

## Doug Bridges: The veteran honored by Divide Camp's memorial hunt

### Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

Josh Spanno well remembers the day and circumstances that led to the death of his friend, Army Specialist Doug Bridges, killed in action in Iraq: Nov. 4, 2006. "Doug had already been shot one time — on a raid," Spanno said. "We were supposed to go home in July (of 2006), and Doug went home as part of a "torch party," the initial group that goes home to get stuff ready for when a whole brigade comes back." Bridges was called back as part of the troop surge at the time and everyone's deployment was extended. The group moved from Mosul to Baghdad and Bridges was providing security for a Medical Civilian- Assistance-Program mission, which involved intelligence gathering and provided medical care to the local children when a sniper's bullet put an end to his dreams of going home.

"I was on an overwatch mission on the day it happened, and I didn't come back for three days," Spanno said. "I found out about it at about 10 or 11(p.m.) and someone asked if I was going to the memorial tomorrow. I

told him I didn't know what he was talking about, and he said, 'Bridges got shot and he died.' It was not the news I wanted; it was a real kick in the gut."



**Divide Camp. This place in the mountains outside Joseph offers battle-weary veterans a place to re-boot by connecting with nature.**

Steve Tool/Chieftain