

REGIONAL

Fallen soldier returns home, receives burial in Roseburg

ROSEBURG (AP) — A Marine Corps honor guard fired a 21-gun salute as about 300 people gathered in the rain Tuesday for the funeral of Oregon's first native son to die fighting in the Persian Gulf.

Lance Cpl. Michael E. Linderman Jr., 20, was killed Jan. 29 during fighting with Iraqi troops in the Saudi Arabian town of Khafji near the Kuwait border.

The government has said it appears a missile fired from an American warplane slammed into a light armored vehicle, killing Linderman and six other Marines.

At the conclusion of the service, Cpl. Joe Sciannameo presented the folded flag from Linderman's gray and chrome casket to the widow, Christina Linderman. He gave another flag to Linderman's mother, Danese Linderman. Sciannameo accompanied the body home from Saudi Arabia.

Eight Marine pallbearers in dress blue uniforms from the

6th Bridge Company, a reserve unit based in Eugene, removed the casket from a hearse and placed it on a bench in front of the family.

A woman sang the "Marine Hymn" and "Amazing Grace," then retired Pastor Roy Kellar spoke. Noting the funeral was on President Abraham Lincoln's birthday, he invoked the memory of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, saying Linderman did not die in vain.

Seven Marines fired a series of three rifle volleys and a trumpeter played Taps. Then the pallbearers folded the flag.

Though he moved around the country because of his father's Navy career, Linderman always considered Roseburg his home, his family has said.

Born in Roseburg, he often spent time on his grandparents' nearby sheep ranch.

Linderman joined the Marines after his 1989 graduation from Central Kitsap High School at Silverdale, Wash.



Smooth moves

Bianca (center) demonstrates her belly-dance technique to a host of eager students, including Toula Kosciolk (left). She will perform Saturday night at a benefit dinner and dance festival to raise funds for the Greek Orthodox Mission of Eugene.

Photo by Sean Poston

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