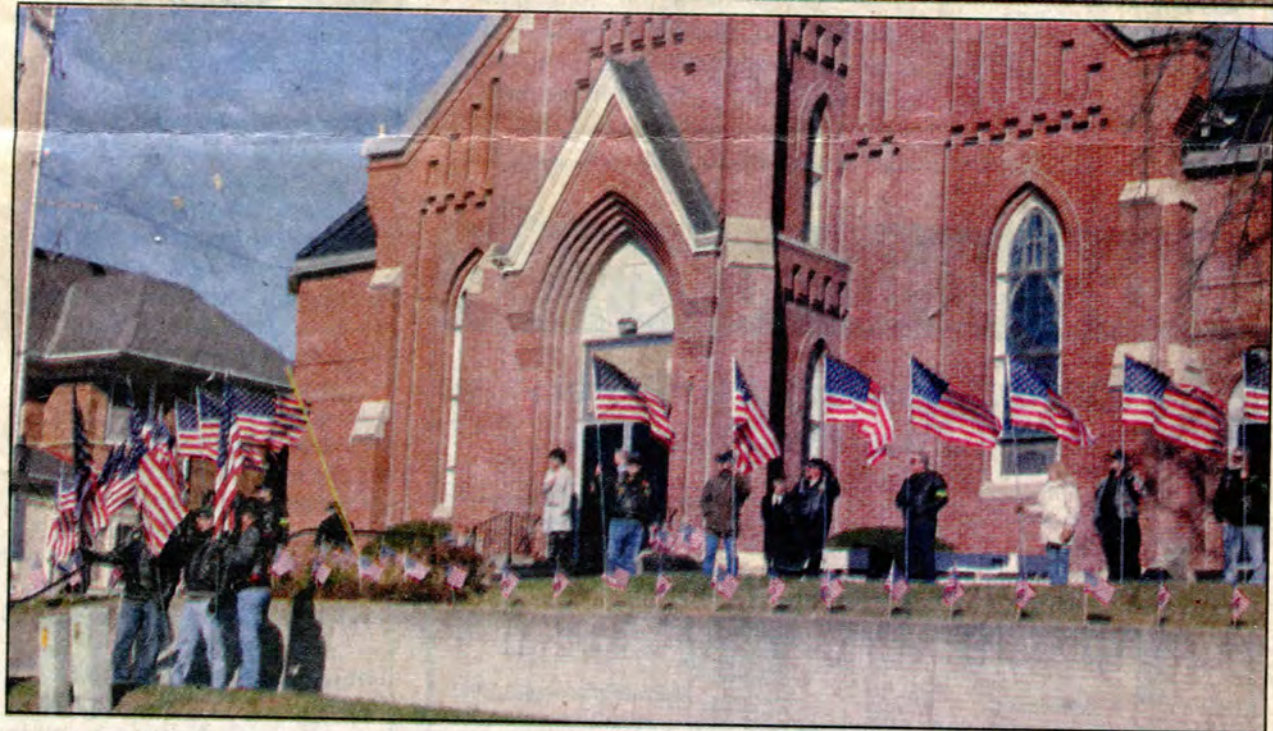


*Harlanda Lubinski*

# Fallen Soldier Laid to Rest







## *Thousand attends funeral for Lt. Col. Paul Finken*

**EARLING** -- Friends, family and fellow soldiers of Lt. Col. Paul Finken, 40, paid tribute to their hometown hero Saturday during services at St. Joseph Catholic Church here.

More than 1,000 people turned out for the funeral to pay

their respects to Finken, who was killed in action in Baghdad, Iraq Thursday, Nov. 2. Officials said it was a roadside bomb that killed Finken and another member of Finken's unit.

Flags lined the streets throughout this small Shelby County town, and fire trucks hoisted a large American flag along the highway with a nearby sign that read "Thanks Paul, May You Rest in Peace."

Finken was from Tennessee,

but grew up in Earling. He was a 1984 graduate of Harlan Community High School, and went on to a decorated military career.

He was remembered Saturday as the loving husband and father, and dedicated soldier. Besides his immediate family, up to 50 of his classmates were in attendance at the funeral, American Legion post representatives, a contingent from West Point where Finken graduated and members of Finken's 101st Airborne Division in Fort Campbell, Ky.

Also on hand was a convoy of motorcyclists who rode and carried flags in Earling.

The Rev. Mike Berner led the funeral ceremony, which culminated with a funeral procession to nearby St. Joseph Cemetery, where Finken was buried. Bagpipes filled the air with "Amazing Grace" following the ceremony, and the funeral included full military honors.

Finken was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. (Photos by Kim Wegener)

