



## **Soldier's letter published in magazine**

*By Star Courier staff*

KEWANEE -- A letter to the editor from a Kewanee soldier serving with the Galva National Guard unit in Iraq has been published in the August issue of The American Legion magazine.

Spc. Nicholas P. "Nick" Welgat wrote the national magazine, received earlier this week by 2.7 million Legion members around the world, to thank the organization for its support and to tell reader-members what it's really like in Iraq.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Welgat was one of 10 members of the Galva National Guard unit to receive the Army Commendation Medal of Valor in a ceremony July 12.

Spc. Welgat's was the lead letter in the Vet's Voice section of the magazine.

Thanks from Baghdad

I'm an Army specialist serving in the Baghdad area. I'm also a member of American Legion Post 31, in Kewanee, Ill.

I have the magazine sent to me over here and felt compelled to write a letter thanking The American Legion for its support of the mission we're accomplishing here in Iraq.

People back home only know what goes on here by what they see in the news. Everyone knows we are ridding Iraq of Saddam's loyalists and terrorists. What they don't know is that we also are working with the Iraqi people to improve their lives.

My unit does daily combat patrols around the Baghdad area. We've seen heavy fighting, but we've also seen and done a lot of good things.

Almost every person we encounter is friendly. They understand we are trying to help them/ In turn, we give them MRE's, bottled water and anything else to make their lives easier. Giving their families even one meal is greatly appreciated. Some areas here are filled with such poverty, yet the people are hardworking and optimistic. They want a democratic country free of violence and terrorism just like we do.

Every day we see children so innocent and unaware of what is going on around them. You see smiles on their faces as they wave at you, just hoping you will wave back and say hello.

Things like that make me proud to represent and serve my country. Thank you for your support. It doesn't go unappreciated.

-- Spc. Nicholas Welgat, F Battery, 4/5 ADA, 1st Cavalry Division

Staff Sgt. Martin Gibson, F Battery's Rear Detachment Officer at the National Guard Armory in Galva, said that once the National Guardsmen were mobilized, they were eligible to join the American Legion and many in Foxtrot Battery, like Spc. Welgat, became members of the posts in Kewanee, Galva, Toulon and other communities represented in the unit now in Iraq.

When they have completed their tour, the soldiers will be eligible for membership in their local post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

### [Co-workers help mom buy special trike for son with CP](#)

Ian VanDamme is a typically unstoppable nine year old. That's not unusual. What is unusual is that Ian, the son of Tom and Dawn VanDamme, has been battling cerebral palsy since he was three.

### [Soldier's letter published in magazine](#)

KEWANEE -- A letter to the editor from a Kewanee soldier serving with the Galva National Guard unit in Iraq has been published in the August issue of The American Legion magazine.

### [Wethersfield grad stars in 'Footloose'](#)

PEORIA -- Wethersfield High School graduate Bryan Blanks has one of the lead roles in the upcoming production of "Footloose," at the Peoria Players Theater.

### [Police blotter](#)

A domestic issue was reported from the 300 block of S. Elm Street.

### [From the files of the Star Courier](#)

on microfilm at the Kewanee Public Library

### [Moffitt authors bill on genetic counseling](#)

SPRINGFIELD -- A bill sponsored by Rep. Don Moffitt that would regulate the cutting edge discipline of genetic counseling is on its way to the governor after concurrence in both houses of the General Assembly.

---

[ [Home Page](#) ] [ [City News](#) ] [ [Regional News](#) ] [ [Sports](#) ] [ [Obituaries](#) ] [ [Weather](#) ] [ [Editorial](#) ] [ [Photo Gallery](#) ] [ [Classifieds](#) ] [ [Calendar](#) ] [ [Archives](#) ] [ [Shopper](#) ] [ [Illinois Lottery](#) ] [ [About Us](#) ] [ [Email Us](#) ] [ [Health](#) ] [ [Entertainment](#) ] [ [Town Hall](#) ] [ [World News](#) ] [ [Stocks/Market](#) ]

---