

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
**GREGORY G. SCHULZ**  
Administrator and Medic, Army and Army Reserve, Iraq War.

2008

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**Schulz, Gregory G.**, (1973- ). Oral History Interview, 2008.

User Copy: 2 sound cassettes (ca. 75 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 2 sound cassettes (ca. 75 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Security Copy: 1 sound disc (ca. 75 min.), analog, 33 1/3 rpm, stereo.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Military Papers: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

**Abstract:**

Gregory G. Schulz, a Baraboo, Wisconsin native, discusses his career in the Army and Army Reserves as a medic in the 7302<sup>nd</sup> Medical Training Support Brigade, including his experiences in Honduras, Haiti, and Iraq. Schulz reflects on his reasons for enlisting in the Army Reserves at age seventeen and for joining the regular Army after basic and advanced training in administration at Fort Jackson (South Carolina). Assigned to Fort Drum (New York), he states that even though he had specialized in administration, he was assigned duty as the commander's driver. Schulz talks about six months of duty in Honduras operating a base cable television system, overcoming homesickness through recreational activities, and observing the poverty in the area. He comments on the food, being allowed off base, accommodations, learning his job, and getting a weekend off to visit a beach. Schulz mentions that he was happy to get out of administrative duties and reflects that during admin training they worked with typewriters, but at his first duty assignment they used computers. He characterizes some of the officers he worked under in Honduras and Haiti. After returning to Fort Drum, Schulz talks about spending a lot of time playing video games with a friend to get out of the barracks and avoid being snowed in. Sent to Haiti with the advance party for his unit's annual training mission, he reports the lack of civilian reaction to an air assault on the airport. He expresses frustration at not understanding why the Army was in Haiti. Schulz comments on being promoted there, his promotion ceremony, and being interviewed by *U.S.A. Today*. He recalls an incident when some infantrymen accidentally released mustard gas on the base and mentions he never carried protective gear. Schulz reflects on forming friendships overseas and losing contact with those friends back in the States. After returning to Fort Drum, he states he joined the Reserves in 1996, and in 1998 he became a Department of Defense civilian employee as a unit administrator for an Army Reserve dental unit in Denver (Colorado) before returning to Wisconsin. He mentions moving in with his brother and working for the 998th Quartermaster Company in Junction City before quitting due to some difficulties with the commander. While attending combat stress school, Schulz talks about being selected to go on a six-month rotation to Kuwait and the fading of his fear during two months of waiting during mobilization. He characterizes some of the friends he made, speaks of getting sick on the plane ride to Kuwait, and touches on spending a week at Camp Arifjan. Assigned to a water distribution unit, Schulz discusses being unable to find his gas mask during a rocket attack, living in Umm Qasr (Iraq), being replaced by the unit he had quit a couple years earlier, and spending the rest of his deployment at Camp Victory and Log Base Seitz (aka "Mortaritaville") in Baghdad. He comments on transporting supplies between bases in convoys, mortar attacks on Log Base Seitz, acting as his unit's medic, and working with the British at the Troop Medical Clinic. Schulz recalls a particularly hot day when he ran out of supplies dealing with so many cases of dehydration, feeling drained by the heat, and not getting air conditioners

until September. He describes the psychological breakdown of one of his friends and the drama caused after the friend was sent home for mental health reasons, mysteriously promoted, and lied to the newspapers about how much action the unit had seen. Schulz speaks of his job as coordinator with local civilian workers, working with an interpreter, and meeting his wife, Jackie, in Iraq. Schulz mentions the first time he saw a bad injury after some soldiers driving a convoy passed out in the heat and crashed. He reflects on how humorous incidents kept him going, spending time with Jackie, and getting secretly married after returning to the States. Schulz mentions he and his wife are now in the same unit and talks about how hard it was when Jackie spent six months away at operating room technician school. He details the weird moments of his readjustment to civilian life, his homecoming, his plans to attend flight medic school, and his distant plans for retirement.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Schulz (b. 1973) enlisted in the Army in 1991 and served in Honduras in 1993, Haiti in 1994, and Iraq from February of 2003 to April of 2004. He currently resides in Middleton (Wisconsin).

Interviewed by Kathryn Plane, 2008

Transcribed by Maggi Matousek, court reporter, 2009

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Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2011

**Transcribed Interview:**

Kathryn: This is an interview with Greg Schulz, who served in the U.S. Army during Honduras in 1993, Haiti in 1994, and Iraq in 2003 and 2004. This interview is being conducted at the Truman Olson Reserve Center at the following address, 1402 South Park Street, Madison, Wisconsin, on the following date, July 22nd, 2008. The interviewer is Kathryn Plane.

Tell me about your background and life circumstances before you entered the military.

Schulz: Basically I grew up—I was born here in Madison and I moved. My family lived in Evansville until I was about nine, then we moved to Baraboo. And I was in Baraboo for maybe nine, ten years at the most before I joined the military. One of the reasons I joined the Army was because I felt like my life was going really nowhere in Baraboo and I'd dropped out of high school and I thought that maybe if I got some discipline in my life that it would help me out. So I joined, and it actually worked out for the best for me doing it that way. But my dad used to be in the Army and he got out. My brother's still in the Army in another unit. It's been more along the lines of a family thing for us, but we all joined for different reasons.

Kathryn: So you felt you had no direction, so it would give you a good direction?

Schulz: I had a direction. I shouldn't say I didn't, couldn't find a direction. I had a direction, but it was going down the wrong path, and I could see it from a ways away, but if I would have kept living in Baraboo and not done anything about it, I'm pretty sure by now I'd either be in jail or something else. So I felt like the military was the best option, and it actually worked out really well for me.

Kathryn: So how old were you when you joined?

Schulz: Seventeen, seventeen years old. I was—I joined maybe two, three months after my stepbrother had died, and he was like a year younger than me, and that was another major influence because he wanted me to join the military as well. I think in the long run he was gonna probably join eventually, but I beat him to it.

Kathryn: So when you joined, where in Wisconsin did you sign up?

Schulz: I signed up in Baraboo and they sent me down to Milwaukee MEPS to sign the contract. And then about three months later I was on my way to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for my basic and advanced training.

Kathryn: You did both in South Carolina?

Schulz: Yep. Initially I joined the Army into the Army Reserves, came—went to Fort Jackson, did my basic, then went to my advanced training, which was admin. Came

back, I was back maybe two or three months, did not like being back in Baraboo, so I went—immediately went to the recruiters and left to go active maybe a week after I talked to the recruiters, and then I went to Fort Drum, New York for three years.

Kathryn: And what year was this?

Schulz: I graduated basic and AIT in October of '92, I believe, and then I left for Fort Drum in January, January 6th of 2003.

Kathryn: What is AIT?

Schulz: Advanced Individual Training. I think they changed the name of it since then, but a lot of the terms and stuff I use is from—I don't want to say the older Army, because I'm not that old, but like the late '80s, mid-'90s, the Army had different acronyms than they are using now.

Kathryn: And you said your advanced training was in administration?

Schulz: Yeah. But when I got to Fort Drum—it was a funny story. I remember, you have to go meet your brigade command sergeant major before they send you down to your subunit. And I got there and he's interviewing all the new people that are coming in. He's like, "What's your MOS, private?" Because at the time, I was only a private. "71 Lima, Sergeant Major." He looks at me and said, "You know what an 88 Mike is?" "No, Sergeant Major." "Good, you're the commander's new driver." So the whole time I was active, I never did admin.

Kathryn: Oh, wow.

Schulz: And then I got—when I got out of active, came in the Reserves, I immediately changed my job or specialty into medical. So now I'm a medic; I've been that since pretty much '98.

Kathryn: So backtracking a little bit, in '92 you were still a driver?

Schulz: Yep.

Kathryn: Okay.

Schulz: But that's tricky, too. I—because immediately when I got there, they were—the colonel still had his driver and so they were looking for something for me to do and that's when it came up, oh, let's send him to Honduras for a few months. So I ended up going to Honduras for probably six months until after his driver left, then I came back. But when I was sent to Honduras, I was supposed to do admin there, and I ended up just operating a base cable TV system.

Kathryn: What year did you go to Honduras?

Schulz: '90—1993.

Kathryn: Okay.

Schulz: It was a six-month rotation. I left in May and came back in late October. But it was actually my first time out of the United States, so everything was still new to me at that point; I'm only eighteen, nineteen years old. I remember going out off post and seeing the poverty and stuff like that, so later on down the road when we went to Haiti and Iraq, it didn't really bother me as much since I'd seen it before. Once we get talking about Iraq, that was one of the biggest problems a lot of the reservists had that went over there, was not seeing this kind of poverty before, and it stuck in their head really bad.

Kathryn: So what was the main reason for the United States being in Honduras or having—

Schulz: What the main reason was for it? I could not tell you. I just know we had a—it was on an Air Force base that we brought supplies in for the Hondurans and we helped out with local medical care and helped build them hospitals and—I don't want to say hospitals—little medical centers and little houses, little schools. Anything they needed help building or taking care of, they would come to us and we'd help set it up.

Kathryn: So how did you feel about being there? Did you enjoy your time there?

Schulz: At first I didn't, because it was the first time I'd really been away from my family at a distance where I couldn't call them or go see them on a daily basis, so it was hard for, I want to say, the first one or two months. But like any Army thing, once you leave and you get with new people, it takes a while to integrate with them, get to know them, but after that, it's just everybody's best friends. And you're so close together that—the area where we were at was, maybe, I don't know, ten square miles. And they had football fields there, softball, basketball. They had a couple clubs on post like dance clubs. So that was really nice, too. So you get to meet a lot of new people, but the problem with that is after six months, you leave and don't really ever talk to 'em again.

Kathryn: So what was the base like, like the food and the barracks?

Schulz: There was a couple different places you could eat. The chow hall was an Air Force chow hall, so it actually was really good food; the only problem was, you had to pay to eat there. And they had—I don't want to say McDonald's. They had a couple Popeye's Chicken, or something like that, Burger King, at the post exchange. They had plenty of places to eat that were Americanized, but we liked going off post and eating some of the Honduran food. It was actually really, it was—when we first got down there, though, it was kind of restricted; you had to stay on post and you had to get a letter from the commander letting you off post and had to have a 9 mm. But

that changed like halfway through; you could just go on and off as you please, you just had to sign out at the front gate. And that worked out better for everybody, because everybody started gettin' a lot looser and havin' a lot more fun.

Kathryn: Did you get time off during the week?

Schulz: Usually Saturday and Sundays were ours to ourselves, unless there was something major going on because the base itself, it gets a lot of Army Reserve and Army National Guard coming through there doing these support relief missions. So if one was coming in, we had to make sure everything was set for them. If they came in on a Saturday or Sunday, that meant we had to work on a Saturday or Sunday, but most of them usually came in on Friday or Monday because they had to fly in from, I believe it was Charleston Air Force Base out of South Carolina. I think that's the name, I'm not sure. And getting them to fly on the weekends, getting any pilot to fly on the weekends is a rare feat, so—

Kathryn: So you were a driver in Honduras. Is that what you did in Honduras?

Schulz: Nope. I was the base cable TV operator. I got down there, I was supposed to work in the J6, which is communications and intel. And when I got down there, I found out that I was gonna be replacing an Air Force sergeant E5. And I met him to find out what he did and he basically showed me, you're running the base cable TV operation. Make sure these channels are good to go. If one goes out, switch it to another one. If people are having problems with their cable TV in their hooches—the hooches is where everybody stayed. It was a little room. If you were a specialist or below you had to share a room with another person. E5s got their own room. And then the senior NCOs, like the master sergeants and sergeant majors and all the officers, got their own little building that they got to share—one or two—but they had their own room, their own shower, and stuff like that. It's actually really nice. They're older looking from the outside, but inside they were really nice. I had to live in that cable TV hooch. And [laughs] it was a pretty simple job, actually, just making sure everybody's cable TV worked. They had my number so if they ever had a problem, just call me at the hooch and I'd go in and repair it. I had never done it before, but I learned really fast.

Kathryn: So did you enjoy that job?

Schulz: Oh, I loved it. It was a great job, especially since I wasn't—I should go back. Because I chose admin as my MOS, but I *never* wanted to do it. When I got offered my job or military jobs, it was pretty much infantry, admin, and there was something else. And I did not like any of them, but I wanted to get out of Baraboo so bad, I just chose admin. So anytime I got a chance to not do admin, I loved it.

Kathryn: So your advanced training school, what did they teach you to do in admin?

Schulz: Pretty much type memorandums, how to take dictation, stuff like that. The problem with that was, they taught us on typewriters, and then when we get to our first duty assignment, it's on computers. So it was different. A lot of this stuff I learned down there they teach you at military school so fast that it goes right over your head; after you're done learning it, you forget completely about it. Especially advanced individual training or the AIT, because you're so young, you just want to get out of the classroom and go have fun. And all anybody ever looked forward to was the weekend, going, gettin' off base for the weekend. Fun times.

Kathryn: So do you remember any stories or excitement that happened while you were in advanced training school?

Schulz: Oh, there's a couple stories, but it was mainly people just getting in trouble and I don't really like going into those.

Kathryn: Okay. That's fine. So going back to Honduras, you said you were there for—

Schulz: Six months.

Kathryn: Six months. Were you happy to leave, or did you want to stay longer?

Schulz: If I think about it now, I guess I'd say indifferent. I could have stayed there and not been upset, or I could have come back and still not be upset. One of the best things that I ever remember about Honduras is, at one point there was like a one-month stretch when I was working so much that my section OIC gave me, the lieutenant, and my section sergeant who was in charge of me, a weekend off and we all went up to northern Honduras to the gulf on the beach and got a hotel room up there. It was actually one of the best times I've ever had in my life, just sitting on that beach, and I'll always remember the sunset going down over it. I don't think I've ever seen a picture like that since then.

Kathryn: So are there any memorable people from Honduras?

Schulz: I remember a lot of people from Honduras, mainly from the people I worked with. It was quite a diverse crew. There was a major that was in charge of me when I first got down there. This happened, again, when I was active—or when I got back to Fort Drum, but this major, I swear, thought I was his son, because he would not let anybody talk to me or anything. If anybody came up and started harassing me, he would just go off on 'em. Major Gillum [?] was his name. He wrote a letter to my commander at Fort Drum talking about how he wanted me promoted as soon as possible and how he trusted me with his life, and that was the first time anybody ever said anything like that about me to another person, so I was pretty struck back and I admired the guy. I want to say he was like a dad to me, because we did a lot of drinking on the weekends down there, so—

Kathryn: So what rank were you at this point in Honduras?



Schulz: In Honduras, I was a private first class, an E3.

Kathryn: So what happened when you left Honduras?

Schulz: Went back to Fort Drum. I was there—really didn't do much at all at Fort Drum except drive, nothing important. I made a lot of friends, though, from the time I got back from Honduras until the time we left for Haiti because when I left for Honduras, it was like almost a complete changeover in personnel there. It was really weird coming back and seeing all these different people. But I got to know all these people and became really good friends with one of them, Eloi Blonko [?]. He was the same grade as me, same—born the same year. He was married and I was always going over to his house and playing Sega with him. His wife would tolerate us, but—and I remember spending many nights over there. It just got me away from the barracks, too, and I absolutely hated the barracks.

Kathryn: Really? How come?

Schulz: Fort Drum, it snows, I want to say until the first week of June, and that's a heavy snow because it's right off from Lake Ontario, I think it is. And so if you're sittin' in the barracks on a Friday night and it started snowing, you're stuck there until Sunday or Monday when you go to work. If you're not there, then—the barracks are one of the last priorities to get the snow cleared off, and if you're in housing, they clear the snow out right away, so if you're not in the barracks, you can go out and about, but if you're at the barracks, you're pretty much there until they decide everything else is cleared. One of the biggest things you'll see with anybody who lives in a barracks is one of the first things they will do is buy a TV and a game system of any kind. Every room, I swear—I shouldn't say every room, but every male room there at the time had a Sega Genesis—man, that's old—a Sega Genesis and a Nintendo of some kind and a stereo system.

Kathryn: So after you were there for a while, you went to Haiti, is that what happened?

Schulz: Yes. Well, the unit I was with was going to Haiti and I was part of the, what they called the advance party that goes down a few weeks beforehand. There was—the way it's supposed to work is, like, if you're doing an AT, their Annual Training if you're a reservist, you send a group up of like two or three, three or four days in advance to scout out the area and let you know where to set everything up when you get there. Well, they put us on the USS Eisenhower for a couple weeks and then we did what they call air assault in Haiti to secure the airport. And I don't remember much about the Eisenhower—well, I remember some stuff, but I'm not—I can't really say on video or on tape, but the one thing I do remember about the air assault mission that really struck me as odd at the time was, we got on the ground, we did our 360 perimeter, and people were just walkin' by the airport like nothing was going on.

Kathryn: You mean civilians?

Schulz: Yeah, the Haitians.

Kathryn: Yeah?

Schulz: It's just really weird. And to this day, [sigh] I'm still debating as to why we were there. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have been there, but I don't really know what our mission was down there, because it was never clarified to me. I guess because I was only a specialist, I didn't need to know. But it would have been nice at the time if I knew why we were there.

Kathryn: So how did that make you feel?

Schulz: Unimportant.

Kathryn: Yeah.

Schulz: I can—I'm not gonna say anything bad about the people that were in charge of me, because I'm sure they had a reason not to say it or they just didn't think it was important to tell me.

Kathryn: So what did you do after that, that first initial—

Schulz: We set up, I want to say, three tents. And there's only—from our unit, there's probably only maybe ten people that went down there advanced, then four or five days later the rest. I was at what they call brigade headquarters, so I'd say about a hundred twenty other people showed up a few days later, almost a week later. And then what was fun about that, and I remember this to this day, the rest of the unit got there, they had their little formation. I got called out and promoted in front of everybody to specialist. And they starting making me doing push-ups and then they dumped a whole bunch—a bunch of buckets of water on me while I was doing push-ups. It's just a funny little story from there.

Kathryn: [laughs] So is that a good, a positive memory?

Schulz: Yeah. They told me I was the first person—according to the *U.S.A. Today*, I was first person promoted in Haiti, so I didn't know if that was a big deal or not.

Kathryn: Sounds like a big deal. So you were in *U.S.A. Today*, your name was in *U.S.A. Today*?

Schulz: Well, I was interviewed by *U.S.A. Today*. I don't know. I was down there, so I don't ever know if the paper was published or not.

Kathryn: And what year was that?

Schulz: '94, it would have had to have been. I honestly can't remember what days they were. I want to say September sometime in '94 was when we first got down there.

Kathryn: Was that pretty exciting to get interviewed by *U.S.A. Today*?

Schulz: At the time, yeah, it was, it was really exciting for me, because I was young. And I remember my sergeant major sittin' behind saying, "Don't say this, don't say that." "Yes, Sergeant Major." One of the things, too, when I got back from Honduras, we had a new—when we had a change-over in our section, one of the things I had was, I had this section, new section sergeant that was in charge of me that, for the life of me, I could not figure out why he just rode me constantly. I did this wrong, I did that wrong, never gave me any positive feedback, did this. I remember at one point, I went to the brigade sergeant major and told him, "Hey, I want to be transferred; I don't want to be under this person any more," and explained to him what was going on, and he said he would make a change. So a few weeks later, I got this new sergeant major in there. And I remember he showed up on like a Tuesday or Wednesday. That weekend on a Saturday, I was sittin' in the barracks with my roommate; we were playing a video game like usual and somebody knocked on our door, and it was our new sergeant major asking—and he had his wife with him—asking if he could take me out for lunch. After that point, he was—I felt like he was pretty much a dad to me, because I never really had a real father growing up. I had my stepdad, but he felt like a real father to me. He was always there when I needed it. I could talk to him about anything and he would listen and give me advice. But this sergeant major, the whole time down in Haiti, would just, any time I needed anything, he'd tell me to go take a break or whatever, and he'd cover for me. The nicest guy. Sergeant Major Rogers was his name, Ernest Rogers.

Kathryn: Are you still in touch with him?

Schulz: I don't keep in touch, really, with anybody from my active duty time. It's just Iraq, I still have a lot of contacts with my close friends from Iraq.

Kathryn: So when you were in Haiti, did you do admin or were you again—

Schulz: I was basically a colonel's driver, driving him back and forth to the meetings. And then what—the driver for the S3, I guess it's a training and operations section for the brigade, driving their—they always had people had to be drove from one side of Port au Prince, Haiti to the other and I'd have to go do that. And then when I wasn't driving the colonel, I had to answer the radios that were going off. That was pretty much it. I remember—there was nothing major while I was down there that happened. I remember one day there was a—mustard gas, I think it was. The infantry guys from Fort Drum were screwing around and popped some sort of mustard gas accidentally, and I remember it going across the base. And all of a sudden your nose starts running, your eyes are watering, and everybody's like, "We are being attacked." The infantry guys were over there snickering, "That was us."

Kathryn: Was that painful?

Schulz: No, it's not painful, it's just annoying. It doesn't hurt. You can't figure out why your nose is running and your eyes are watering and then, boy, I smell something.

Kathryn: So did you just have to wait for the symptoms to go away, or do you wash your face off with water?

Schulz: I washed my face. Usually you're supposed to don your protective gear at that point, but when I was down there, I don't remember ever carrying my protective gear. I remember taking it down there, but I don't remember seeing it after that. I'm trying to remember if we turned it in or what, but I don't remember. That was actually—that deployment was actually really good for me because all the people that I had grown to know over the last year from being back in Honduras and working there all went down with me, so all those people were really close still. And I don't know, maybe two months into the deployment, we actually got telephone lines, we could actually call back home and got to call home, and it was pretty good. I didn't really want to call home, but—not to say I don't like my home; I love my family, but I was actually having a blast down in Haiti. I remember just being myself, gettin'—hanging out with my friends, playing a lot of spades and euchre.

Kathryn: So how long were you in Haiti altogether?

Schulz: I want to say just over three months. I think we came back in—we left at the beginning of September and came back sometime in the middle of December.

Kathryn: So did you go back to Fort Drum then?

Schulz: Yep, went back to Fort Drum for—'til January of '96 and then I ETS'd out of active duty Army, went into the Reserves. I was in the res—I was just a regular reservist until probably, I want to say June of '98, then I became a Department of Defense civilian employee as a unit administrator for a combat support hospital—or actually a detachment up in Menasha. And at the time, I was only a unit administrator technician. I worked for—what a UA is, I worked for him for probably a year and then took a job out in Denver, Colorado and then worked out there a year, came back to Wisconsin. I've been a UA in Wisconsin since, I want to say 2000—it's been around 2000 sometime, and then went back active as an active Guard Reserve this April.

Kathryn: So in all that time between when you got done with Haiti and this April, you were in the Reserves, not active?

Schulz: No. I was active Army after I got out of Haiti for probably another year or so, but—and the problem with active duty Army is, when you're gettin' close to getting out, like six months waiting up to your ETS, they call it, I didn't really do anything but attend classes. I didn't do any Army stuff, any training with the unit or anything. I remember once they asked me if I wanted to go do weapons qualification. I'm, “No,

not really.” “Okay, that's fine.” The hardest part about ETSing is those people that you've made friends with that whole time you were there—I don't know, I kept in contact with them for maybe three or four months, and after that I haven't heard from any of them since.

Kathryn: What does ETS mean?

Schulz: I don't know what the acronym stands for. That's basically where you get out of active duty; your time is done.

Kathryn: So did you like those jobs you did in between? After you got done with Haiti and you moved around a little bit, did you enjoy those jobs?

Schulz: The one in Denver I loved. To this day, I still regret moving back, because I actually liked being out in Denver. It's just the cost of living was killing me out there, that's the sole reason. For a while, I thought it was because I missed my family, but I don't think that was it. I think it was just more I was always broke from paying for at the time what I thought was lot at \$900 a month. Then I moved here to Madison.

Kathryn: So tell me again what you did in Denver?

Schulz: I was a—still a Department of Defense civilian employee. I worked for a dental—Army Reserve dental unit. But I was what they called non-MOS qualified, which means I didn't have a job that matched any of the jobs in the unit. So that was another reason, I guess, why I came back, because I didn't feel like going to school for three or four months to become a dental hygienist.

Kathryn: So what was your job? What did your job entail in the dental office?

Schulz: This is where the admin part came back into play. Alls I did was paperwork pretty much five days a week, except on reserve [?] weekend, and then I'd do it another two days. I was supposed to be the training NCO. And it was setting up of, like, PT tests or going to the ranges to qualify or doing all these other various activities. But pretty much the reservists ran that for themselves on the weekends and I'd sit back and just make sure their pay was good or if they had problems with their personnel files, I'd help them get them fixed, help them get promoted. That's pretty much it. It was all boring until I went to Iraq. That was—all that admin, just—I have no good stories about admin, because it just bores me and I still regret taking that.

Kathryn: Okay. So we—after you came back from Denver, you went back to Madison?

Schulz: No, actually I was up in Junction City, Wisconsin for a quartermaster company, 998 Quartermaster Company. And at first I really liked the job because I was living in a place where I used to live, in Mosinee. I lived in Mosinee in '90—when I first got out of active duty I moved with my brother, who was livin' up there. He was in the Army for some finance unit at the time, but I was livin' up with him. So I thought I'd live

there again, since I knew some people there. At first that unit was great, but then just weird things started happening at that unit. The commander—there was a female motor sergeant that was about my age and the commander, for some reason, thought that her and I were sleeping together. And it ended up me just quitting my job because every day, something new would happen. You can't do this, you can't do that, you can't have music on, I don't approve of it, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I mean like, I couldn't take any more and just quit. And then a few months later I was deployed, so it worked out, actually.

Kathryn: So were you called up for active duty or did you volunteer?

Schulz: Well, what had happened was, I quit my job up in Wausau—or Junction City, came back down here, got a job, was in a Reserve unit in this building, a combat stress control unit. I was supposed to go to combat stress school to learn how to be a combat stress—whatever they are—psych tech or whatever. I was supposed to leave like two weeks after I got here. And I was here making up some drill time that I had missed, and my brother happened to be a full-timer of that unit, too. And I was driving in the driveway from something and he called me on my cell phone and said, “Hey, I got a mission for you.” I'm like, “Oh, okay, I'll be right in.” I come in and the commander, the first sergeant, and XO are there. I'm like, “What kind of mission is this?” “You were just selected for cross leveling for mobilization.” I'm like, “Oh, crap.” So they sent me up to Fort Snelling, Minnesota to do what they call an SRP, where they make sure you're medically fit, your paperwork is all taken care of. And I got up there, still had no idea what unit I was going to or anything. And by the time—I was there maybe two days, and I finally was told in the last hour where I was going, and I was told, “Yeah, these guys are goin' to Afghanistan.” Never said anything about Iraq 'cause there was nothin' goin' on in Iraq at the time. This was gonna be a six month rotation in Iraq, do that, come back, you'll be good to go.

Kathryn: In Afghanistan or Iraq?

Schulz: I'm sorry; not Afghanistan, Kuwait. Six month rotation in Kuwait.

Kathryn: Okay.

Schulz: That was what we were originally told when we were at the SRP what we were gonna be doin'. And there is probably two or three people that were up there from other units that I didn't know that were going to the same unit—**[End of Tape 1, Side A]**—So the unit called me later that afternoon when I had gotten home and told me that they were heading to Fort Campbell, Kentucky over the weekend and wanted to know when we were gonna be there and I told them my plane leaves Tuesday morning, I'll be down there probably sometime Tuesday afternoon. That was probably one of the scariest moments of my—or not—[break in tape]

Kathryn: So you were saying you were about to be deployed to Kuwait and it was scary for you?

Schulz: Yeah. One of the things I remember the most when I first found out I was gettin' deployed, is Neal, I believe—Colonel O'Connor to me—was in here in the office that day, so he knew what was going before I did. And my brother, in his tactful way of telling me that I was getting mobilized, that was what threw me for a loop. But I was really nervous and scared because there was nothin' going on in Iraq at the time, but everybody knew what was coming, so you had this picture in your mind, okay, you're going to war; what is war like? And you're just scared like—and anybody says they're not scared, that they're all gung ho, they want to go, I'm gonna say flat out is a liar, 'cause you're always nervous and scared of the unknown. And, ah, it was—so I was actually nervous and scared going down to Fort Campbell, but when I got down there I met the First Sergeant Chaffey when I got there. And this was the oddest fellow I'd ever met. He was—he did everything he could for his soldiers, it's just I'd never met anybody like him before, but—he was trying to take care of us. We sat at Fort Campbell for probably two months. Half the unit, I want to say—maybe not half, maybe a quarter of it—was what they call fillers, people that come in from other units to fill vacant positions in the unit. And I was one of them, and I met a couple other ones. One of them I met was a Brian Pittman, who at the time, I thought we were a lot alike. We both had the same personality and all this other stuff, but as I get talking, you'll learn that him and I weren't exactly the same. So at first we became really close friends and we went everywhere together at Fort Campbell. We'd go to the PX together, we weren't really allowed too far away from the barracks because they said our plane could go at any time, even though we knew we were gonna be there for a while. I met another guy down there that I'm still really close with, Jessie Isaacs, a really great guy, I want to say. He kept me on a sane path the times when I felt like I was goin' mentally unstable. But when we were there, I did a lot of, I don't know, what they call hip pocket training, where you have nothing to do so they say, "Grab your task book and go over the tasks and keep practicing." I was just—I don't know, my nervousness just left because I was just so bored just sitting there. But we finally flew to Iraq on the longest plane ride I had ever been on; I want to say it was close to twenty hours.

Kathryn: Wow.

Schulz: And I remember on the plane ride, I got so sick from something, I don't know what it was, and by the time we landed in Kuwait, I had no voice, I was barely awake, I was sleeping constantly. And then we got into Kuwait and—funny story. The plane landed and it was—the pilot comes on, he's like, "It's currently ninety-some degrees," blah, blah, blah. "It appears they want you to don your protective masks, yes. Gas, gas, gas." So we got in our full battle rattle without masks on. I'm sitting there, "What the heck did I just get into?" And we got—they had us run off the plane, under shelter, and sent us to another place. And when we got on the bus to go to that other place—I think it was Camp Arifjan, they sent us. On that bus, they had us take off our protective stuff. And we were at Arifjan for probably about a week before we left on our first mission, but one of the things I remember about Arifjan—and this is where I started learning more about this Brian Pittman and Jessie Isaacs, plus I started making

more friends along over there once we got into Kuwait, was, ah—we were given our initial order as to, we're gonna go from, our platoon was going from Arifjan to Umm Qasr in Iraq. Actually, it was supposed to be Camp Bucca, but we stayed at Umm Qasr on the port because I was assigned to—I should have said this from the beginning. I was assigned to a water distribution unit. And we got our orders, and Brian Pittman was supposed to be the assistant squad leader, and the squad leader was telling us what's going on and all this other stuff. And I remember Brian asking, “Well, it's a camp, or a port, so there's gotta be a PX.” And we're trying to explain to him this is not a place for a PX, this is a war environment. They're trying to take Iraq over; there's no PX there. And I remember him getting so mad, because he swore there was a PX there that he threw his rifle into the dirt. I'm, like, okay. So the squad leader pulled him aside and talked to him. It was just a weird situation.

Kathryn: What's a PX?

Schulz: The store where you can get stuff: shaving cream, soap, CDs, stereos, PlayStation, stuff like that. Just a store. They call it a PX; it's a post exchange, it's called. But that night, we had a—I don't—I guess a rocket hit somewhere in Kuwait City, and so they—whenever a rocket hits, they bang on metal three times, you're supposed to don your protective gear. Well, Brian Pittman had been sleeping in the cot above me at the warehouse we were staying in, and he left to go talk to his wife on the phone. And instead of taking his protective mask, he took mine and his. So this is going off, and I'm trying to find my mask, just flippin' out, and he comes back with both masks about an hour later saying, “Oh, I didn't know.” But that's—and then, ah, yeah.

Kathryn: Wow. Was that a little scary?

Schulz: I was really scared. Because I didn't—you're in that environment, you don't know what's goin' on. You don't know if it's just fake or real or whatever is goin' on. For as far as you know, we could have actually been being attacked and there was nothin' anybody could have done for me. Because your priority is to get yourself protected and then take care of everybody else, so if we were in an actual chemically-attacked environment, I was pretty much SOL there. Yeah. But I got past that pretty fast. And I was still really sick, and everybody made fun of me after that because I was sittin' there yelling for Pittman. And they're like, “Yeah, you sounded really funny, you're like, “Pittman.” [Pittman said in very weak, hoarse voice] [laughs] Yeah. And it was about a week later we left for Umm Qasr. That's where I got to meet probably the guy I got closest to over there: Glen Glaise [?] was his name. And it turned out—I didn't know him that well at Fort Campbell or when we first got to Kuwait, but as time went on when we were at Bucca and Umm Qasr—and we were only there, I want say, two months, but as time went on there, we actually got really, really close. I knew everything about his family, about him; he knew everything about me and my family. I had never really gotten that close to another male before except that sergeant major from Fort Drum, so it was actually really good to have somebody there I could talk to and if I had problems, go to. And at the same time, I starting to get to know that Jessie Isaacs I had mentioned earlier. And it was, I don't know—Umm Qasr, I don't want to



say it was—it was more like Shangri La than it was being in a war zone because we were right on the port; anything we wanted, we could get. The only difference was we were sleeping in tents on cots. And it was not rough there. We got into trouble one time, I think, from the Camp Bucca commander because we used to drive from Bucca to Umm Qasr, where we stayed; it was probably about four or five miles. You're supposed to be in your full gear, protective vests, Kevlar and everything. And we'd go and just take our weapons and that's about it. So we kinda got in trouble for that. I also got to start to know my platoon sergeant then—assistant platoon sergeant, I guess, Sergeant First Class Perkins, who I tell everybody to this day was the greatest sergeant I've ever worked with, ever, 'cause he taught me so much about what it means to be a sergeant. But that's something completely different. So we were at Bucca probably—or Umm Qasr probably two months. And what was ironic is we were replaced in Umm Qasr by the unit that I quit in 2001, from that quartermaster unit in Junction City. And they all knew who I was and they all wanted to talk to me, and I wanted nothing to do with them. Went back to Arifjan, we were there for probably about a month and then went to Baghdad for the rest of the deployment, ended up at—started off at Camp Victory, Iraq, which is part of the BIAP, or Baghdad International Airport, formerly known as Saddam International. We were there probably 'til, I want to say January of—yeah, January of '04, then we moved to Log Base Seitz in—which is about four or five miles away. But they called it Mortaritaville because it was mortared *every* day, and that's the worst part about being there. But when we were at Victory, we were never really in harm's way either, because it was so isolated inside the airport and you had all these surrounding bases outside of it, so any attacks inside of Victory were pretty rare. And that's a—did a bunch of convoys from Kuwait City or Arifjan to Camp Victory during that time. We'd go down to Arifjan and get supplies and bring them back up to—it wasn't Camp Victory. We were taking 'em to Log Base Seitz, because that's where our higher headquarters was at. Never had anything, really, no attacks or anything during any of those convoys. It was pretty boring except for, I want to say, August 8, 2003, we were in a convoy; it was a hundred and fifty-eight degrees outside.

Kathryn: Wow.

Schulz: I was the only medic in the convoy and I ran out of IV fluid. People were just dropping left and right, and finally the commander is like, “We gotta stop at the next base; we can't go on any further.” We could not go—I remember taking six or seven people to the TMC at, ah—I can't—Taji, I think it was called, or Tallil [?]. It was Tallil [?]. And a couple of them were so dehydrated they could not move their fingers, they were so cramped up. And I remember I ended up passing out that night, I was so exhausted from trying to take care of everybody else, but—

Kathryn: So was that your main job, being a medic? Or was it the water distribution?

Schulz: I was assigned to them as water distribution, but they ended using me as a medic because they didn't have any medical assets except for if they sent somebody to TMC. So the TMC at Baghdad would give me medical supplies and I could take care of our

soldiers back at where they were at, instead of having to drive them back in. So, yeah, I was supposed to be water, but I ended up doing medical the whole time. I remember when we were at Umm Qasr I worked with the British at the TMC down at the port for a few months, or a few weeks.

Kathryn: What does TMC stand for?

Schulz: Troop Medical Clinic. It's where you take the sick or injured or whatever. It was interesting working with the British, to say the least. They have totally different practices than we have.

Kathryn: Medical practices?

Schulz: I don't want to say medical; I mean more military. One of the things, that officers on the U.S. side, they actually talk to their enlisted like they'd know what they're supposed to do, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. When I dealt with the British officers, they did not really want to talk to you unless you were another officer; they looked down on you. And I go, "Okay, that's great."

Kathryn: So more based on the ranks?

Schulz: Yes, they separate their ranks very well.

Kathryn: So this whole time that you were kind of moving around Iraq, were you part of—the unit you were with, were they fighting?

Schulz: Nope. Actually what happened would be—this will be a great part of the stories. There was another unit out of Dubuque, Iowa which was a water purification unit; they would draw the water out of, like, rivers or lakes and purify it and then send it to us and we would distribute it to, like, the infantry soldiers or whatever. We made sure the front-line soldiers had fresh water every day. And that was pretty much all they did the whole time, was distribute water to infantrymen. I want to say November, December, KBR—and don't ask me what that stands for; it's one of the companies, civilian companies that went over and took over the water mission, so we pretty much got delegated to a transportation unit for the rest of the time. You're gonna drive here, drive there. Yeah, this whole time, too, is when [sighs] Brian Pittman started losing his mind, and I remember the first time he went up to Baghdad—and this goes back to my Haiti story—he was one of those that could not stand to see these little kids on the side of the road livin' the way they were, so he would start crying and crying, throwing his rifle and everything he could do to—at that time, I thought he was just trying to get attention, but after sitting back for a few years and thinking about it, he wasn't really trying to get attention, he just didn't know how to respond to it. And I remember seeing him—I talked to him several times. He would be out behind the Humvees puking, or when we were driving in convoys, you're supposed to have your rifle pointed out the window and he would zip up his window and just be sitting there in a little ball, just—ah, I don't know. The guy—I don't want to say he was—how do I

say this? He wasn't meant for the military, but he was just there trying to get a paycheck. But he wasn't—he should not have joined for the reasons he did. When we got to Baghdad, though, is when I started gettin' to know Jessie Isaacs really well. And to this day, him and I are really close. We still converse, we have text messages or phone calls. He's supposed to come out in August to visit, but if he does, that's another story. I guess he just got over—he was in the hospital for the last year with leukemia. He just got over it—released on that. But—

Kathryn: So was it pretty scary, like on a daily basis? Did you feel threatened on a daily basis?

Schulz: At Camp Victory? No, I did not. At Camp Victory I felt more tired than anything because of that heat. And it was non-, it was non-stop heat and it was dry heat, too; I wasn't used to that. Being around from here, you got the humidity and Fort Drum you had humidity, but I'd never seen any heat like that before, and especially that a hundred and fifty degree plus. And that went on for probably a week straight. I think they called it the hell week over there, the locals did, because it was so hot. It wasn't until, I want to say mid- to late September that they finally got air conditioners for our little tents. And those were the best things ever. I remember hearing stories—I never saw them—I remember I heard stories about people dying, or soldiers dying in their sleep over there because they'd dehydrate while they were sleeping and wouldn't wake up. So I remember during that, though, I could not sleep. I was up every hour just guzzling water.

Kathryn: Wow.

Schulz: It was during that time, too, we moved to Log Base Seitz in January. First day there, we had just set up our stuff and we were there three hours, all of a sudden I heard these explosions. And Jessie looked over and said, "Those sound like incoming." And we heard the alarms going off, and we were getting mortar attack the first day. Maybe about a week later we started new jobs at Log Base Seitz and I got assigned as the—this is difficult to explain. They got local nationals that come in the base and they do various jobs like cleaning the showers or digging stuff up or whatever. And I was assigned as the—they're called TCNs, but I was assigned as a coordinator. Like if they showed up, I had to call back to the gate, front gate headquarters, and have them send up a soldier to escort them. And I did that for probably about two months, and that was actually a great job. I got my own interpreter. We called him Columbo. He said that he could tell us his real name but we wouldn't be able to say it right. He was probably the funniest guy I've ever met. I have pictures of him and me together on my wall at home. It was also during that time, I called up for one escort, and this girl comes up. And she just wouldn't leave. Next day she comes down, brings this box of food and stares at all of us, because there's probably eight or nine of us in this room. I was the one with the interpreter and the rest were all gate guards. And she stares at all of us and takes off running. So that was the first day I met Jackie, and now we have been married for three years. So we actually met over there.

Kathryn: So you met your wife in Iraq?

Schulz: Yeah. And since that day, we pretty much have been inseparable. It's been pretty odd. I didn't expect to go over there and meet my wife. There's a lot of little stories from Iraq. I remember a convoy we were on, where it was the day after where it was a hundred-fifty; I think it cooled down to a hundred forty-seven or something like that. And there was two young kids driving what they call a five-ton, one of the big vehicles, and the assistant driver passed out and the driver was so hot, he was trying to wake him up and at the same time passed out and the five-ton went off the road into one of the ditches and it ripped the driver's nose right off, his—except for a little flap of skin holding it on. And that was the first time I'd seen a really bad injury like that ever in my life, and I remember I was so nervous calling in the medevac request and then getting yelled at by the commander because he didn't think it was that important.

Kathryn: So were you—you were being a medic at that time, is that it?

Schulz: Yeah.

Kathryn: How did you get trained to become a medic? Is that when you worked at the hospital?

Schulz: No—well, it's part of it. When I got—worked at the hospital, I had to get what they called an MOS or military job. And the current admin job they didn't have at the hospital and I didn't want to do it, so I volunteered to go to—at the time, it was a 91 Bravo or combat medic school. So I ended up doing that through the Reserves, where once a month I would go down to Milwaukee for two days and do training and then for two weeks in June, I'd have to go to Fort McCoy to complete my training. And I did that for probably about a year, year and a half, and then I was awarded the job of medic.

Kathryn: So did you like being a medic in Iraq?

Schulz: I loved it. I loved being a medic, period. That's one of the things I'm excited about. In January of '09, I get to go to flight medic school to learn how to be a flight medic and I'm really excited for that. I'm nervous because I've never really done that sort of stuff up in a helicopter, but I'm also very excited.

Kathryn: So a flight medic treats someone while they're flying, like while in the air?

Schulz: Well, they provide life sustainment measures while they're in the air. They don't do interventions unless it's absolutely necessary. They're supposed to be sustained by the time they get on the helicopter, or as the military calls it, they want us to call it “the bird,” even though it's a helicopter.

Kathryn: So what kept you going through all of your time in Iraq and being over there in that oppressive heat and—

Schulz: Well, that's hard to say. I knew each day I had to get up and do my job, so I wasn't gonna sit there and argue. It's not like I could call in sick over there. Everybody over there that I got to know—there's another guy I keep in touch with, Matthew Dummet [?]. Most annoying laugh I'd ever heard in my life, but he is one of the funniest guys I've ever met, just hilarious. It was just the little things that kept me going. What was it? I go off on these side stories, so bear with me. I love the Milwaukee Brewers, so we got this paper over there called *Stars and Stripes* and each day, the headline would be something major about the war in Iraq or Afghanistan. And I remember picking it up one day in, I want to say late—mid-to late September of '03 and the headline on the paper was, "Pirate Trips Running Brat." And it was a picture of one of the Pittsburgh Pirates' guys trippin' the brat, the running brat from Miller Park. And I just thought it was the funniest story. Stuff like that that kept me going. I have this dry sense of humor and I think about this stuff when I'm working. I'll sit there and think about Monty Python or something, so anything to distract my mind from what I'm actually doing.

Kathryn: Once you met Jackie, were you able to spend time with her, too?

Schulz: Yeah. My shift hours when we moved to Log Base Seitz were 4:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. And she did pretty much the same—well, hers was six to noon and then after that she was done. So she would come over to our—we called them barracks; it was just a warehouse with beds in it. She'd come over and play PlayStation with me or we'd go over to her barracks and we'd sit there and write little notes to each other no one else could see. She still has the notebook to this day and looks at it every once in a while. She makes me look at it.

Kathryn: So did you get married when you came home?

Schulz: No. We probably dated for about two years after that and then we got married in, let's see—we got married in—this is a funny story, too. We actually secretly got married in December of '05 because she wanted to move up here. She had been living in Dubuque still, so we got married, she moved up here with me. She had no insurance, no job, nothing, so the only reason we got married early was so that I could put her on my life insurance and stuff like that. Well, she'd been here maybe a week and she got a job as a nanny for probably one of the nicest couples I've ever met, two doctors; she got a job with them. And I remember I was sitting there filling out my taxes and my brother, who now works in this office, comes over and said, "What are you doing?" I'm like, "I got a question for you," and I explained to him. And he's like, "Were you gonna tell anybody?" I'm like, "Just don't say anything to anybody." About ten minutes later, my youngest brother calls me—who I'm the closest with in that family—he calls up, he says, "Are you married?" I'm like, "What?" So pretty much my whole family knew about it by the end of that day, so we had to tell her family and then we got, had the official ceremony in October of '06. But she's back in—she got out of the Army; now she's back in in my unit. She went to operating room technician school in San Antonio in Walter Reed, last fall; and that was harder for me than actually deploying to Iraq.

Kathryn: Really?

Schulz: I'd gotten so used—I'd never done this before, but I'd gotten so attached to her and stuff that I wasn't used to her being gone and it was just hard. It felt like—I still talked to her every day on the phone, we had email and everything, but she wasn't there. And, I don't know, maybe it's just psychological for me, but I just had a hard time getting over the fact she was gone. So that six months dragged on. I went and saw her a couple times down there, but it went by way too fast.

Kathryn: So going back to Iraq; how long were you there?

Schulz: We got there sometime early February of '03 and left there late April of '04, so it was actually fourteen, fourteen and a half months we were there, which is kind of long, considering now they're saying it's only supposed to be twelve months. It was—I don't know. I came home for leave in October and then for some reason, the second half of that deployment just flew by. It seemed like it was done in no time. Just the first half seemed to go on and on and on. The second half flew by, probably because I had a job I was doing every day that made me happy I was doing. And I had Jackie there preoccupying the other half of my time, so—and then it was sometime just before we left for Seitz, too, Log Base Seitz, that Brian Pittman was sent back home by the mental health people because they felt that he wasn't in a good enough mental state to be staying there. I remember one of the last things he said to me was, “My daughter turned”—what was it—“fourteen months, two days today.” Like, “You can't think about that stuff all the time; it's gonna drive you crazy.” I remember him looking at me and saying, “It already has.” That was the last I talked to him. But he got back home, and everybody in the unit got so mad at him because he got back home and got promoted for some reason, we have no idea why, and then he told the newspaper some story about how the soldiers, or the convoys we were in, people got killed in 'em and our base was always getting attacked at Camp Victory. I was so mad. Not for the fact that he lied, but because he's telling this and families are reading this, thinking okay, what kind of danger is my son or daughter or my husband or wife really in?

Kathryn: So you guys were pretty—your convoys weren't usually attacked anywhere?

Schulz: We were never attacked. We were one of the rare few, and I'm never gonna complain about it, but we were one of the rare few that never got attacked.

Kathryn: So when you were finally sent home, how did you feel about how the whole thing was for you?

Schulz: How the overall part?

Kathryn: Yeah.

Schulz: I didn't really want to come home; I wanted to stay because I'd been living with these people—and four of them in particular—we had these tents that were four-person tents and pretty much all of us stayed in the same tent until we moved to Log Base Seitz. I don't know, it was really hard for me come back because I had gotten to know these people. These people were my family for the last year. Anything I needed or anything, they took care of or vice versa; if they needed anything, I'd help them. I wasn't used to coming back to the actual family family and being civilian. I didn't really know what to do. When I first got back I was kind of lost. One of the things—and my youngest brother still gives me a lot of crap about this to this day—I remember when I first got back, I did not want him driving over potholes or going over cardboard or anything on the road, and I'd always be looking on the side of the road for like boxes or cans or something because of IEDs. And he still gives me crap to this day, like, "I'm gonna drive over this box, is that okay? You're not gonna flip out?" I'm like, "No, I'm fine."

Kathryn: Well, that's understandable.

Schulz: It's also really weird. Not—I don't know, maybe it was about a week after that that it really hit me. I'm like, "Hey, I haven't had a weapon around me in probably about a week or two."

Kathryn: After you got home?

Schulz: Yeah. Just really weird, because you're used to having that thing by you or on you for a year and a half straight, and all of a sudden it's gone. You're looking around for it. Wake up in the middle of the night trying to grab it; it's not there.

Kathryn: So did you come back to Fort McCoy?

Schulz: No, they actually sent us back to—it was really weird, too, because we came back the same time as Jackie's unit did, so they had us ride the same plane. And they dropped us off at Fort Campbell and then dropped them off at McCoy. The unit I was with was from Marion, Ohio. And another side story to that is, I was—there was probably three or four of us from Wisconsin, but everybody from that unit that was actually from that unit was huge Ohio State fans, and, I mean, just huge. So when Ohio State played Wisconsin and Wisconsin won, I let them hear about it for the next month, and they absolutely hated me for it. Well, yeah, they dropped us off at Fort Campbell because that was closer for that unit, actually, and I was down there maybe three days and then they sent me back home here to Madison.—[End of Tape 1, Side B]

Kathryn: Okay. So you got back to Madison from Iraq. And then did you have to go through some—like did they take you through some stuff to—

Schulz: At the time, it wasn't—a lot of the stuff we did was at Fort Campbell before I came back. It was, ah, you had to go through medical, you had to make sure everything was good and stuff. And then they sent—when they sent me back to Madison, it was pretty

much, okay, you're back; do your thing. Okay, no one really gave me any guidance from there. So I ended up getting a job working at a law firm for probably about two months, then I got hired as a civilian employee again working for a surgical team here in this building at Park Street, Army Reserve surgical team, and did that 'til four months ago. And that's where—that's pretty much all I've done for the last four years, is sit there at that unit and work and do paperwork, be a medic—actually EMT medic for them. I have to be nationally registered, and it's actually a really nice unit. The only problem was, they work a lot harder than I wanted to work at that point.

Kathryn: So you're planning on going to flight medic school?

Schulz: Yeah. Very excited about that. I'm supposed to go there in January and hopefully I get promoted again next summer, but I plan on making—finishing my career off on this, at least another twenty-five years, if possible. I'm only thirty-four now; I'll be here until sixty at least.

Kathryn: So what's your rank right now?

Schulz: I'm a staff sergeant, E6.

Kathryn: So flight medic school, what will you do after you go there? Do you know if you'll be called up again?

Schulz: As long as I'm in this unit, right now—because right now I'm in a medical training support battalion. As long as I'm in this one I guess I'm non-deployable. So I guess I'm supposed—I have to get that flight medic designator and then what I do after that, I have no clue. No one really is sure what my duty description is for this unit. They just know I'm a flight medic.

Kathryn: So when you got home from Iraq, were your parents happy to see you?

Schulz: Oh, yeah, they—[laughs] that's a funny story, too. They were all excited to see me and everything. I had called—what I had done was, when we were in Kuwait getting ready to come back, I called my youngest brother and I'm like, “Hey, we're getting ready to head back. Our plane leaves at this time. We'll be at Fort Campbell at this time. I'm supposed to go back to Madison at this time. I'll call you when I get to Madison—or when I'm getting ready to—the day before I leave Fort Campbell to Madison, give you the flight time and everything so you can have everybody there.” He's like, “Yeah, all right.” So I didn't call my mom; I wanted to surprise her, because everybody thinks my mom and me are really close. So we're at Kuwait for probably about a week, week and a half, I'm sitting there waiting and waiting for this plane and all of a sudden my commander comes up, he's like, “Hey, Sergeant Schulz.” I'm like, “Yes, sir?” “Do you know your mom just called the commander of the 101<sup>st</sup> Division looking for you?” I'm like, “What?” Evidently she had been calling everybody, including her senators and congressmen, because evidently she was all worried about me. I had to call her and tell her, “No, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine.” She's like, “Oh, I talked to your



commander, he said you're coming home." I'm like, "Yep, thanks, buddy. There goes my surprise." And then I called my brother, my youngest brother, the day before I came back to Madison, told him, "Okay, here's my flight time, here's when I get in." Well he, for some reason, wrote it down as an hour ahead or an hour different and my brother that works here figured out what was the right time, so he was the only one there at the airport. I'm like, "Where is everybody?" It's like, "I tried telling him it was not that time." So we sat there for an hour at the airport waiting for the rest of my family to get there and they come in, they're like—didn't even know I was there, holding a banner up. And I'm like, "Yeah, that's great, it's late."

Kathryn: [laughs] You must go—

Schulz: I didn't—when I got back, I probably didn't sleep for two or three days. I just wanted to do everything all at once, go do this, go do that. It was May, so immediately it's like, all right, let's go to the Dells. Let's go do this. Let's go do that. I finally got home, laid down Saturday night probably about—I got home on a Thursday, laid down Saturday night finally about two or three in the morning. About an hour after I laid down, Jackie called me from Dubuque, wanted to know if I wanted to come down there, so I immediately got in my car, went down there, fell asleep at her place and didn't wake up until probably Monday night. I was just out like a rock, and at that point everybody was looking for me. "Where's Greg? Where's Greg?"

Kathryn: So you don't foresee being deployed back to Iraq in the near future?

Schulz: I can't say that. I—who knows what this Army is going to bring me now? I could be; I may not be. But as long as I'm here, I'm not gonna be.

Kathryn: So do you belong to any veterans' organizations at all?

Schulz: No.

Kathryn: So what has all this meant to your life, like in the overall scheme of things, all of these experiences in Honduras and Haiti and Iraq?

Schulz: You know, it really didn't mean that much to me until a few weeks ago. And I was complaining about my job and how much I hated it and it was really ironic that you called and wanted this interview—how much I hated my job and how I wished I had never been in the military. My wife reminded me of something. She's said, "You've been everywhere. You've been all around this world. Do you know what people would do to have that experience?" I sit back, and I'm like, "Yeah, my life really hasn't been that bad." This whole military experience has just enhanced my life tremendously. I can't really think of anything else to say. It's just the military has given me focus; they've also given me everything else. I don't think I can imagine my life I would have done something else.

Kathryn: So is there anything else that you would like to talk about that I haven't asked you about?

Schulz: No, I think we've hit on everything. I'm planning on staying in 'til they make me retire. My wife always asks me what my goal is in the Army. I said, keep telling her, I want to be the Command Sergeant Major of the Army some day.

Kathryn: Work your way all the way to the top?

Schulz: Yep.

Kathryn: Well, thank you so much for this interview. I really appreciate it.

Schulz: You're welcome.

**[End of Interview]**