

# War claims life of Marine

## ■ Second Houston countian to fall in Iraq

By Sharron Randall  
Reporter

A second Houston County family has received news of a son, brother, friend and fiancé's death by an improvised explosive device (IED) during a combat patrol in Anbar Province, Iraq while serving in the Marine Forces Reserve's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Division.

Marine Cpl. Jacob H. Neal, 23, a 2001 graduate of Crockett High School was serving in Iraq, when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb on Friday, Jan. 19. He joins the more than 55 other U.S. servicemen who have died in Iraq during the month of January 2007.

So far, the total of U.S. fatalities numbers 3,056.

Described by Crockett High School teacher Ronnie LaRue, "Jacob was strong academically, in the top 10 percent of his class and a good person. He had a good



Marine Cpl. Jacob H. Neal surveys his surroundings while serving in the sandy environments of Iraq.

personality and everyone who knew him spoke highly of him."

Colleen LaRue, former CHS teacher, was Neal's class sponsor for the four years he attended Crockett High School.

She remembers a very conscientious young man, who had set goals, knew what he wanted to do with his life, knew where he wanted to go to college and knew that he would have to work hard to pay for college.

Ms. LaRue said Neal faithfully attended and worked with the youth at his church. She also said that at age 16 he began working at local businesses to save money for

college. During his spare time he excelled in cross-country sports.

Neal was engaged to be married to his high school sweetheart as soon as he returned home. Ms. LaRue said she believed that the devoted couple had been together since junior high school.

Neal attended the University of Texas for a couple of years before joining the Marine Reserves in January 2004, a decision he made in order to complete and pay for his education.

He attended Grace Street Church of Christ. His future

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## SD meeting

Kimberly Browning, consultant, trainer and account manager for Scientific Learning Corporation was at the meeting to explain the reading intervention program.

Dr. Ross, said, "It's critical that administrators find programs and identify students in grade 9-12 who have never passed the TAKS Reading test."

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father-in-law Mitch Bradshaw of Latexo said emotionally, "Jacob was already a son to me."

Besides his fiancée, Cam Bradshaw and her parents Mr. and Mrs. Bradshaw, Neal is survived by his mother Judy Neal, formerly of Crockett, who now lives in San Marcos and his brother Jason; father Perry L. Neal of Wyoming; grandmothers Sylvia A. Landry of Bastrop, La., and Eunice D. Zalesky of Kennard, grandfather Huron Neal of San Augustine, as well as many relatives, friends, classmates and church family.

A full military funeral will take place at Crockett Civic Center with interment later at Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio. Funeral arrangements are pending and under the direction of Callaway Allee Funeral Home in Crockett.



Cpl. Jacob Neal