



Release # 11-03-007
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March 17, 2011

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

82nd Airborne Division Paratrooper dies

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — An 82nd Airborne Division Paratrooper died at his home in Fayetteville Tuesday after sustaining a gunshot wound.

Spc. Brandon M. Smith, 24, of Cabot, Ark., was a missile system repair specialist with Company F, 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

Smith joined the Army in September 2007 and attended Basic Training at Fort Benning, Ga., and Advanced Individual Training at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. He arrived to the 82nd Abn. Div. in June 2008.

His most recent deployment was to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from Sept. 2009 until Sept. 2010 when his unit redeployed.

“Specialist Smith was one of those Troops who you could give any mission to,” said Capt. Lucas Rand, commander of Foxtrot Company. “He never complained or made a fuss when things got busy; it is Soldiers like Smith that keep the Army moving every day.”

“Specialist Smith, or ‘B-Randon’ as some of us knew him, was a great kid. He was a good trooper and an even a better friend,” said Staff Sgt. Brad Kelso, Smith’s platoon sergeant and good friend. “Smith was more than just one of my troops; he was more like my little brother. He was family to me.”

Smith’s awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Action Badge, and the Parachutist Badge.

Smith is survived by his wife, Natalie Smith of Cabot, Ark, and his mother and father, William and Holly Smith also of Cabot.

Editor’s Note:

1. An official photo of Spc. Smith is attached.
2. For more information, contact the 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office at (910) 432-0661/0662 or (910) 813-3891.