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Star Courier City

KEWANEE
ILLINOIS



Galva unit responded to convoy attack

By DAVE CLARKE Of The Star Courier

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- The Galva National Guard unit stationed near Baghdad International Airport was among the first to respond to an attack Easter Sunday in which an Apache helicopter was shot down and the two-man crew killed.

According to word received this week by the family of Sgt. John Taylor of Kewanee, a communications specialist with Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, the unit was in the middle of a firefight trying to save a convoy which had been attacked. News reports placed the attack on the west edge of Baghdad on a key supply route to and from the Iraqi capital.

According to news reports, the attack occurred at 11:05 a.m. on Sunday, April 11.

Air support was called in which included an AH-64 Apache gunship from the 1st Cavalry. Taylor said he was on the radio with the crew when the chopper was hit by ground fire from insurgents.

Additional troops were sent and the convoy secured, according to press reports. The wounded were airlifted from the scene, according to news reports. Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt told a news briefing Sunday the two-member crew of the Apache were the only casualties in the incident.

According to press reports, masked gunmen had been roaming the roads west of Baghdad for the previous three days attacking convoys of fuel and other supplies.

Taylor, a 2000 graduate of Kewanee High School, is the son

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of Bob Taylor of Toulon, and Karen Taylor of Kewanee.

- A Prophetstown soldier assigned to an engineering battalion stationed northwest of Baghdad also had some nervous moments last week. In an e-mail to his parents, Brock Bollivar, a member of the 84th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy Equipment), based at Camp Anaconda, said their position is under frequent, but thusfar inaccurate fire.

"They haven't hit anyone yet, but he says they don't see some of the mortars until they hit inside the camp," his mother, Brenda, said in an e-mail to family and friends. "He seems to be pretty nervous."

"He has to work tomorrow pushing dirt with an excavator but he will be inside the camp. Thank goodness!" Mrs. Bollivar said.

Bollivar has been in Iraq since February. He is a recent graduate of Prophetstown High School, the son of Robert and Brenda (Vandemark) Bollivar of Prophetstown, and grandson of Ruth Vandemark of Kewanee.

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