

Wisconsin families and hometowns honor those who died in service to their country

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 Select a service member

Cpl. Matthew Grimm

Age: 21

Service Branch: United States Army

Hometown: Wisconsin Rapids

Died: Jan. 15, 2007

Matthew Grimm felt lucky. When his convoy was attacked, he was hit by shrapnel in the shoulder, arm and leg. The gunner on their Humvee, his best friend, was killed. If not for another U.S. platoon coming to their rescue, Grimm might have died, too.

While he was recovering, he called his folks.

"He just said he was pretty darn lucky the trucks came and helped them out, because they would have been captured or killed," said his father, Eldon Grimm.

Grimm's luck did not hold, though. He and four comrades were killed by a roadside bomb a few weeks later.

Grimm enjoyed playing videogames and watching movies. When the Army returned his possessions to his family, they included a couple hundred DVDs.

A good cook who often made his own meals, Grimm sometimes came home from school with recipes for his mother, Jean, to make - including his favorite, a chicken and noodle dish. But he would eat just about anything, too.

"He wasn't a picky kid," Jean Grimm said.

After he graduated from Lincoln High School, he joined his cousin's Stevens Point-based racing team and spent most of his time making sure the high-performance stock cars were ready to race. He planned on going to college and becoming a physical therapist, sports trainer or coach when he finished his stint in the Army.

Grimm played football and wrestled in high school. His parents said he liked to work out - weightlifting and running in particular - and motivated his fellow soldiers to stay in shape even when they were so far from home, in a war zone where free time was a precious commodity.

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