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Wheeler was hit by shrapnel in his wrist and sustained several minor burns on his forearms and face. **Knudsen** was the .50-caliber machine gunner in the turret of the same humvee. He was hit in the knee with a piece of shrapnel.

"When I got to the hospital I went into surgery right away," said Wheeler. "I stayed for three days and then returned to my unit where I was on light duty for a month."

Both Marines are with the Provost Marshal's Office of Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and will be deployed for another three to four months.

Wheeler is a native of Vernal, Utah, and is currently serving his third tour in Iraq. He has an 11-year-old daughter named Justice.

**Knudsen** is from McKinley Ville, Calif. This is his first deployment.

According to 1st Lt. Jered Hemingway, military police platoon commander, MWSS-374, even with the injury, the Marines have adapted well to the environment.

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Photos included with story:



Lance Cpl. Matthias E. **Knudsen** holds out the Purple Heart he received May 1 for injuries sustained during an improvised explosive device attack on March 3. The McKinley Ville, Calif., native is a military police officer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by: Sgt. Enrique S. Diaz

Staff Sgt. James N. Wheeler holds out a medal May 6th. He received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained during an



improvised explosive device attack on March 3. Wheeler, a native of Vernal, Utah, is a military police officer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by: Sgt. Enrique S. Diaz

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Staff Sgt. James N. Wheeler receives his Purple Heart May 1 from his squadron Commanding Officer Lt. Col. James B. Hanlon for injuries sustained during an improvised explosive device attack March 3. Wheeler, a native of Vernal, Utah, is a military police officer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by: Cpl. Samantha L. Jones

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Lance Cpl. Matthias E. **Knudsen** receives his Purple Heart May 1 from his squadron Commanding Officer Lt. Col. James B. Hanlon for injuries sustained during an improvised explosive device attack March 3. **Knudsen**, a native of McKinley Ville, Calif., is a military police officer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by: Cpl. Samantha L. Jones

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Staff Sgt. James N. Wheeler (left) and Lance Cpl. Matthias E. **Knudsen** (right) received the Purple Heart May 1 at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, for injuries they received during an improvised explosive device attack March 3. The Marines are military police officers with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Wheeler is a native of Vernal, Utah, and **Knudsen** hails from McKinley Ville, Calif. Photo by: Sgt. Enrique S. Diaz

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