

Local man killed on third Iraq tour

Penfield is mourning the loss of a native son killed in war last week.

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As a young high school student at the Charles Finney School in Penfield, Army Staff Sgt. Steve Butcher had a passion for the arts, said Finney President Michael Belmont. He played Prince Charming in the school's production of "Cinderella" in 1996 and "brought down the house," he said.

"He spent a lot of time in my office talking about the meaning of life, philosophy and literature," Belmont said. "He was a very intelligent man."

Butcher was a student at Charles Finney from 1994 to 1996. Later in his high school career, Belmont said, Butcher studied martial arts. Belmont said Butcher didn't always have the easiest time fitting in.

"He was a very intense kid, very directed," he said. "He knew what he wanted and went for it."

Sgt. Butcher, 27, of Penfield, was killed on his third tour of duty in Iraq after an improvised explosive device, or IED, exploded near his unit



BUTCHER

Wednesday of last week. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

His father, Steve Butcher Sr., declined to comment through his Rochester law firm.

Sgt. Butcher is survived by his 6-year-old daughter.

On Wednesday, May 30, the school paid tribute to the former Finney student at its spring concert. The program featured John Williams' "Midway March," and was scheduled in honor of the troops who are serving in Iraq.

"I think now, given the loss of Steve, it'll be an added honor to be able to say a few words about him," Belmont said on Tuesday afternoon.

Sgt. Butcher graduated from

Penfield High School in 1997.

"Our deepest sympathies go out to the Butcher family and to the families of all the young men and women who have lost their lives in Iraq," said Nancy Bradstreet, director of information for the school district.

Sgt. Butcher also attended McQuaid Jesuit High School.

He visited home in November and returned for his third tour of duty in January. He is the 10th serviceperson with Rochester ties to be killed in Afghanistan or Iraq.

No funeral plans have been announced.

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