to duty.

McDaniels' wife, Rebecca McDaniels, said her husband, a 25-year-old student at Western Illinois University, suffered only minor injuries and called her after the ambush.

"He and all the soldiers are in our prayers every day, and we're very proud of the job they're doing," she said. "It was good to hear his voice and know that he was OK, but it was definitely a scary time for us."

Also, a State Farm Insurance employee seriously injured last week in Iraq when his convoy was attacked is being brought back to the United States.

Troy O'Donley, a native of Grayville, is commander of the Illinois National Guard 1544th Transportation Company, based in Paris, Ill. He has worked for State Farm in Bloomington since January 1998.

Grayville Mayor Joe Bisch said O'Donley apparently broke both of his legs and is on a ventilator. He is being brought to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., from Germany.

Wrotny, 24, of LaSalle called his parents April 7 to inform them he was about to have surgery in Iraq after a bullet or shrapnel entered his face through his cheek and exited his mouth, according to Shelley Wrotny, his mother.

Wrotny suffered a broken jaw and lost several teeth, Shelley Wrotny said Wednesday from her home in Cottage Grove, Minn. After surgery, he was flown to Germany and was currently on his way to a hospital in Washington, D.C.

"He's doing really well, and he's on his way to Washington," Shelley Wrotny said. "He was awarded the Purple Heart when he came out of surgery from what I understand from his commanding officer."

Celletti confirmed the men were part of a unit on mounted patrol about 6 p.m. April 7 somewhere in Iraq when they were ambushed. Wrotny was working as a gunner on top the moving vehicle.

Shelley Wrotny said it was unclear from talking with her son, whose jaw is now wired shut, whether the Humvee came under

gunfire or something exploded nearby.

And while she may question the "non-serious" designation officials offered for her son, she does have mixed feelings about his injury and his return.

"I am sorry that he got injured, but I'm thankful," she said. "If it would've hit an inch higher or an inch lower it could've been fatal, so we're just thankful he's coming home."

Wrotny joined the Guard and got married all within the last year, his mother said. It is unclear when Wrotny will return to LaSalle, where he lives with his wife, Melody, who is expecting their first child in July.

[News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Business](#) | [Lifestyles](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Shop](#) | [Search](#)