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Two area soldiers injured in bombing

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Man closest to blast calls wounds minor

December 25, 2004

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GALVA - Two local men were among eight members of the Galva National Guard unit who were injured in a roadside bombing in Iraq on Dec. 14.

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Troy Wolford, a 1987 graduate of ROVA High School, and Derrick Glisan, a Galva resident, were injured when the truck in which they were riding was hit by explosives detonated in an idle vehicle parked alongside a road.

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Wolford, now of Knoxville, was the most seriously injured, but called his injuries minor.

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"I sustained flash burns to the right side of my face, neck and right ear, several cuts and puncture wounds to my right forearm, and some hearing damage to my right ear," Wolford told The Galva News in an e-mail received the day after the attack.

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"I am in good spirits and very thankful that these are the only injuries that I received," Wolford, 35, said.

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Wolford was taken to a Baghdad hospital, where he met with audiologists while recovering.

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"I was informed that 60 percent of my right ear drum was destroyed and would grow back, with care, in approximately two months. As for my burns to my face, neck and ear, they are healing quickly," said Wolford, who returned to his unit Dec. 17.

Glisan received some glass in his forehead and right eyelid, Wolford reported. Glisan's sister, Darcy Gustafson of Galva, confirmed Monday that her brother's injuries were very minor and that he was returned to his unit quickly.

Eric Werkheiser of Galva and AlWood High School graduate Seth Malcolm provided security at the site after the explosions, but were not present when the blasts occurred,

Wolford said.

Wolford said the explosions occurred while he and seven of his comrades were ending detail Dec. 14.

"We were heading back from a 24-hour mission when we passed an abandoned car on the right side of the road when someone remote detonated the bomb inside of the car," he explained.

"All I remember is the explosions and seeing the (dashboard) on fire and knowing I needed to get out of the truck before it blew up. I was successfully extracted from the truck before the fire got all the way into the cab, and was treated on the scene. I was then flown to the hospital here in Baghdad."

Wolford said medics were concerned his throat would swell shut due to scorched hair on his face and in his nose, indicating he had inhaled smoke and heat.

Wolford said he believes he was the worst of the eight men injured because the explosion occurred right next to the passenger-side front door, where he was riding.

"I am just thankful that my guardian angel protected me one more time," he said.

Doug Boock is editor of the Galva News.