

THE CHSAA IS SAD TO REPORT THE LOSS OF SOME OF ITS BELOVED ALUMNI

Honoring Our Too-soon Departed

Robert Sluyter '41

Robert passed away March 8, 2007. After CHS, Robert briefly attended Dartmouth and UCLA, but joined the U.S. Army before completing his studies. He served in South Pacific during WWII. Sadly, in 1995, Robert was hit by a car and was bound to a wheelchair for the remaining years of his life in Wellesley, MA, where he and his wife, Jeanne, lived since 1959. He is survived by Jeanne, their four children, and their four grandchildren.

Robert S. Agman, '49

Bob had been an active alumnus, never missing a reunion opportunity to reminisce about our good days at Columbia. A graduate of Yale and Columbia Business School, Bob had a life long career in the shipping industry. He also served in the US Navy and Naval Reserve, retiring with the rank of Commander. His is survived by his wife, Joan, of Virginia Beach, VA.

Robert Mitchell '47

(excerpted from Playbill.com)

A stage designer for Broadway, ballet and rock concerts who was the first American to design a classical play in the ancient theatre of Epidaurus in Greece, died August 18th, at Saint Vincent's Hospital in New York City. He was 77.

Mr. Mitchell designed scenery, costumes and lighting, and consulted widely on theatre design. While an undergraduate at Yale, he studied with Donald Oenslager, and later assisted both Jo Mielziner and Boris Aronson on Broadway.

Mr. Mitchell's work spanned Broadway, Off Broadway, regional theatre, ballet, as well as concert designs for such entertainers as David Bowie and Emerson, Lake, and Palmer. On Broadway, he designed the musical *Beatlemania*, as well as *Medea* starring Irene Pappas and *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel* starring Al Pacino.

Robert is survived by his partner of 45 years, Patrick Horrigan. ♦

This mailing of THE COUGAR'S ROAR would not be possible without your support!

To pay your 2008 dues, fill out this form and return to:

CHS Alumni Association, P.O. Box 242, Maplewood, NJ 07040

Dues for the 2008 Calendar Year: **\$25** if you graduated in or before 2001, **\$10** if you graduated in or after 2002.

Thank You!

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The Cougar's Roar

THE NEWSLETTER OF COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL'S ALUMNI ASSN.



Issue No. ③ December, 2007



Reflections on the Florida CHS Reunion

Submitted by Boies Coppinger '44

The thirteenth annual reunion luncheon of the CHS Florida Alumni Association took place in Naples the last weekend in February. The venue was the Royal Poinciana Golf Club, a setting right out of Hollywood.

There were over 100 guests, some coming from as far as Jacksonville (400 miles) and the oldest member was from the class of 1941. Prizes were given to those two hardy and faithful alumni.

Next year, the reunion will be held in Ocala, the farthest north it has ever been held and we're looking forward to seeing some new faces because of that. Anyone that's going to be in the area the first weekend in March, please contact the CHSFAA, 1204 Peridot Lane, Sun City Center, FL 33573 (813) 633-3360. ♦

NJ Wedding.com

Submitted by Eric Kent '88

My wife, Beth and I, launched NJWedding.com on Valentine's Day in 1997 as a way of helping to connect engaged couples with local wedding professionals throughout New Jersey. The idea for NJWedding.com originated after planning our own wedding in 1994 and after visiting our friends **Diane (Rintzler) Yen '88** and **John Yen**, who were living in Boston in 1995 and planning their wedding in New Jersey (they were using the "Internet" at the time and we immediately saw an opportunity that other couples would soon be doing the same thing to find information about wedding planning).

Within a few years of starting NJWedding.com our business started to grow, and I was approached by **Mike Kaplan '74**, who was working in Internet advertising sales (and also managing his own wedding band, the Smokin' Section, which became an advertiser on the site). Mike had the idea of working together to build our base of clients, and we've been working together ever since.

Over the years, I've also had the opportunity to work with **Melinda Vega '87**, who owns her own wedding and event planning business, Simply Chic, and has also helped represent NJWedding.com at bridal shows, and also meet **Joetta Clark Diggs '88** (who lives nearby and gave a talk to my daughter's girl scout troop on physical fitness). In addition, I've kept in touch with my good friend, musician and song-writer "extraordinaire" **Jon Regen '88**, who constantly inspires me with his music (his new CD "Let It Go" is now available, which is terrific, though my favorite song he wrote is called "Little One" on his album "Almost Home" (which he gave us permission to use the lyrics on our birth announcement when my son, Ian, was born in 2005). I also had a unique opportunity to meet **Andrew Shue '85** at the premiere of "Gracie" in Princeton (where he currently lives with his family), and he was extremely gracious and generous in autographing my CHS soccer jersey. I've thoroughly enjoyed watching "Gracie" with my wife and two daughters, Ellie (8) and Zoe (5) - it's truly an inspirational story and well-told in the movie, and as I've followed the film's production in the news over the years, I was excited to see the result of the scenes shot in South Orange/Maplewood and at Columbia High School. ♦

Mark Your Calendars:

February, 2008

A Capital Campaign Event featuring a local band

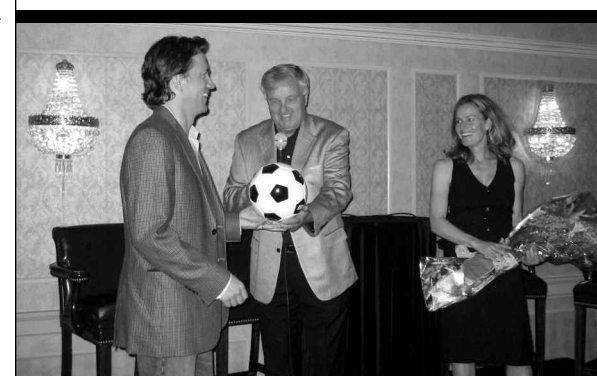
April 28, 2008

The 10th Annual Cougar Booster Golf Classic to benefit the sports and activities of CHS. Contact Al Farah at A7892@aol.com for more info.

May, 2008

CHS Sports Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony
Award recipients will be named in our next newsletter and online.

Having a Reunion in 2008? Let us know!
info@columbia-alumni.org



Fun at the "GRACIE" Premiere Event. Andrew and Elisabeth Shue are honored by their former coach, Coach Chyzowych

Dates and Online Information

Check out some of these websites:

www.highschoolsports.net for all the CHS sports schedules and gear which can be personalized!
www.chscougarboosters.org for more on CHS Sports and Activities
www.columbia-alumni.org for more reunion stories (check out one from the class of '49) and up-to-date information about the **Capital Campaign**, as well as more news items as they become available. ♦

From the Desk of the PRESIDENT

Greetings from South Orange & Maplewood! I am happy that you have received this, our fourth newsletter during my time as president of the CHSAA. I am sorry this was delayed a bit from our usual every-sixth-month publication schedule. After the "Gracie" Premiere event (see article), we were excited to have some new board members join us to get the Capital Campaign off and running. I welcome to the board **Janet Confalone Crane '80, Charlie Tamayo '79, Victor Nicols '81, and Bill Squires '71**. More will come from them in the future as our push to renovate Underhill and Ritzer fields gains ground.

As a faculty member of CHS, I am proud to report that this school year is off to a great start. Our new daily schedule is a big change for the whole community, as we are no longer on a "rotation" schedule by which we drop a period every day. Additionally, I am happy to report that Dr. Lovie Lilly is now officially our principal. She brings to the position her passion for ensuring that all our students receive a, in her words, "first class education." We are all excited to see her take the position after being acting principal for the past year.

In other exciting personnel news, the district has gained a new superintendent. Mr. Brian Osborne joins us on the heels of completing a doctoral program in Education at Harvard University. His opening day speech to the district was so inspirational, I have reprinted some of it here for you:

The first way that we embark on a new beginning of putting children first is to celebrate and take pride in your efforts to push our young people to learn and do more. I'm in awe of what you have accomplished....

We had 90 Advanced Placement Scholars... We had 28 middle school students awarded for top SAT scores... Our high school math team placed second in year-long county competitions. And 10 middle school students won national awards in the Math Olympiad... The Columbian won national and state awards for journalism... We have an award winning food and nutrition program, with arguably the healthiest food served every day to all our students of any school system in the nation... We have champion and runner-up fencing teams, with players that qualified for the Junior Olympics, a boys soccer team that is Iron Hills Champion, a Division III Heavyweight Champion, a varsity baseball team that advanced to the state semi-finals, a girls lacrosse team that qualified for the semi-finals of the state championships, and a boys tennis team that went to states...

Even the current physical climate reflects a new sense of pride. We sit in an auditorium with the woodwork's luster restored, having just come from a breakfast in the new cafeteria – a cafeteria that has so beautifully merged two different cafeterias that were physically and literally separate into one beautiful space so that CHS now has ONE cafeteria for its ONE school.

Toward the end of his speech, Mr. Osborne reminded us of one very important fact: *Excellence and equity are not opposing concepts. The definitions of the word include each other... True excellence requires equity as a precondition.*

As we move forward into a new era in Maplewood and South Orange, I am excited to be part of the effort toward excelling our students so that our list of accomplishments is too overwhelming to contain in an opening day speech! With our new and returning administration team, and a sense of unity throughout the district, we truly will accomplish anything toward which we set our minds and hearts!

I would like to take this opportunity to let all you loyal readers know as I am making changes in my life, I will have to resign from my position of President of the CHSAA by the end of next summer. I hope to be enrolled fulltime in graduate school next September to pursue a Masters of Education (keep your fingers crossed that I get in!). This means that the CHSAA will need a new President. So if you or anyone you know would like to take the lead of a wonderful, dedicated group of alumni, please let me know!

The CHSAA Needs a New President

The CHSAA is also looking for a new PRESIDENT and continues to need board members interested in assisting with the newsletter, the alumni directory upkeep (and getting a new one out for 2010), updating the website, working on the capital campaign for the track and fields, and general communication with alumni from all over the world. We need volunteers to become board members. The annual commitment is a maximum of about 6-10 meetings a year. Don't let this opportunity to get involved in the CHS alumni community pass you by! Please e-mail all inquiries directly to President Alex Somers at alexandrasomers@aol.com.

CHS - ALUMNI

News!

Math Team Excels in 2006-2007

Submitted by Mark Wolfmeyer, CHS Math Teacher

The New Jersey Math League consists of six contests held after school throughout the year and are open to the entire student body. Last year we had several individual successes: **Kenneth So '07** received perfect scores on 4 of the 6 contests and 7 students received a perfect score on one of the six contests. Because we had so many perfect and near-perfect scores, our team proved to be competitive this year. We placed third in the county, behind Livingston and Montclair and tied for 27th in the state. Our team score proved better than schools such as Millburn, West Orange, Montclair Kimberly Academy, Delbarton, West Morris Mendham and countless others.

Last year at the Essex County Math League, Columbia High School placed third overall, just behind Livingston and Millburn. Particularly noteworthy was our Algebra 2 team which placed second. Our Precalculus, Calculus and Statistics teams each placed 4th.

Finally, two of last year's graduating class, **Kenneth So** and **Daniel Gordon**, qualified to write the American Invitational Mathematics Examination because of their excellent scores on the American Mathematics Examination. Qualifying for this examination is often regarded as an indication of a student's potential for advanced mathematical work. Congratulations to these two fine students!

The math team is advised by Math Department faculty members **Mark Wolfmeyer, Pam Noonan, Mani Arguelles** and **Chandar Gulati**.

Hey! What about the Chess Team?



Check this! We wouldn't want to neglect telling you about the accomplishments of the CHS Chess Team which is supervised and coached by Math Department member **Roy Eismann** (father of alumni **Sarah '96** and **Matt '00**). Look at all they've done!

NJ State Team Scholastic Championships

- 4th Place 2006 (several individual trophies)
- 2nd Place 2005 (several individual trophies)
- 3rd Place 2004 (several individual trophies)

Essex County Chess League (1998 to 2005)

Champions 7 out of 8 years (we missed 2000)

Alumni Spotlight: The Stein Brothers



The Maplewood-reared, saxophone-playing Stein Brothers are poised to realize a longtime dream when they release their debut CD early next year. **Alex '98** and **Asher '01** present their own highly personal and melodic take on bebop, the spirited, exuberant brand of jazz pioneered in the 1940s by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonious Monk.

The brothers first performed together as preteens at the late lamented Tuesday jam session at the old Peppermint Lounge in Orange, and later shared the stage as members of the CHS jazz band. Their small group during overlapping tenures at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill would provide the basis for their current quintet.

While at the University of North Carolina, both men were awarded Burch Fellowships to study jazz – Asher studied Latin and Caribbean Music in Cuba in 2003 and Alex studied with top musicians and Grammy award-winning arranger Slide Hampton during the summer of 2002. Both graduated with majors in Jazz Studies; Alex holds a masters degree in Jazz Performance from William Paterson University.

The Stein Brothers recently appeared in the Seattle area with bandleader and South Orange resident, TS Monk, son of the legendary pianist. Asher first met TS while attending fifth grade at Maplewood Middle School. In addition to frequent appearances in the NY/NJ area, upcoming engagements include a tour of Florida in late February '08 and Europe in May. For more info: www.steinbrothersjazz.com

Six-figure Pledge is One More Step Toward Making our New Track & Field a Reality

Contributed by Linda Karten, CHS Parent and Campaign Committee Member

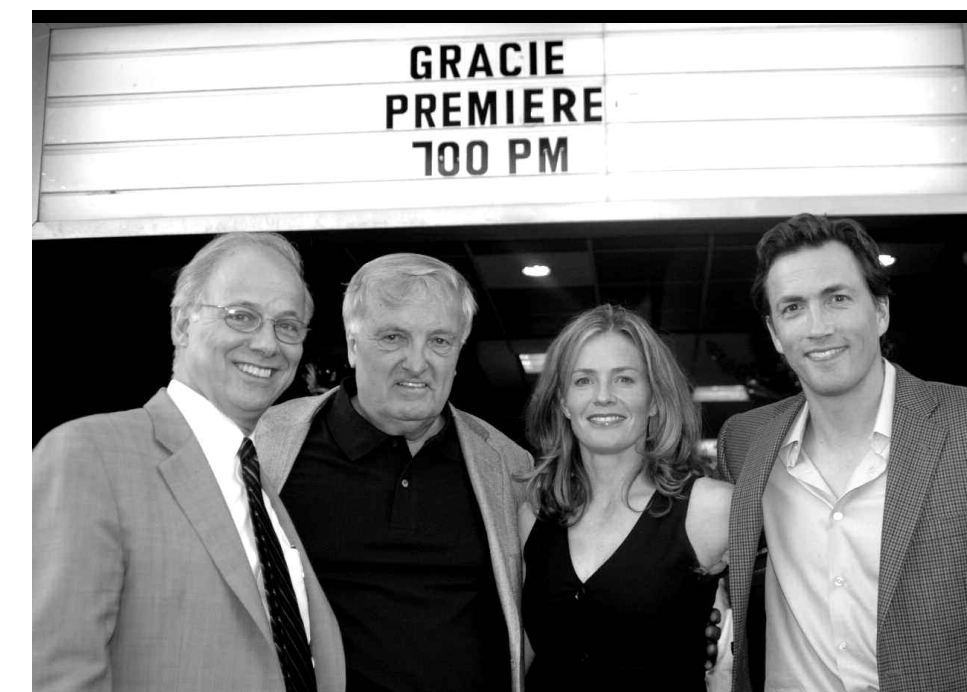
About a year ago, CHS alumni association vice president, **Fred Profeta** shared his dream of restoring the athletic fields at Columbia High School with a small group of people who were also concerned about the poor conditions of our fields. Since then the number of people who have joined the effort has grown to include other CHS grads, coaches, district representatives, and members of the community. Profeta, Class of '57, and his wife, **Susan**, have contributed \$100K, inspiring his fellow alumni and community members to contribute to the campaign in anyway they can. So far the alumni association has pledged exceeding \$350,000. The momentum is building for raising the \$1.7 million needed to install a new track and turf field at Underhill this spring. Once we meet that goal, we'll move on to Phase II of the project, raising another \$2.5

million to completely restore the athletic field alongside the high school. It's a big dream, but so many people in our local community and the wider CHS family around the country are excited and are getting on board!

Last May, the CHS community came out to support the project at a fundraiser tied to the premier of Gracie, a film set in South Orange/Maplewood and produced and starring **Elisabeth and Andrew Shue**. That event raised over \$60,000 for the fields project and Andrew signed on as the campaign's honorary co-chair. This fall, proceeds from the ever-popular annual Maplewood in Motion 5K race will benefit the project.

There are so many signs of progress! The campaign has enlisted the support of a development professional and a project manager. An architectural firm has laid out plans and the school district has selected a firm that will take the preliminary sketches to the next phase by developing actually plans for the site. The selected firm is Kinsey Associates, Park and Recreational Consultants.

What's next? We are raising lots of money but a deal of room remains for us to raise more! We want next year's football team to have a new field to play on and the track team a new track on which to run. For all up to date information on the campaign including the case document, an intent to donate form, and more informative visual information as it becomes available, please visit the alumni website at www.columbia-alumni.org ♦



2007 Hall of Fame



From L to R: Alex Somers '97, Dr. Erna Schneider Hoover '44, Dr. Yolanda Troublefield '79, and CHS math teacher and track coach Rich Moss. Alex and Rich presented the award recipients in the school assemblies.

College after CHS and then pursued a Ph.D. in Philosophy at Yale University. Finding that teaching jobs were limited for married women, she was lucky to find a position at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. When her husband, Charles, moved the family to New Jersey for his career, Dr. Hoover herself found a position at Bell Labs. Her career there soon took off. She became the first woman to ever manage a group at Bell Labs. She also has one of the first computer software patents for a telephone switching system developed to deal with the problem of telephone "traffic."

In her acceptance speech, she pointed out that the technology she helped develop did not exist when she was in high school, and there was no way to know that she would have such a career when the field of computers was not even a sparkle in an inventor's eye in the 1940s. Additionally, there were few women in positions of leadership in corporations such as Bell Labs, so her ascendance to such a managerial position paved the way for many future female leaders. Dr. Hoover encouraged students to learn everything they can in high school and beyond, as one never knows what skills one will need in order to pursue paths which may not yet be realized in their daily lives.

Dr. Troublefield has equally varied experiences in her path to being an otolaryngologist. Having completed an undergraduate degree at Rutgers followed by a law degree at Georgetown University, she found herself longing to return to her high school academic passion— science. After completing a biology course at Seton Hall University, Dr. Troublefield matriculated at NYU Medical School where she became her class's president and eventually student body president of the Student Government. Dr. Troublefield's residency was completed at UMDNJ. Afterward, in 2002, she took up a position as Adjunct Professor of Surgery at the Dartmouth University School of Medicine.

Her accomplishments have earned her New Hampshire Monthly Magazine's Best ENT-Surgeon Award not once but twice- in 2005 and again in 2007. Dr. Troublefield's resounding message to students at CHS is "success comes if you do what you love!" She encouraged every student to follow their dreams, no matter how difficult the path may be.

The CHS Hall of Fame Committee was very happy to induct two women into the CHS Hall of Fame this past May.

In ceremonies held on May 24th, **Erna Schneider-Hoover**, Ph.D. '44 and **Yolanda Troublefield**, J.D., M.D. '79 told students of CHS about their careers and experiences which led them to be honored by their alma mater.

Dr. Hoover attended Wellesley

Heard on NPR



Are you a fan of "Wait, Wait! Don't Tell Me!" or "A Prairie Home Companion"? You may have been listening to a CHS alumni and not have known it!

On the NPR weekly news quiz show "Wait, Wait!" in October, 2007, a reference was made to the research of **David Feinberg** '98 about men who have deep voices having more children than those with higher pitched voices. David is currently on the faculty of the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behavior at McMaster University in Canada. David completed his Ph.D. at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and was a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard University before joining the faculty at McMaster University. (www.voiceresearch.org)



Also in October, pianist **Ethan Uslan** '97 (the artist formerly known by his given name, Eytan), was the guest pianist on "A Prairie Home Companion" with host Garrison Keillor. His bluegrass and ragtime musings on the piano were famous enough to get him on the show when it was taped in Charlotte, North Carolina. Ethan currently lives in Charlotte with his wife and young son, entertaining fans of all ages including some CHS alumni who had him perform at their retirement community after Ethan was highlighted in The Cougar's Roar previously. (www.uslanmusic.com)

Photographs courtesy of the McMaster University and Ethan Uslan websites.



Subscribe to The Columbian

The school newspaper has seen its subscription rate drop, thus putting a strain on its financial resources. It's still available for only \$0.25 per issue to students, and to keep it that cheap for every student, The Columbian is hoping some alumni may want to subscribe to the newspaper to keep up to date on the happenings at their alma mater!

To subscribe please send \$17 along with your name and address to:

Columbia High School, Attn: THE COLUMBIAN
17 Parker Avenue Maplewood, N.J. 07040

Celebrates The class of 1957 50th Reunion

Story by Edith "Chickie" Rosenberg '57, CHSAA Recording Secretary

The CHS Class of 1957 had their 50th reunion in late September and, for a class with a history of successful reunions, this one was simply over the top. When you have had many previous reunions, a birthday party for the class, barbecue picnics, a weekend at a resort in Pennsylvania, and a "class trip" to Montana, there's a lot of pressure to create a special time for the 50th, but they seem to have done exactly that.

The celebration began with a dinner dance at the Maplewood Country Club to which 180 persons attended. The weather was perfect, the place was festive, the music was great, the food excellent, and the classmates so very happy to all be together again. There were memorabilia displays, table centerpieces constructed with original yearbook photos, and videos running of all those previous reunions. It was a wonderful night, and things didn't stop there.

The next morning classmates gathered at Columbia High School where Class of 1957 President **Fred Profeta** (who also happens to be the Mayor of Maplewood) and CHS Alumni Association President **Alex Somers** (whose father was a member of this class) along with **Dr. Lovie Lilly**, CHS principal, gave a presentation to these alumni along with a tour of the building. Then, by late afternoon, a good sized crowd (eventually

140 persons) had already gathered at Fred Profeta's home where the committee had arranged for a lovely evening with a tent party and catered dinner. The tent itself also was a super-sized screen for the showing of more videos. Many of those who attended Friday night were back for more, along with additional alumni who had just come to town and joined the group.

Sunday was another day of glorious weather and some 80 members of the class gathered under the tent for a very festive farewell catered brunch. The statistics revealed that there had been more alumni than ever before attending a Class of 1957 reunion. Although most were there all three days, various persons were only able to attend specific events and were appreciative of the choice in terms of personal scheduling. How many were classmates as opposed to spouses or friends?

This class has had so very many reunion gatherings that it's hard to create distinctions; especially because although nostalgia is definitely a part of it, there have also been developed deep friendships created via the reunions. In fact, that exactly is the reason why this Columbia High School Class of 1957 has always been successful.

The more events planned, the greater the comradery, and the greater feeling of closeness these classmates experience. They all have a shared past and the feeling for the 50th was simply like that of a huge family, reunited in a joyous celebration. The hefty yearbook (over 200 pages) captured this aspect well in its title of "Then and Now" in that reunions not only bring back memories but also are the source of creating new ones. And this 50th reunion was certainly unforgettable! ❖

Be sure to visit the alumni website soon for pictures and videos from the reunion weekend!

Continuing progress
in the Courtyard...

Donate a Stone Paver

As the A-wing courtyard next to the auditorium has seen significant, positive changes in its appearance, those that made that happen still need some help finishing off this area which is home to CHS's 9/11 Memorial. CHS Phys Ed teacher **Viola DeLuca** has put together an opportunity for you to memorialize a loved one or classmate in this garden by buying a stone paver and having up to 6 lines to write your dedication.

For more information, please visit our website for the details!



Team Spirit!

For sports schedules and cool CHS gear go to www.highschoolsports.net

Alumni in Iraq:

Contributed by Nathaniel Fredman '96
A producer for FOX News Channel's "The O'Reilly Factor"

A STORY FROM A REPORTER IN THE WAR ZONE

I met **Daniel Agami** in December outside the Al Faw Palace in Baghdad. As a producer for FOX News, I was in Iraq with Bill O'Reilly for a brief reporting trip. Agami was a front-line soldier, patrolling the dangerous streets of downtown Baghdad.

The scene was surreal. The palace, which was once Saddam Hussein's, is now the headquarters for American commanders. Surrounded by a massive man-made lake lined with palm trees, my interview with Agami was interrupted sporadically by the thunder-like thud of Black Hawk helicopters flying overhead. A desert oasis in a dangerous place.

I asked Agami to describe what a patrol is like. "By patrolling the city," he said, "we make sure that nobody gets hurt, between the IEDs [improvised explosive devices] and everything else that's going on out there. ... Our patrols basically consist of making sure the bad guys don't go forth in hurting anybody here and back in the United States."

I later learned he spent time mentoring children in an Iraqi orphanage too.

While in Iraq I also visited a combat support hospital, had candid conversations with senior commanders and, for the first time, had to wear body armor. But it was meeting and interviewing Agami and dozens of other service members that really made the trip memorable.

Agami, and four other soldiers, were killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad on June 21. He was 25.

"We came in here with our morale high, and it's still high," he told me in December. "People that we've lost in the past, in the past few months, we've just got to soldier on and Charlie-Mike [Army speak for continue the mission] ... and make sure we continue with our heads high."

I know Daniel Agami continues to hold his head high, even now. ❖