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'Devil Dog'



Five-year-old Ryan Zapalac of Bryan peers into the cockpit of the B-25 World War II Bomber, "Devil Dog," on display at Coulter Field Open House Air Show Saturday. The Open House celebrated the anniversary of 100 years of flying. The B-25 Bomber, built in 1944, is owned by the Commemorative Air Force, and a four-man flight crew travels with the bomber to different air shows across the nation.

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TAKE HOME DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Leadership loss: Arkansas town's mayor, police chief called to Iraq

By Caryn Rousseau
 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRADFORD, Ark. — The mayor, police chief and school librarian are all leaving for military duty Monday that is expected to take them to Iraq, and the residents left behind in this tiny town of 800 are scrambling to fill their roles.

At the local cafe and in school hallways, the callup and what to do about the loss of city leaders is the talk of the town. At city hall, meanwhile, officials have been rushing to prepare paperwork necessary to transfer the mayor's power to a 78-year-old retired school teacher.

The soon-to-be acting police chief says Bradford is just one example of how the war in Iraq has affected small town America.

"One way or another we're going to handle it," said Michael Ray, who will become the new police chief, along with his job as a school resources officer. "It's going to be OK. I'm going to run it the same way as if the chief was here."

In addition to Mayor Paul Bunn, Chief Josh Chambliss and librarian Nolan Brown, five other citizens of this farm town have received orders to report to Fort Hood, Texas. There, they will prepare for a tour of duty in Iraq that is expected to put them in Iraq by Christmas.

Grebe Edens, the town's recorder-treasurer, will take over for the 35-year-old mayor. Previously, she spent 24 years as Bradford's fourth-grade teacher.

Edens said she plans to carry on with Bunn's ideas. "As the mayor says, we're a family

here," she said.

At the elementary school, Brown was organizing the library ahead of his deployment. He served in Vietnam and has been in the National Guard for 31 years. Now 57, he was hoping to leave the guard at age 60.

"I've got stuff scattered from here to there getting ready," he said. "I want to leave it as if I'm not coming back."

Brown says he's edgy about his departure, as are his wife and the three children they care for. But he's adamant that he has to give back to a country that gave him an education.

"The U.S. has been very good to me," he said, adding he believes citizens need "to be willing to do whatever it take to make sure kids in the future have the same opportunities that we have."

Unlike Brown, who works in a headquarters group, the police chief and the mayor are infantry soldiers responsible for more dangerous security duty.

"I'll make a deal with the president," said Bunn, who has fought in Panama and in the Gulf War. "I'll go over there, but I'm not willing to die. Maybe it's because I've got kids now."

Chambliss, 28, has been the town's police chief since 2001. He's not worried about Bradford, which is about 70 miles northeast of Little Rock. He said he expects the town's other four officers to continue to man the school crossings and attend all the ball games.

"I'm curious to see what the next 18 months hold, not for me but for Bradford," Chambliss said. "I want to come back into town and see the progress."

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**Diversity ab
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In response to
 Sept. 29 article:

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