

Retired veteran remains in service

Kevin Boozer

Staff Writer

WINNSBORO — The phone rings and Kevin Douglas and his wife, Amy, spring into action.

As Red Cross volunteers in Fairfield County, they respond to cases where people have lost their homes to fire.

Both are former volunteer firefighters and this role with the Red Cross gives her, a stay-at-home mother, and him, a retired Army veteran, a new way to help fire victims.

In his mid 20s Douglas and his wife both became

volunteer firefighters.

During those years he worked in construction and he joined the National Guard. It was then that he helped pull a man from a burning house, his first rescue. He also became a member of the local rescue squad.

When he was in his early 20s, Douglas continued serving when he enlisted in the Army National Guard as a way to build his resume as a military policeman with the eventual plan of becoming a civilian police officer.

After a rough childhood, he had a positive experience with a family member that involved Fairfield County sheriff's deputies and at that time he realized he wanted to go into law enforcement.

The road to that goal was long but rewarding.

Staff Sergeant Douglas served for 10 years and four



Kevin Douglas | For the Herald

Kevin Douglas had a life changing military experience in Iraq.

months in the Army National Guard. During that time, he was called to active duty in 2002, serving guard duty in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

He went back into the National Guard Reserves for a time and during that stint, the couple's first child was born.

Douglas wanted to raise his son where he grew up, so he applied for a position with Winnsboro Department of Public Safety in 1999. After

he was hired there, he built upon his military police experience by attending the criminal justice academy. He made top scores and graduated second in his class. Douglas also was a class leader at the academy.

Douglas figured he would spend the rest of his life as a firefighter and public safety officer, but fate intervened.

He was called up to go to Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom and was transferred to a field artillery unit to help provide convoy security using his military police training.

In 2005, the Humvee he was travelling in was struck by an improvised exploding device and Douglas suffered multiple injuries that ultimately caused him to retire from the Army and undergo

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over seven years of rehabilitation.

The transition to civilian life held challenges for this decorated soldier who received an army commendation medal, army components achievement medal, army reserve components achievement medal, national defense medal, global war on terrorism expeditionary medal, global war on terrorism service medal and a non commissioned officer professional award during his career. He also received a development ribbon and an Iraqi campaign medal.

While doing training at Fort Jackson, Douglas

received the Co Major of est ranked commissioned o

Douglas back injured his hips. He traumatic developed stress disorder. He must at a time

Though the process of the injury pain, he to serve.

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