

November 2004

Dear Family and Friends of the Wolfhounds:

On October 27th, 2004 Corporal Billy Gomez died of wounds he suffered from combat action in a small town near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Billy Gomez was a very special person, a dedicated soldier and loving son. He made everything and everyone around him better.

Billy was wounded on October 21st when a remote controlled improvised explosive device struck his vehicle. Three others were injured when their vehicle hit the mine, SFC Martin Delarosa; PFC Ryan Sergeant and one local national interpreter. Their mission was to deliver medical care to a remote village that has no doctors or clinics. Because of their actions the people in this area are no longer intimidated by the enemy. Billy helped bring hope to these people and the enemy's only course of action was to try and destroy that hope. In a desperate attempt to refute the progress Billy, Martin and Ryan brought to this small town the enemy struck in this cowardly way. In spite of the enemy's actions their service and sacrifice continues to make a difference in this once extremely hostile area. We will not let the enemy win. Billy believed in what he was doing and we will continue to bring stability to this remote area; Billy would have wanted it this way.

Billy was evacuated to Germany as he clung to life. His mother, sister and two brothers traveled to Germany to be with him during his last days. The trip his mother made is every mother's worst nightmare. As I prayed for Billy I could not help but cry for his mother. Every soldier is prepared to face the sacrifices that our country asks of us but we often forget the human toll on those we leave behind. Recently Mrs. Joan Neal, the mother of CPL Wesley R. Wells, wrote me and shared these words.

"Each and every one of you deserves to be honored for all you sacrifice for our freedom here. Unfortunately for human nature it takes such a tragedy to open the eyes of all to see what it takes to make our country what it is...America the beautiful, land of the free and home of the brave."

I was very moved by these words. I realize now that mothers, not soldiers, pay the price for our freedom.

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Walt Piatt
Wolfhounds!