

Guardsman hurt in attack

Wyanet soldier, three others hurt in Baghdad car bombing

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By [LISA COON](#)

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GALVA - A Bureau County National Guardsman based in Galva lost an eye and sustained third-degree burns in a car bombing in Baghdad, Iraq, on Tuesday, according to the unit's commander.

Pfc. Dustin Hill of Wyanet was the gunner in the vehicle carrying members of Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery Unit, when a civilian car pulled right behind the convoy and detonated, Maj. Michael Kessel reported in an e-mail to the Galva News, a Copley-owned newspaper in southeastern Henry County.

Hill sustained serious injuries, including the loss of one eye and third-degree burns over approximately 33 percent of his body, Kessel wrote. He was being transported to Germany on Friday and when stable enough, will be sent to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

"Brooke Army Medical Center is the best burn center in the military and considered one of the best facilities in the world," Kessel wrote.

Three other members of the same unit also were injured. Spc. Lucas Siemers of Galva sustained shrapnel wounds and a dislocated elbow. Staff Sgt. Daniel Quimby of Henry sustained minor burns while working on another soldier and Staff Sgt. David Jensen of Albany suffered a shrapnel wound to the thigh. Jensen stayed at the scene near the "Green Zone" to evacuate others and secure the area. He had to be ordered to the hospital, Kessel wrote.

The Green Zone is the former name of the International Zone, which is the heavily guarded area of closed-off streets in central Baghdad where U.S. occupation authorities live and work. It's located in the center of the city and includes the main palaces of former President Saddam Hussein. The area houses the civilian ruling authority run by the Americans and British and the offices of major U.S. consulting companies, according to www.globalsecurity.org.

Tami Siemers said her son had recovered well enough from the injuries he sustained Tuesday to return to his unit on Wednesday, the Associated Press reported. "I'm one of the lucky ones because I don't have to talk about my son in the past tense," she said.

Tuesday's car bombing was the third such incident in four days that Galva unit was involved in or came upon.

On Sept. 18, on the highway leading to and from the airport to the Green Zone, a car pulled between the Galva unit's patrol and a military police convoy that was passing through. The car detonated as it neared one of Galva's Bradley fighting vehicles. Four troops from other units were injured. Shortly after that attack, another car bombing on a bridge about one-half mile away wounded 10, one seriously, and killed two. None were with the Galva-based unit, which was deployed last November, but all were members of the 202nd Air Defense Artillery Unit, Kessel said.

"All the soldiers have seen a great deal of tragedy over the past week," Kessel wrote. "You(r) continued thoughts and prayers are appreciated, especially for the wounded but also for the rest of the battery."