

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers honor fallen hero

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CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq -- Just two days before, Soldiers from 1/10th Mountain Division were helping a young democratic nation elect a new government in Iraq. This day they paused to remember a fallen comrade.

Camp Liberty's Warrior Chapel was silent Dec. 17, as every head was bowed, when the prayers of Capt. Jonathan Stertzbach, the 1st Squadron, 71st Cavalry chaplain representative, echoed through the place of worship.

"For, again, Thou have ordered those who serve our country to the realm of death. Hear now the sorrows of those who mourn. Touch our tired hearts with healing. Keep clean the memory of the one Thou has permitted to be taken from this earth. May we, by our examples, go live that we may die worthy citizens of our great land."

In a service honoring Sgt. 1st Class James S. Moudy, the Soldiers who fought with him in Iraq shared a few words about a life lived.

Moudy was killed Dec. 11 when an improvised explosive device detonated beneath his humvee during a patrol in western Baghdad.

"Thank you for joining us today to pay tribute to our fallen comrade and to celebrate his life," said Lt. Col. Mark Meadows, Ghost Squadron commander. "I stand before you as a commander, a Soldier, a brother in arms. This is not the first time I've stood here, but I hope it is my last."

"I mourn his death. It is the hardest part of combat to deal with " the unknown," said Meadows. "But I choose to celebrate his life, and who he was and still is. He was a Ghost Warrior."

"He was dependable," and had a "will to succeed, to persevere and never quit. He was an example of what right looked and acted like. Sgt. 1st Class Moudy touched us all."

"I can tell you he was not just an outstanding noncommissioned officer," said Capt. Timothy Bean, Headquarters Troop commander, "but also a loving father who loved his daughter very much. He was a loving husband, and he was a loving son."

"Sgt 1st Class Moudy, I will miss your candid advice and leadership. He did everything a leader could do to take care of his men and mitigate risks. I thank (Moudy) for that. I look forward to seeing you again, brother," said Bean.

A good friend and Personal Security Detachment team leader counterpart, Sgt. 1st Class Lorenzo Balsach spoke of how his unit had nicknamed Moudy "Mad Dog" during a football game. "Moudy controlled the line of scrimmage where everyone on the opposite side of the line looked for any other way to get to the quarter back without facing him."



"Fierceness, professionalism and knowledge were his trademarks. Moudy, knew something about everything. That's how I will remember my friend -- fierce, professional, all knowing, and one hell of a Soldier. I'll miss you bro," said Balsach.

"We here are reminded of the value of life, that its success is not measured by wealth or status, nor by how one dies, but by how one lives," said Sterzbach.

"We must continue this fight against the biggest bully in the world " the terrorists. Sergeant Moudy would ask, and I think he would expect us, to do just that. Get back in the fight. For all the right reasons and for you, Sgt. 1st Class Moudy, we your teammates, will finish this fight," said Meadows.