



Paraglide

Bragg Honors Fallen MP

by Janice Burton

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Fort Bragg Soldiers and family members gathered Tuesday at the Main Post Chapel to honor the memory of a Fort Bragg military policeman who was killed in Iraq on March 24.

Staff Sgt Wentz Jerome Henry Shanaberger III, 21st Military Police Company, 16th MP Brigade, was killed, and two other Soldiers were wounded while on routine patrol. The Soldiers were investigating a suspicious vehicle when they came under attack by individuals using small arms and an improvised explosive device.

Shanaberger, who joined the Army in 1990, was remembered by friends and colleagues as a man of humor and honor.

“His affectionate personality drew you to him,” said Maj Stephan DeVille, commander of the 21st MP Co “He served his nation proudly.”

Staff Sgt Hugh Traughber, MP, 21st MP Co., noted, “He brought a smile to the room whenever he entered. He was a Soldier who led from the front.”

Another friend, Sgt 1st Class Jeff Maddox, 21st MP Co., talked about Shanaberger’s can-do attitude and his willingness to put himself on the line for others.

“Humor and laughter were a part of everything he did. He knew how to dance, laugh, love and care,” said Maddox. “We’ll never know how many lives his actions saved ... The words ‘quit,’ ‘can’t, and ‘won’t’ didn’t have a home in his vocabulary. He truly epitomized the Army values.”

Master Sgt Allen Blanchette 16th MP Bde., added, “His presence assured us no matter what the turn of events, it would all be all right.”

Joseph Burke, a retired sergeant first class who worked with Shanaberger, compared him to Bob Vila, the television ‘Mr. Fix-it.’ Burke said that Shanaberger was always working on ways to make the quality of life better for Soldiers.

“I’m a better person today for knowing Wentz Shanaberger,” said Burke.

During Shanaberger's career, he has served as an MP, gunner, team leader, squad leader, brigade training noncommissioned officer and platoon sergeant.

He deployed to numerous areas of the world to include: Operation Desert Storm (1990-1991), Task Force Tropic Refuge (Marshall Islands, 1994), Operations Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard (Bosnia/Kosovo, 1997), U.S. Army South Retrograde Operations Panama (1999) and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While assigned to the 21st MPs, Shanaberger served as a platoon sergeant for the 4th platoon, and was recently promoted to sergeant first class.

While deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Shanaberger participated in critical maneuver and mobility support, law enforcement, area security and police intelligence operations.

Shanaberger is a decorated combat military police officer who has received the following awards and decorations: Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with six oak leaf clusters, Meritorious Unity Citation, Army Good Conduct Medal (3rd), NATO Defense Service Medal, Kosovo Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal with Bronze Star, Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Saudi Arabia), Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait), NATO Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge and Drivers Badge.

He has been awarded a Silver Star and Purple Heart Medal posthumously.

He is survived by his wife, Corey, and their five children, Wentz Jr., Jesse, Audrey, Grace and Jack.