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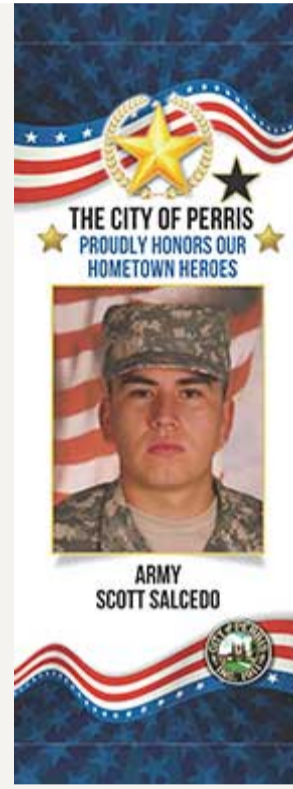
Somber Ceremony Honors Fallen Soldier

Scott Salcedo's family felt pride when he enlisted in the U.S. Army, when he spent a year in Iraq as a tank gunner and when he was promoted last year to staff sergeant.

They felt pride again Tuesday when they appeared before the Perris City Council.

But the occasion was bittersweet.

The family came to City Hall to receive their personal banner of Sgt. Salcedo, who died of a cardiac aneurism while on active duty in Fort Carson, Colo. Salcedo was just 24. He becomes the first Perris resident featured on a military banner along D Street to die in uniform. Along with the banner, the family received a Certificate of Recognition honoring his service to America.



A portrait of Army Staff Sgt. Scott Salcedo, 24, who completed a tour in Iraq and died while on active duty.

A somber Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough presented the certificate to the family. The certificate commends Salcedo—a graduate of Rancho Verde High School—for “having served patriotically and faithfully in the Armed Forces of the United States.”

Michael McDermott, the City’s Economic and Redevelopment Manager, presented them with Salcedo’s 6-foot by 2.5-foot banner.

On hand were Salcedo’s mom, Belen; stepdad, Kevin Rogers; brother, Cesar, 29, and stepbrother, John Kevin Rogers, 12.

Yarbrough said the loss of any young soldier hits close to home. His twins, Andrea and Schuyler, are serving with the Army and Marines. Perris Mayor Daryl Busch is a Navy veteran. Perris City Councilman Al Landers’ brother was killed while serving in Vietnam nearly 50 years ago.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough reads a Certificate of Recognition to Scott Salcedo's family: stepfather Kevin Rogers; brother Cesar Salcedo; step-brother John Kevin Rogers and mother, Belen Salcedo.

Yarbrough said every soldier deserves the respect of the American public.

“It was a great honor to recognize the Salcedo family but it was something I wish we did not have to do,” Yarbrough said after the City Council meeting. “It was a very difficult, very emotional experience. To me all our soldiers are heroes. What matters is that Scott Salcedo served with honor and faithfulness.”

Kevin Rogers said the family still struggles to cope with Salcedo’s sudden death. He died Dec. 13 and was later buried with full military honors at Riverside National Cemetery.

“We’re still scratching our heads about it,” Rogers said. “Scott loved the Army. He was going to be a lifer. He was rising through the ranks and he had such a bright future. He showed a lot of promise. He was way too young to die.”

Rogers said Scott Salcedo was promoted to sergeant at the age of 22 and shortly before his death he earned the rank of staff sergeant.



Perris Economic and Redevelopment Manager Michael McDermott presents the banner of Scott Salcedo to his mother.

Rogers said the family was heartened by the City’s presentation. He was also pleased by the number of veterans in the audience who raised their hands in a show of support for the family in response to a request from Yarbrough.

“We are happy the City recognizes Scott’s efforts in the Army,” Rogers said. “It was real enlightening for our family. It was a good moment!”

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