

Lt. Col. Paul Finken, 40

July 31, 1966 - Nov. 2, 2006

CLARKSVILLE, TN — Paul John Finken, son of Charles and Edna (Fromm) Finken, was born July 31, 1966, in Manning, as one of the heaviest set of twins ever born at the hospital. He attended grade school at St. Joseph Catholic Grade School and graduated in May, 1980. He attended high school at Harlan Community High School and graduated in May, 1984. He then attended Iowa State University for one year prior to entering the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY where he graduated in May, 1989, with a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Engineering Management and a minor in Operations Research (Systems Engineering). He also graduated from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, CA in June, 2000, with a Masters of Science degree in Operations Analysis. Paul entered the United States Army as a Second Lieutenant Infantry officer where he served for 17 years on active duty until his recent death in Eastern Baghdad, Iraq. He was an infantry officer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Paul arrived at Fort Campbell in June, 2003 and immediately deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Oct. 10, 1992, Paul married Jackie Farrar at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling. From this union three children were born, Emilie, Caroline, and Julia. Paul's awards and decorations include Weapons Qualification, M9, expert; Bronze Star medal (2); Meritorious Service Medal; Army Commendation Medal (3); Army Achievement Medal (2); Iraqi Campaign Medal; Armed Forces Service Medal; Army Superior Unit Award; National Defense Service Medal (2); Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; NATO Service Medal; Overseas Service Ribbon; Army Service Ribbon; Air Assault Badge; Combat Infantry Badge; Expert Infantry Badge; Parachutists Badge; Pathfinder Badge; and the Ranger Tab. Paul was awarded the Purple Heart and his second Bronze Star posthumously. After graduation from West Point, Paul began his military career as a Rifle Platoon Leader in A Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, "Manchu's" at Fort Wainwright, AK. He later served as the Company's Executive Officer. In June 1992, he moved to Headquarters and Headquarters Company as the Mortar Platoon Leader and later served as the Assistant Battalion S-3/Operations Officer.

In September 1994, following graduation from the Infantry Officer Advanced Course, he was assigned to Headquarters, V Corp in Heidelberg, Germany as an Assistant G3 Operations Officer. In February 1996, he moved to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment in Vilseck, Germany and served as the Battalion Supply Officer. In November of that year, he took command of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment in Vilseck, Germany. In March of 1997, he was deployed for seven months to Bosnia as the Commander of A Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, a combined Armor-Infantry Company Team and later served in Headquarters and Headquarters Company as the Battalion Air Operations officer. In June 2000, he was selected to serve as an Expert Combat Operations Analyst for TRADOC Analysis Command at Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Following graduation from the Army Command and General Staff College, Paul was assigned in June, 2003 to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, KY. He immediately deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom where he was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, "Rakassans" as the Battalion Executive Officer and later as the

Battalions Operations Officer upon the unit's redeployment from Iraq.

In November 2004, Paul became the Executive Officer of the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment "Currahee". In August 2005, he was assigned to Headquarters, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team as the Chief of the Military Transition Team and once again deployed to Baghdad, Iraq to train Iraqi Forces. He was serving in this position at the time of his death from enemy action. He died Nov. 2, 2006, while on a mission in Eastern Baghdad, Iraq.

In addition to his parents, Charles and Edna, Paul was preceded in death by his brother, John, and nephew, Gregory. Survivors include his wife, Jackie, and their three children, Emilie, Caroline, and Julia of Clarksville, TN, his sisters and brothers, Steve (Sharon) Finken of Harlan; Alan (Donnelle) Finken of Littleton, CO; Richard Finken of Earling; David Finken of Papillion, NE; Jean (Alex) Pruitt of Spencer; Mark Finken of Carroll; Joan (Jim) Henscheid of West Des Moines; and Peter (Kara) Finken of Simsbury, CT; mother-in-law, Juneadair Farrar of Toluca, IL; sisters-in-law Janine (Russ) Welp of Marshalltown, Denise (Scott) McGillis of Toluca, IL; nieces, nephews, godchildren and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 11, 2006, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling, with Rev. Michael Berner celebrant. Military rites were conducted in the Earling Cemetery by the 101st Airborne Division Color Guard. Serving as part of the Honor Guard were LTC Matt Ferguson, SSG Shannon Cole, SGT Nicholas Shaw, SPC Paul Ogilvie, PV2 Jose Richardson, PFC Erin Dotson, SGT Eugene Deriada, SPC Jonathan Allen, SPC Justin Major, SPC Dakarai Davis. LTC Michael Scott and LTC Jay Cox served as Paul's personal escort and assistance officer throughout the ceremonies. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.