



# The Columbian

## Six Clark County soldiers return from tour of duty in Iraq

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By Dean Baker, Columbian staff writer

A group of Clark County soldiers returned home from Iraq Thursday night to greetings from family members, fellow soldiers, 15 members of the Southwest Washington Patriot Guard Riders motorcycle club and U.S. Rep. Brian Baird, D-Vancouver.

First Lt. David A. Proctor of Vancouver, Staff Sgt. Mitch Giles of Battle Ground and 1st Sgt. Garry L. Dietzman of Camas, all members of the Army Reserve's 104th Division, headquartered at Vancouver Barracks, were mobilized in January 2007. They spent three months training at Fort Riley, Kan., then deployed to Baghdad for another 12 months.

Proctor, Giles, Dietzman and three other local soldiers whose names were not disclosed were among nearly 80 soldiers from their unit who arrived at Fort Riley on Monday. All spent three days demobilizing. Activities included medical and dental screenings, finance review, turning in of equipment and mental health and family reintegration briefings.

Proctor returned home to his wife, Melissa, and 5-year-old son, Braeden. Dietzman and his wife Kristina have three children: Ryan, 10; Nicole, 14, and Alyssa, 16. Giles' family includes his wife, Cherry, and children Lauren, 7, and Tyler, 5.

The six were among approximately 300 officers and enlisted personnel that deployed from the 104th Division. About 40 of these are from Oregon and 110 from Washington. The remainders were from communities across the nation.

An armor officer, Proctor served as the platoon leader in the 1st Provisional Motorized Infantry Co., also known as the "Rough Riders." Dietzman was the first sergeant for the company. Their unit was responsible for hundreds of convoy security missions every month in and around the Baghdad area in support of U.S., coalition and Iraqi personnel aiding the Multinational Security Transition Command — Iraq.

Giles, an infantry soldier, served as a lead gun truck driver for one of the unit's two platoons.

In their civilian capacities, Proctor has been working as a security officer while he pursues his master's degree in teaching at Washington State University Vancouver.

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Dietzman is a designer and fabricator for the ESCO Corporation in Portland, and Giles is a journeyman carpenter for Harlen's Drywall.

In August, Proctor was in the news in Vancouver for acquiring seven surplus patrol car light bars and sirens from the city of Vancouver for use on his unit's vehicles as they drove through the Baghdad streets. The city shipped the lights to the war zone at a cost of \$900.

The soldiers in his unit, Proctor wrote at the time, had found that the Vancouver police's outdated lights and sirens were "more effective" than the ones they could get from the U.S. Army.



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