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May 06, 2005

Robert Jason Gore

February 11, 1982 to April 21, 2005

Robert Jason Gore, 23 of Nevada died of injuries sustained in a helicopter attack 12 miles north of Baghdad on Thursday, April 21, 2005. Funeral services will be held 1:00 P.M. on Saturday, May 7 at the Nevada High School Auditorium with Pastor Scott Milsom officiating. Military graveside rites will be conducted by the Iowa National Guard's 186th Military Police Co. and the William F. Ball American Legion Post #48 of Nevada during the private family burial at the Nevada Municipal Cemetery.

Jason was born February 11, 1982 in Vail, Colorado to Donald and Sue (Selby) Gore. He was a graduate of St. John's Northwestern Military Academy in Delafield, Wisconsin and attended ISU. He was a sergeant in the Iowa National Guard's 186th Military Police Co. Jason had recently been employed as a security professional for Blackwater USA in Moyock, North Carolina. Jason is survived by his mother, Sue Selby-Gore of Nevada; a brother, Sean Gore of Nevada; his father, Donald Gore of Sheboygan, Wisconsin; his maternal grandparents, Bill and Karen Selby of Nevada; his paternal grandparents, Dr. Donald and Jacqueline Gore of Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Uncles, Scott (Julie) Selby of Roland and Daniel (Charlotte) Gore of California, Maryland; Aunts, Jennifer Gore-Lucier (Gary) of Wilmington, Delaware and Elizabeth Gore-Wong (Stuart) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Jason is preceded in death by great grandparents.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund has been established for Jason at the Community Bank in Nevada.

Chet Ryan Mortuary in Nevada has been entrusted with the arrangements.

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May 12, 2005

Local soldier honored at weekend memorial service

Jason Kristufek, Special to the Journal

"Chivalry. Fighting for what you believe in. Honor. Loyalty. I believe in these values very strongly. Those things are the heart and soul of me."

- Robert J. "Jason" Gore, in a quote that appeared in the Iowa State Daily on May 3, 2002.

Sandy Landis recalls Sgt. Robert J. "Jason" Gore talking to her church group after he returned from deployment in Iraq. He told them about how he got to know many Iraqi families.

"That is one reason why I think he went back," she said. "He felt strongly about securing freedom for the people. It's such a loss."

Gore, 23, of Nevada - described by many as a born soldier - was killed April 21 when a civilian helicopter in which he was a passenger was attacked by insurgents about 12 miles north of Baghdad.

He was remembered and honored by family, friends and his Iowa National Guard unit, the 186th Military Police Company, at a funeral ceremony attended by more than 300 on Saturday.

"He was definitely a leader, you could just tell by the way he spoke to our group," Landis said. "He was an excellent soldier, but at the same time you could tell he had a very gentle soul."

Gore, on inactive status from his Guard unit, was on his second tour of duty in Iraq. He was among 11 people killed when the helicopter was downed en route to Tikrit.

Gore was employed as a security officer for Blackwater USA, a private security firm hired by the U.S. Department of State's diplomatic security service.

Previously, Gore was mobilized with his 36-member Iowa National Guard unit and stationed in Iraq from February 2003 till his return to Iowa in May 2004.

He earned the rank of sergeant and was qualified as a military police officer, Guard officials said.

"We can only grieve the loss of a man so young, and yet Jason didn't want that," said Pastor Scott Milsom, who presided over the funeral. "He told his family he wanted his funeral to be a celebration ... a celebration because of his homecoming."

Margaret Nady of Nevada remembers Gore as a Sunday school kid who one year volunteered to visit a few times a month with her elderly mother.

"She just fell in love with him," Nady said of her mother Irene Dutton. "Whenever he came over he never showed he was anxious to leave, like he had a game or something else to do.

"It was such a special thing for my mother. You don't find many kids that age who take an obligation like that and actually do it."

Sgt. First Class Jeff Peterson, who was Gore's first line leader in the National Guard, described Gore as an ambitious leader with a love of weapons who was adamant about physical fitness.

"He lived to be a soldier," he said.

Gore attended Nevada High School for his freshman year, but transferred to Saint John's Military Academy, in Delafield, Wis., where he graduated in 2000.

The military academy has said Gore's name will be included in a list of graduates who have died in the line of duty.

Gore also attended Iowa State University before he enlisted in the Guard, his family said, where he expected to return to study physics.

Roy and Sue Woolsoncroft of Nevada, who met Gore twice, were impressed by how courteous and polite Gore was.

"He was just a real nice kid," the Woolsoncrofts said.

Family members said Gore was an avid weightlifter, skier and enjoyed fly fishing. Guard members said his love of military-issued weapons was impressive. Gore could assemble a weapon blindfolded.

"We can ask ourselves what good can come from this, but the good of this can be in a community of so many people with different backgrounds that come together to support a family and one who made an ultimate sacrifice," Milsom said.

Gore is survived by his mother, Sue Selby-Gore, and a brother, Sean, both of Nevada, and his father, Donald Gore of Sheboygan, Wis.

"We are not gathered here to say goodbye," Milsom said. "But, rather, we are here to say to Jason, 'We'll see you later.'"

Gore's family and National Guard unit attended a private burial ceremony at the Nevada Municipal Cemetery.

Everyone who attended Gore's funeral was left with these words spoken by Milsom, that many say ring true.

"We should remember, and if Jason were standing here himself, he would say the same thing. He was where he wanted to be, doing what he wanted to do.

"And for that, we thank him."