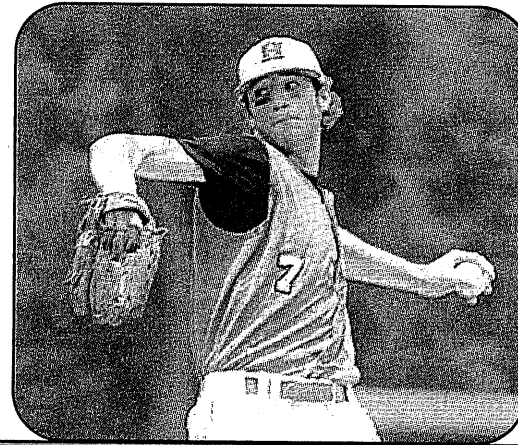


ROUND ROCK Leader

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SPORTS PAGE 7A

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Marine from Round Rock found dead

2004 McNeil High School grad
reported dead in Marine barracks

By BRAD STUTZMAN
Leader Editor

Marine Cpl. Chad Oligschlaeger, an Iraq war veteran and 2004 McNeil High School graduate, died May 20 in his barracks at Twentynine Palms Marine Corps base, located in California's Mojave Desert. He was 21.

Oligschlaeger had served two tours of duty in Iraq, joining the Marine Corps shortly after his graduation from McNeil nearly four years ago.

On Friday, McNeil administrators and staff remembered Oligschlaeger fondly, and expressed sadness at his sudden death.

"He was such a sweet kid," said Lisa Zacarias, who worked for Assistant Principal Louis Garza when Oligschlaeger was at McNeil. "I just loved Chad. He had the biggest smile, that kid."

At McNeil, assistant principals divvy up the students they will work with alphabetically. Oligschlaeger was among the group falling under Garza's watch for four years.

MARINE: McNeil graduate had served two tours of duty in Iraq

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In his office Friday, Garza – himself the son of a Marine World War II and Korean War veteran – remembered Oligschlaeger as a kid who found his focus in life when he decided to join the Corps.

“The first couple of years here were kind of tough,” Garza said. “I don’t think school was a big priority for him ... He had

some discipline issues, but he wasn’t high maintenance.”

Garza said he noticed a change coming over Oligschlaeger in the boy’s junior and senior years.

“Chad had an air about him, a little bit of a chip on his shoulder,” Garza said. “I felt what turned it around for him [was], when he made his commitment to join the military.”

During his high school,

career, Oligschlaeger was an escort for the Majestics dance team, counselor Sandra Doren said.

Garza and Zacarias each remembered Oligschlaeger had plugs in his ears – big earrings that left holes that had to be closed surgically before Oligschlaeger could join the Marines.

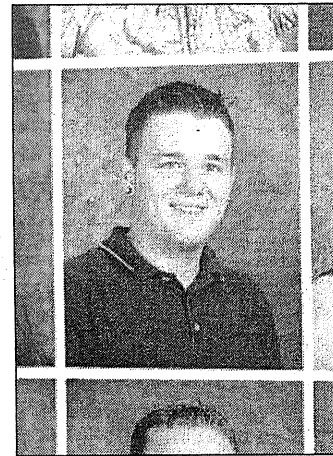
“We were so proud of him,” Garza said. “When he came back [from boot camp] he looked like a mil-

lion dollars.”

“He was so proud to be going in the Marines,” Zacarias added.

Garza said that among Oligschlaeger’s family members, he is survived by his father, Eric, and his mother, Julie.

“Chad’s not someone I’m gonna forget,” Garza said. “At the podium [at graduation] he told me: ‘Can I get a hug?’ That meant a lot to me.”



Courtesy photo

Shown here in his high school yearbook photo, Chad Oligschlaeger, a Marine Corps Iraq War veteran and 2004 McNeil High School graduate, was reported dead May 20 in his barracks at Twentynine Palms Marine Corps base.