

McDonald man injured in Iraq

By Karen Krien
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McDonald man, Kelly Ray Simmonds, is serving in Iraq as part of a convoy escort team. However, he was recently injured while on a mission.

"I can't tell much about it now," he said. However, he will be out of commission for four months.

Simmonds joined the National Guard in Goodland while still in high school. Following his graduation from Cheylin High School in 2004, he went to basic training in Fort Jackson, N.C. He was one of three out of his class of five boys who went into the service.

In basics, he found he really enjoyed being in the service. He had gone into the service for the benefits and to become a cook. He wanted to go to Iraq but there were no positions open for cooks so he settled on being a gunner. He rides on top of a Humvee guarding the convoy.

Serving in the Army National Guard, Simmonds said he spends a lot of time "on the road," being back at his "house" maybe two days a week. The team's convoy security missions make sure that supplies get from one point to another, then back to safety.

"The time on missions depends on what happens on the road," he said.

As a .50 caliber gunner, he said he has been engaged in fire several times. In the month of July, the company was in small arms fire where the enemy fires on the convoy with AK47s and rocket propelled grenades.

nades.

"I enjoy what I am doing over here," he said. "Not the fact that our incentive is kill or be killed, but that we are attempting to help out a nation that cannot defend or protect themselves."

"I volunteered for this deployment for two reasons," he said. "The first reason was to honor all my friends who have been killed in action while serving their country; and second, I swore that if I were deployed, I would do anything and everything within my power to make sure everyone I came over here with, goes home safely, even if it means giving up my life so they could go back to their families."

A few missions ago, Simmonds said he had the opportunity to help out the explosive ordinance division.

"I was given the chance to take control of the EOP robot which is used to place the C-4 on an improvised explosive device and, I got to blow it up!" he said.

He actually has some video of the explosion.

Simmonds said his team has just been named the "senior convoy team" in the whole country of Iraq.

He will be coming home for his brother John's wedding on Aug. 25. He said he is not sure whether he will stay in Iraq for another year.

He is the son of Kelly and Diane Simmonds, McDonald. Mr. Simmonds said that the 170th Maintenance Unit in Goodland is supposed to be deployed to Iraq within



KELLY RAY SIMMONDS poses with his guns in Iraq.

the next year and Kelly Ray is considering going with them.

Mr. Simmonds also said that, while growing up, Kelly Ray didn't like to shoot a shot gun because it "kicked too much." He has come a long way, as, today, he now carries three guns, one of them is a grenade launcher.

The Simmonds said they are very

proud of their son and what he is doing but they will be glad to see him in August.

Editor's note: Kelly Ray Simmonds was to be featured in the Freedom Section that is inserted in this weeks paper; however the information was not collected in time for the deadline.

Road construction begins in county

By Karen Krien
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Two highways in the county will have road construction during the month of July. U.S. 36 west of St. Francis and K-161 north of Bird City.

Kristin Brands, Kansas Department of Transportation, reported that both construction projects will have pilot cars and people should plan to have a wait if traveling on these highways; however the wait should not exceed 15 minutes.

U.S. 36

The second part of the road construction on U.S. 36 is west of St. Francis. The crew will run a test strip on Wednesday and, weather permitting, the work is expected to begin on Thursday. Earlier in June, the road crew completed a heater scarification process on this stretch of road.

The beginning date could depend upon getting the asphalt plant set up. The work is expected to take six to seven days.

When the road is completed, it will have 1-inch asphalt overlay from the Republican River bridge to the Colorado-Kansas state line, a 12-mile stretch.

The estimated cost of construction for this project is \$1,012,323.

K-161

Construction on K-161 from the U.S. 36 junction to the Kansas-Nebraska state line is expected to start on Monday, July 16. The 17-mile stretch will start with the heater scarification process which heats 2-inches of existing pavement before the final seal is put in place. The 17-mile stretch will consist of a 2-inch surface recycle and seal.

"The process heats the existing pavement and rejuvenates it before it is re-compacted into the roadbed," said Michael Terry, Atwood construction engineer. "This is the first step in the process."

The final step in the construction consists of applying a conventional seal to the section. This will be done by contracting firm Heft and Sons of Greensburg. The second step should start by Aug. 20.

There will be a couple of weeks between the first and second step of the construction so the surface can "cure" before it is sealed.

The highway is expected to be completed by late-August, weather permitting.

Dustrol Inc., Towanda, was awarded the project bid for \$1,313,583.

As always, the Kansas Department of Transportation encourages drivers to be aware of highway workers and exercise caution when traveling through this and any other road work zone in Kansas.

For questions concerning this road construction project, contact Area Two Construction Engineer Michael Terry at (785) 626-3258 or mterry@ksdot.org or Kristen Brands, Northwest Kansas Public Affairs manager, at 785-877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org in Norton.

News Past

5 years ago - 2002

Friday evening at about 6 p.m. three planes flew in and landed at the Bressler-Young Airport in Bird City. Their destination was dinner at Big Ed's. They had heard what great steaks they would get there. One of the planes was from Nebraska, another one was from Colorado and the third one from Goodland.

Ed Garner was honored by the Cheyenne County Commissioners for 25 years of service to the county.

Progress is being made on the new First National Bank building in Bird City. Plans are to be in the new facility by August.

The Rumley plow, patented in 1906, is an eight bottom breaking plow. It has undergone many hours of labor but is now ready for the 2002 Thresher Show. The plow was originally pulled with a steam or gas powered engine.

Officers of the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Association include Ken Beougher, president; Al Kirmer, vice president; Ned and Deb Smith, secretaries; Stan Dorsch, treasurer; Norman Dorsch, Larry Henry, Wayne Sawyer, Gary Brubaker and Steve Busse, directors.

Tyrone and Amy Wilkens, along with family and friends, are working hard remodeling and updating the Frosty Mug in McDonald.



JOHN KITE, retiring attorney after 50 years in practice, received a certificate and pin from the Kansas Bar Association. Judge Jack Burr made the presentation in the Cheyenne County Courtroom on July 3.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Semi tractor accident reported on K-161

A semi tractor accident happened on K-161 about 16 miles north of Bird City at 7 p.m. on Saturday. The report from the Kansas Highway Patrol showed driver, Husniddin Sharipov, 26, of Kissimmee, Fla., was going south when he went into the west ditch, over corrected, then

drove into the east ditch. The 1999 Kenworth semi truck overturned on to its top and was facing the northwest when it landed.

Sharipov was taken to the Dundy Hospital by ambulance. It was noted that he was wearing a seat belt.



•• NOTICE ••

A Special Meeting of the Governing Body is hereby called to be held at the City Hall on **July 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.**, the object of said meeting being to discuss and approved the budget.

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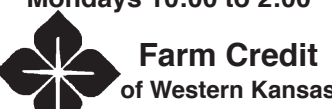
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