



Staff Sgt. Frank J. Gasper

November 11, 1982 – May 25, 2008

U.S. Army

November 3, 2002 – May 25, 2008

Served in:

Iraq, Four Tours

Staff Sgt. Frank J. Gasper



Age: 26
Hometown: Merced, CA
Date of Death: 05/25/2008
Incident Location: Najaf, Iraq

Branch of Military: Army
Rank: Staff Sgt.
Unit: 3rd Battalion, 10th
Special Forces Group
Unit's Base: Fort Carson, Colorado

Army Staff Sgt. Frank Gasper loved what he did so much that a fellow soldier gave him a nickname that stuck: "Gaspartacus." "That was in his last tour," his mother, Anita Richards, recalled. "He said it meant that only the strong can call themselves warriors."

Gasper, 25, was killed May 25 when his vehicle struck a roadside bomb in Najaf, Iraq, south of Baghdad. A career soldier, the Merced native was killed months after volunteering for his fourth tour in Iraq. "He'd always write, saying, 'I'm doing exactly what I want to be doing. I wouldn't be anywhere else,' " his mother said.

Following the example of many family members, he enlisted in the Army after high school. "He just wanted to do his four years, get some experience, get out and become a cop," said his wife, Breanna Gasper, who married him just after he graduated from boot camp. "He figured his military experience would help him with that." But military life grabbed him in a way he never expected. Worried about buddies who never received mail, he gave their names to his mother. A caseworker for the Merced County Health Department, she recruited fellow employees to send them messages and small gifts. "I'd always try to see him before he deployed," she said. "I'd say, 'Frank, are you ready?' And he'd say, 'I'm always ready, Mom. Just pray for me.' "

In addition to his wife, mother and stepfather Joel Richards, Gasper is survived by a sister, Victoria Beuerlein. Her husband, Army Staff Sgt. Dustin Beuerlein, is a member of Gasper's unit and served with him in Iraq.