

Two more Maryland soldiers die in combat

BY PATRICIA M. MURRET
CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Two Maryland soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan died last week.

First Lt. Gwilym J. Newman, 24, recently of Waldorf, a tank platoon commander, died April 12 of gun wounds he sustained while on foot patrol with his platoon in Tarmiyah, Iraq.

Sgt. Edelman L. Hernandez, 23, of Hyattsville, an infantryman also on foot patrol with his unit, drowned April 11 in the Korengal River, Korengal Valley, Afghanistan.

"It took us by surprise. We weren't expecting anything like this," said Samantha Rose Newman, of her husband's death.

The 22-year-old widow said she was home alone with her toddler son in Rockwall, Tex., Thursday evening when two officers from Fort Hood, her husband's home base, appeared on her doorstep to tell her that her husband had been killed.

"There is no feeling that describes when you see two uniforms at your door," Newman said. "It's something that I will never forget. My husband had a big joke: He always told me that if I saw two high-ranking officers at the door to 'Turn around and run.' I wouldn't wish it on anybody else."

Her husband was the only soldier from his patrol, the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, of Fort Hood, Tex., killed in Thursday's enemy attack, Newman said.

"They made sure he came home to me."

A 2002 graduate of Waldorf's Thomas Stone High School, Newman was 15 when she met her husband, who was then 18, while playing a game of volleyball at Six Flags amusement park in summer 1999.

Her future husband, a graduate of Waldorf's Westlake High School, was headed to Frostburg State University to study psychology in a pre-med program.

"I remember watching him and thinking he was going to be something," Newman said. "He followed me into the wave pool and tried to drown me . . . He decided that day he wanted to marry me."

They married June 5, 2004.

Four days later, Gwilym Newman started training at Fort Knox, Tenn., and joined his post at Fort Hood in July 2005.

He deployed to Iraq in November.

Newman dreamed of being an Army doctor, his wife said, and planned to begin physician's assistant studies upon returning from Iraq, then continue to medical school.

The soldier leaves behind his wife, and a son, Gwilym Alexander, who will turn two on April 27, the day his father would have turned 25.

Newman is also survived by his mother, Christine, sister Brittany, 22, and brother Patrick, 14, of Rockwall, Tex.

The family will bury the soldier next week in Mesquite, Tex., next to his father, Peter Gwilym Newman, who died Sept. 17, 2005.

In Lanham, the family of Sgt. Edelman L. Hernandez, of Hyattsville, also grieves.

Hernandez, an infantryman with the Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), based in Fort Drum, N.Y., accidentally drowned in Afghanistan's Korengal River April 11, said Benjamin E. Abel, a Fort Drum spokesman.

Hernandez was on foot patrol with his unit near Babyal Village, Afghanistan, when he lost his footing and fell into a deep section of the river around 6 p.m., Abel said. Though members of his unit began an immediate search, the soldier's body was not recovered until the next morning, some distance downstream from where he had reportedly fallen.

The incident remains under investigation, the spokesman said.

A Hyattsville native, Hernandez joined the Army in April 2003, after completing boot camp at Fort Benning, Ga. That October he was assigned to Fort Drum's 10th Mountain Division.

He deployed to Iraq with his battalion, the "Chosin Battalion," in December 2003 and served there until the following September.

During that deployment, he earned a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal, among other awards.

In February, Hernandez completed another year's combat service in Afghanistan and a four-year commitment to the Army, but he was not allowed to go home.

His unit was ordered by the Pentagon in late January to stay in the combat zone another 120 days.

Hernandez is survived by his parents, Jose S. and Norma E. Hernandez of Lanham, and two younger brothers.

the University of Maryland. "Scientists need to step up and take a role in educating them."

Bronder encouraged citizens to ask Maryland Sens. Barbara A. Mikulski and Benjamin L. Cardin, both Democrats, to support the Safe Climate Act sponsored by Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., that outlines a plan to reduce emissions to levels 80 percent lower than 1990 by 2050.

One Maryland legislator, Delegate Dana M. Stein, D-Baltimore County, joined the

Emissions, from 39

emissions through each state's energy consumption.

But this eclectic group of architects, legislators and scientists flanked by photos of flooded towns and drowning polar bears had one goal in common - making public policy makers take serious action.

"There is a disconnect between the science community and policy makers," said Ben Zaitchik, a research associate at



PROGRESSIVELY SPEAKING • MICHAEL TABOR

Join your neighbors

Progressive Neighbors meet on May 4 to set agenda for lawmakers

Progressive Neighbors started in Takoma Park and Silver Spring last year as a drive to get new candidates with progressive values elected. The current system offers strong support to incumbents, and it's always been an uphill battle for challengers to get elected, no matter how qualified they are.

We supported candidates for county, state, congressional, and school board offices, and we took positions on ballot questions as well. After securing endorsements from more than 100 activists, we sent out mailings, took out newspaper ads and handed out leaflets. Based on a number of reports from precinct workers on Election Day, our Voter Guide -- simple, direct and limited to candidates who merited praise as progressives -- was a major hit. Most of the candidates we endorsed were elected.

This past January, we held a membership meeting of Progressive Neighbors and started work on a progressive legislative agenda. For the past few months we have talked again to local activists to see if we could reach consensus on legislation being considered in Annapolis and Rockville.

Next, on the evening of May 4, we will hold a meeting to deal with our legislative agenda and add items for future consideration. Our goal is to get several hundred progressives in Silver Spring and Takoma Park to sign on as endorsers, which will give us a huge voice when we press legislators. Two of the candidates we endorsed last year, State Senator Jamie Raskin and County Council member Marc Elrich, who have done very good work during their first few months in office, will address the meeting. In the future, we plan to invite other elected officials to participate.

If you're a progressive, you're invited. The meeting is at Eastern Village Co-

Housing, 7981 Eastern Ave., Silver Spring. Pizza at 6:30, with the meeting starting at 7:00. Contact Wally Malakoff at malakoff@starpower.net for more information.

You can also go to our website (progressiveneighborsmd.org) to get involved and sign on as an endorser. We welcome your suggestions and participation.

The Progressive Neighbors legislative agenda

Progressive Neighbors supports an agenda for Montgomery County and the state of Maryland that is aimed at enhancing quality of life, ensuring equity for all, and sustaining a healthy economy.

We want our ideals and interests to be heard and not drowned out by the special interests of large financial contributors—be they corporations, developers or wealthy individuals.

Our agenda includes the following important areas:

- Voting and campaign finance reform
- Education to ensure students reach full potential
- Housing that is available, affordable and adequate
- Transportation that combines convenience and environmental protections
- Economic and social justice for those who lack it
- Health care for all
- A physical environment protected against further degradation

To read specific details about the agenda items, visit www.progressiveneighborsmd.org.

group in Fells Point to explain that the state legislature is taking action through laws such as the Clean Cars Act.

But he says there is still much more work to do in the form of a statewide emissions cap that does not just focus on cars or industrial plants.

"We must do something or else we will be swimming with ducks," said Stein as he motioned towards two mallards in the water below him. "The state has an abundant source of clean energy."

The group also wanted to stress that Maryland stands to bear some hefty

consequences if scientists' predictions of mass floods and sky-high temperatures hold true. Maryland has 3,190 miles of shoreline according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

Paul Burman from the Chesapeake Climate Action Network stressed the importance of Chesapeake Bay and our ancestors saying that they "never asked for burial at sea."

"What should we call our baseball team when the orioles leave Maryland," said Burman.