

## Young local soldier dies in Iraq



Grandview mourns loss of 2004 grad; memorial planned at football game

By PHIL FEROLITO  
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

GRANDVIEW — American flags were flown at half-staff throughout the city Wednesday in honor of 20-year-old Army Spc. Matt J. Emerson, who died in Iraq.

Emerson, a 2004 Grandview High School graduate and gunner on a Humvee, died instantly when he was thrown from his vehicle Tuesday during an evening patrol in Mosul, just north of Baghdad, his

older brother, Joe Emerson, said by telephone Wednesday.

"I don't know if the vehicle came under fire or not," Joe Emerson said.

Officials with the Department of Defense described the incident as non-combat, but didn't provide any details pending an investigation.

Assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade

Combat Team, Emerson was the 10th serviceman with ties to the Yakima Valley to die in Iraq.

Funeral arrangements are pending as the family awaits word on when his body will be returned home, his brother said.

A somber mood hovered over this small city of about 8,500 residents Wednesday. American flags at the main entrance of town were flown at half-staff, as were flags at

all the schools. A row of American flags lined Wine Country Road through town.

High school officials plan a special gathering honoring Emerson, a former football player, during Friday night's homecoming game.

Students and teachers spent most of the day grieving, said high school football coach Dustin Lamb.

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## Not ready for some football

Yakima investors group unable to meet deadline to start af2 team in 2008

By PAUL SHUGAR  
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

Indoor football's return to Yakima must wait until at least 2009.

The unnamed local investor group didn't provide the proper documentation to buy and place a team in Yakima before the arenafootball2 board of directors meeting finished Wednesday afternoon. This leaves the potential owners under contract with af2 to place a squad in Yakima, but the earliest a team could begin play is in March 2009.

Brady Nelson, a member of the league's executive committee and majority owner of the Spokane Shock, didn't know why the deal didn't go through and wouldn't disclose the group's identity. He said the major sticking point is that the potential investors didn't pay the franchise fee — estimated at \$500,000 in earlier reports — before Wednesday's deadline.

The new team would have been Yakima's second indoor football team; the Yakima Shockwave played one season in the National Indoor Football League in 2001. The team folded before the 2002 season started because of financial difficulties.

Nelson didn't speculate on the group's reasons, especially since the group told him after signing an af2 contract Aug. 17 that it wanted the team to begin play as soon as possible. There is no stipulation in the signed agreement that the team must begin play in March 2008, leaving both sides back at square one with another year to sort things out.

Not that Nelson wants the finalized deal to continue dragging out despite two extensions from the league. He said a deal should be in place as soon as possible to ensure the team is prepared for the 2009 season.

"I imagine now that the 2008

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## SHELTER SETUP



GORDON KING/Yakima Herald-Republic

Becky Morrow and Ray Price take a short rest after moving a large sofa Wednesday as they prepare to open a new homeless shelter in Wapato. The sofa, like most of the furnishings in the shelter, was donated. Morrow hopes the shelter will open in a month.

## Making a home for homeless shelter

Nonprofit group works to get Wapato building open before winter

By ELOISA RUANO GONZÁLEZ  
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

WAPATO — After years of praying for a ray of hope, Wapato homeless advocates finally got it: a large, vibrant blue building that will eventually house dozens of Wapato's homeless.

Although the building isn't open, a few volunteers with Generating Hope, a nonprofit homeless advocacy

organization in Wapato, rummaged through boxes Wednesday, unpacking clothes and rolling out furniture in the old tutoring center, My Star Academy, at 117 E. Second St.

It's a start, Becky Morrow said. The nonprofit's president has wanted to open a homeless shelter in Wapato for several years.

"We have the building," Morrow said. "It's an important step."

David Hacker, former director of Campbell Farm and treasurer of Generating Hope, donated the lower level of the building this month to get the shelter going before cold weather blows in.

"There's a big need here. I needed to step up to the plate," said Hacker,

who lives in the building's upper level. "So nobody freezes out there."

According to the 2007 Point in Time survey — a nationwide one-day homeless count conducted Jan. 25 — nearly 100 people in Wapato, mostly Yakima tribal members, were homeless. They were living outdoors, in abandoned buildings, emergency shelters, transitional housing, vehicles and with family and friends.

But there's much work ahead.

Morrow, a Yakima resident, pointed at a small room in the left corner. She hopes to make it a counseling office where homeless people can seek help for domestic violence and treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, as well as family and relationship

counseling.

She then walked past dozens of cardboard boxes to a large room filled with more boxes. There she envisioned separate rooms for about 15 to 20 children, men and women.

Morrow said the group plans to name the shelter Noah's Ark after Hacker's late wife, the Rev. Sheri Noah, who died in March of lung cancer.

Although desire is abundant, Hacker said the City Council needs to approve the shelter first. And the site has to meet building and fire codes, which requires installing a fire alarm and sprinkler system that, right now,

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**Outdoors**  
Hiking the trail to Gem Lake/6B

**People**  
Dan Rather sues CBS for \$70m; O.J. Simpson posts bail/5A

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'Secret Garden' musical opens



## Position is nonpartisan, but not campaign

County Republicans endorse challenger in City Council race against Bonlender

By CHRIS BRISTOL  
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

In an unprecedented move, Yakima County Republican Party officials announced Wednesday they are endorsing Rick Ensey, who is challenging incumbent Ron Bonlender for a seat on the Yakima City Council.

GOP officials acknowledged that endorsing a candidate in a nonpartisan City Council election is virtually unheard of, but attributed their stance to Bonlender's party activism. He's never been shy about waving his Democratic credentials and ran unsuccessfully for the state Legislature two years ago.

"Everyone knows where Ron stands," said Jim Keightley,



Ensey



Bonlender

chairman of the county GOP, "so let's let everyone know where Rick stands."

Ensey, a newcomer to local politics, is a 38-year-old property manager who moved back to Yakima from the Seattle area two years ago.

He welcomed the endorsement, made by the board of the county Republican Party, and said he needs help from the party to counter Bonlender's name recognition — not to mention his campaign war chest. As of Aug. 31, Bonlender reported \$6,771 in cash and in-kind contributions.

Ensey had \$3,745.

"This was already a partisan race before I got into it," the challenger said. "Everyone knows that Ron Bonlender is a Democrat. It's a free country, so I want everyone to know what my philosophy is."

Bonlender, 64, is a Chicago-style blue-collar Democrat who is fluent in entrepreneurial Republican values given his success as the founder of the Sub Shop of Yakima chain of restaurants.

Since his election to the council in 2003, he has made headlines by taking a leading role against graffiti and urban blight. His support for revitalization of Yakima's downtown has led to the Cruisin' the Ave summer events and the surprisingly popular New Year's Eve party at Millennium Plaza.

Told the Republican Party was taking the unusual step of publicly endorsing his opponent, Bonlender countered that the GOP is simply looking for a yes-

man on the City Council.

"What it boils down to is control," he said. "I am viewed as independent with no strings attached. They really don't have much influence with me. They need to have someone in there that they can have their hooks into, that they can control."

As for his opponent's contention that he's a tax-and-spend liberal, Bonlender challenged anyone to name a single tax he supported aside from the doomed Proposition 1 measure, the unsuccessful ballot initiative that the entire council supported to boost public safety.

Fixing potholes is not a partisan issue, he added.

"They're a bunch of sticks in the mud — you can write that. And they will take us back to the horse-and-buggy days if they get to run the city. I'm going to put us in a Corvette and take us places," Bonlender said.

Former Yakima Mayor Paul

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