

# Veterans, families mark Memorial Day in Texas

By T.A. Badger  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN ANTONIO — On April 9, the meaning of Memorial Day changed for Toni Matula.

That day her 20-year-old son Matt, a Marine corporal, was killed in a mortar attack while on duty in the Iraqi city of Fallujah. He died just a few weeks after being deployed to Iraq for a second time.

"He was a fine young Marine," said Matula, who attended Monday's annual Memorial Day ceremony at Fort Sam Houston Military Cemetery with her husband.

That ceremony was one of many held across Texas to commemorate those who died serving in America's military.

Matula wore a white T-shirt bearing her son's portrait in his formal Marine uniform and a verse from the Gospel of St. John: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Despite their loss, the Matulas said they still believe in the U.S. purpose in Iraq.

"We're proud (Matt) was a U.S. Marine — he said they had a purpose over there," said Matula, who lives in Spicewood, northwest of Austin. "He said there was a lot of good being done, you just don't see it on the news."

The large gathering at the Fort Sam

Houston Cemetery included veterans going back to World War II, many wearing vests bearing their ribbons and medals.

With the nation's eyes on the new National World War II Memorial in Washington, comparisons were made between the soldiers serving in Iraq and those who fought against tyranny six decades ago.

"Today's soldiers are just as determined to defeat terrorism," said retired Air Force Master Sgt. Tom Nesbit, who served as master of ceremonies.

Bill Lewis, a retired chemical salesman, was part of the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944. His landing craft was sunk by enemy fire and he had to swim 150 yards to Omaha Beach, which by then was covered with the bodies of Allied troops.

"There were dead and wounded everywhere," recalled Lewis, 83, who grew up in Wichita Falls and now lives in San Antonio. "It was awful."

Lewis backs President Bush's decision to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq following the Sept. 11 terror attacks and other incidents targeting Americans.

"They're not going to quit it, so somebody's got to stop them," he said.

Frank Stecklein, a World War II prisoner of war who was held in Japan, said too much is being made about U.S. casualties in Iraq. More than 800 Americans have died there since March 2003.

## In memory



Mickey Mahle, Sergeant at Arms for the American Legion Post 159, hands out American Flags to three-year-old Emily M. Velasquez during the dedication ceremony at the Veterans of

Foreign War Post #4692 Monday in Bryan in celebration of Memorial Day. Velasquez, in attendance with her mother, has a brother in Baghdad and another who died serving his country.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Iraqis delay selection of new government

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi Governing Council members accused American officials Monday of pressuring them to accept Washington's choice for Iraq's new president, prompting a delay in the announcement of a new government to take power from the U.S.-led coalition June 30.

Monday was the deadline to name members of the new Iraqi government, but a Governing Council session that was to have chosen a pres-

ident was postponed until at least Tuesday, with sharp differences remaining between the council and the coalition over the largely ceremonial head of state job.

Most council members favor civil engineer Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer, 45, the current council president. The council members said Americans are backing former foreign minister Adnan Pachachi, 81. Both are Sunni Muslims.

Meanwhile, a car bomb exploded Monday near coalition headquarters, killing four people and wounding 25 in violence that U.S. authorities believe was aimed at blocking the coming

transfer of power. Four American soldiers were reported killed in other attacks.

#### Saudi authorities hunt for militants from rampage

KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Saudi authorities hunted Monday for three suspected al-Qaida militants who used hostages as human shields to escape after a weekend assault on a residential complex that killed 22 people, mostly foreign oil industry workers.

The attackers fled Khobar to near Dammam, where they abandoned their truck and a car commandeered at gunpoint from an unidentified driver and drove off with police pursuit, a police official said Monday.

A fourth militant — described as the ringleader — was captured Sunday after helicopter-borne Saudi commandos raided the upscale compound, where the gunmen had taken dozens of foreigners hostage in a hotel a day earlier.

It was the worst terror attack on Saudi Arabia in a year and the second this month to target its oil industry.

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- |                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
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| Sand Volleyball     | \$25/team |
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| Tennis              | FREE      |

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Adult Learn to Swim	NOW-July 11	\$25/\$35
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#### SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

- The following Outdoor activities **OPEN** for registration June 1st:
- |                                       | Date    | Registration   |
|---------------------------------------|---------|----------------|
| Kerrville Folklife Festival           | June 12 | June 1-9       |
| Schlitterbahn WaterPark               | June 19 | June 1-15      |
| Bike Maintenance 101: Flats           | June 22 | June 1-21      |
| Rock Climbing Day Trip                | June 26 | June 1-22      |
| Canoe Day Trip                        | June 26 | June 1-22      |
| Rock Climbing 101 Clinic              | June 27 | June 1-23      |
| Lead Climbing Clinic                  | June 29 | June 1-28      |
| Rafting Day Trip                      | July 11 | June 1-July 8  |
| Bike Maintenance 102: Brakes/Shifters | July 13 | June 1-July 12 |
- Kerrville Folklife Festival**—Kerrville offers music of many styles including traditional folk, bluegrass, acoustic rock, blues, country, jazz and Americana.
  - Schlitterbahn WaterPark**—Known as America's #1 water park, you can float over 3 miles of tubing adventures, splash around in 7 themed activity pools, blast uphill on 3 water coasters, plummet down speed slides or when you're ready to relax, drop into a giant hot tub or stretch out on a sun lounge.
  - Summer Rock Wall Orientation Classes**—Begin June 1st at the Rec Center for all climbers at the Rock Wall. Get certified to climb throughout the summer by coming in Monday-Thursday at 3:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. and Friday at 3:30 p.m.  
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