



**P.O. Box 110741, Anchorage, Alaska 99511 (907) 317-2300**

**MISSION STATEMENT: Believing in the value of healthy moose populations for all Alaskans, The Alaska Moose Federation will be the leader in the effort to both initiate and maintain the quantity and quality of Alaska's moose population.**

March 8, 2011

Honorable Congressman Don Young  
United States Congress  
2314 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Young,

The Alaska Moose Federation (AMF) is asking for your assistance with a request to honor Spc. Stephen 'Max' Cavanaugh Jr. by renaming the Dowling Overpass on the New Seward Highway in his memory. Spc. Cavanaugh returned from Iraq in 2007 after surviving 300 convoys where he manned a .50 caliber turret gun. Two weeks before receiving his discharge papers, he was driving down New Seward highway near Dowling when he hit a cow moose which resulted in the loss of his life.

This loss was the 6th human tragedy during 2007 and, though no human life is more important than any other, this loss really hit home. The AMF has been working with the soldier's parents, Stephen Sr. & Susan Cavanaugh of Atlanta, Georgia, the Parnell Administration and key members of the Alaska Legislature on this effort. It has become very apparent that we need your help, given the status of this highway as being a corridor under Federal Highway Administration's oversight.

Attached is a detailed description of the tragedy as well as an effort that involved the soldier's parents, Governor Parnell and others who worked to remove moose browse in 2008 from the New Seward corridor in an effort to reduce future moose collisions.

Thank you for your time and please consider championing this request because, not only is this important for all service men and women, including those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also for the Alaskans who have either lost their lives or have lost their loved ones to moose collisions.

If you have questions, please contact myself at (907) 529-5567 or Gary Olson, Executive Director of the AMF at (907) 317-2300.

Sincerely,

Bob Henrichs, Chairman

Cc: Senator Lisa Murkowski  
Senator Mark Begich  
Governor Sean Parnell  
Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell  
Senator Lesil Mcguire  
Senator Charlie Huggins

# Spc. Stephen 'Max' Cavanaugh Jr. Memorial

The Anchorage section of the New Seward Highway is a known moose collision corridor in the heart of Anchorage. This corridor has a problem of moose browse located within the fenced corridor which allow moose to winter in the area. If you had forgotten, this area was the scene of an unacceptable tragedy in December of 2007.

Stephen 'Max' Cavanaugh Jr. had recently returned from Iraq after surviving 300 convoys where he manned a .50 caliber machine gun. He was driving down New Seward highway, near the Dowling Overpass, when he hit a cow moose, two weeks before his discharge, which resulted in the



**THIS HERO CONTINUES TO SAVE LIVES!**

loss of his life. Max was an organ donor and it was mentioned in his obituary that he continues to save lives even after the loss of his. This loss was the 6th human life lost to moose collisions with cars during 2007 and, though no human life is more important than any other, this loss really hit home.

A project was put together to help increase safety in the very corridor where this particular trag-



**Moose browse removed from New Seward Hwy**

edy occurred. This effort was greatly assisted by the Department of Transportation, Highway Safety Office, SAGA (AmeriCorps youth program), the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fish & Game.

The project area was the West side of New Seward Highway between Dimond and O'Malley. The work area was between the bike trail and the highway right-of-way. This effort was performed for 4 days in October, 2008 where we cut, hauled and chipped 11 dumpsters worth of willow, cottonwood, birch and aspen trees.

Many volunteers helped with the brush cutting effort including the following workers: Governor Sean Parnell; Cliff Judkins, Chairman of the Board of Game; Colonel Holloway of the State Troopers and also the parents of the fallen soldier Steve Sr. and Susan Cavanaugh who traveled up from Atlanta to help with this effort. We also had solid help from private partners in this effort which included Alaska Waste for disposal cans, Absolute Environmental Services for the donated Ford truck and the donated dump trailer and also the Department of Transportation for the use of the Morbark tree chipper.

The effort now is to commemorate the Dowling Overpass in Spc. Stephen 'Max' Cavanaugh Jr.'s memory as a tribute to this hero who continues to save lives.



**Governor Parnell, Mr. & Mrs. Cavanaugh**

# Iraq/Afghanistan War Heroes



Stephen Max Cavanaugh  
**Anchorage, Alaska**  
December 6, 2007

Age	Military	Rank	Unit/Location
24	Army	Spc	98th Maintenance Company Fort Richardson,

Vehicle Accident. Stateside. Served in Iraq.



From the Seattle Post-Intelligencer [Seattlepi.com](http://seattlepi.com) 12/07/07:

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/6600ap\\_wst\\_moose\\_kills\\_soldier.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/6600ap_wst_moose_kills_soldier.html)

Last updated December 7, 2007 10:34 a.m. PT

**After 300 Iraq missions, Fort Richardson soldier killed by moose**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- Spc. Stephen Cavanaugh survived more than 300 missions in Iraq, but was killed when his car hit a moose months after his return to Alaska.

The 24-year-old Fort Richardson soldier was in a coma when he was taken off life support Thursday.

When he returned to Fort Richardson in March, Cavanaugh had brain trauma from the many explosions around him in Iraq and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, according to the soldier's father, also named Stephen Cavanaugh.

The younger Cavanaugh, who deployed to Iraq with the 98th Maintenance Company, was still trying to heal when his car struck the moose Sunday night on the Seward Highway in South Anchorage.

That stretch of the highway isn't well-lit, and seeing something alongside the roadway can be difficult, said police Lt. Nancy Reeder.

"There was a moose - a mom and a calf - that ran out in front of him," Reeder said. "It's one of those things that happens in Alaska. A moose runs out in the dark and there's nothing you can do."

Reeder said the impact flung the moose on top of Cavanaugh's Camaro convertible, crushing him. The moose died and its calf ran off.

Cavanaugh was rushed to a local hospital in critical condition.

The soldier's family was notified and caught a flight from Atlanta.

As time passed, Cavanaugh's condition wasn't improving, his father said. Cavanaugh - known as Max to family members - never woke up and doctors said he never would, according to his father.

Cavanaugh's family decided that taking him off life support and donating his organs would be the right thing to do, and what he would have wanted, his father said. Cavanaugh died at 2:17 p.m. Thursday.

He joined the Army in June 2004 and deployed to Iraq in March 2006, Army officials said. Cavanaugh was stationed outside of Baghdad, where he staffed a .50-caliber machine gun on a convoy escort, his father said.

His family is planning a funeral Mass in Atlanta for Dec. 15. A memorial ceremony also is being arranged on post.

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Information from: Anchorage Daily News, <http://www.adn.com>

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*Don't Let The Memory Of Them Drift Away*

[Alaska e-Post online](#)

**PAO staff report**

A Soldier from Fort Richardson's Warrior Transition Unit died Dec. 6 from injuries sustained in a car accident Dec. 2.

Spc. Stephen "Max" Cavanaugh was driving north on the Seward Highway in Anchorage when he hit a moose with his vehicle. Cavanaugh suffered severe head injuries in the accident as was on life support.

According to his family, four days after the accident, he was showing no signs of improvement and they decided to remove him from life support and donate his organs.

Cavanaugh, 24, of Lawrenceville, Ga., was a mechanic who joined the Army in June 2004 and was assigned to Fort Richardson in May 2005.

He completed a one-year deployment to Iraq with 98th Maintenance Company in March 2007.



**Spc. Stephen "Max" Cavanaugh**