



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Sergeant Phillip Freligh Posthumously Honored By Senator Catharine Young

CATHARINE YOUNG October 13, 2016

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RIPLEY – U.S. Army Sergeant Phillip Freligh was posthumously honored recently for his service to our nation with a medal presentation ceremony at the First Presbyterian Church in Ripley.

At the ceremony, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – 57th District) presented the family of Sgt. Freligh's with the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army

Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Army Service Ribbon. His family also received the Expert Marksmanship Badge with Grenade Bar, a Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar, the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge and the Parachutist Badge in recognition of his outstanding record of military service.

“Sergeant Freligh was the consummate example of the selfless dedication our veterans demonstrate for our nation. He was willing to defend the values and beliefs we, our allies hold most dear, and his selflessness ultimately cost him his life. His love and loyalty to America is truly laudable and we owe him, and his family a profound debt of gratitude,” said Senator Young.

“It is always humbling to be able to pay tribute to the brave men and women who served our nation honorably throughout our history, but words cannot begin to express our condolences for the Freligh family. Sergeant Freligh has often been described as a soldier’s soldier, a man dedicated to his country, but he was also a loving son and brother, who epitomized the values and lessons instilled upon him through his upbringing,” Senator Young said.

Sergeant Freligh’s father Larry, a veteran himself, accepted the awards on behalf of his late son.

“On behalf of Phillip’s mother, I wish to thank Senator Young and her staff for the honor that you have given today in memory of our son. Also, the many others who worked so very hard behind the scenes for this all too take place. Serving almost ten years of Active Duty Phillip loved his country and served it well,” said Mr. Freligh.

Born April 10, 1975 at Landstuhl, Rheinland-Pflaz, Germany, Phillip M. Freligh knew military service called him from a young age.

As a senior at Green County Tech High School, he decided to enter the U.S. Army Reserve. While processing at the Memphis, Tennessee, Military Processing Station, he opted at the last minute to switch to the Regular Army and enlisted into the U.S. Army's Delayed Entry Program on November 19, 1992.

At 18 years old, he reported for active duty on August 8, 1993. Phillip Freligh was ordered to the U.S. Army Armored Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky where he completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training as a Cavalry Scout.

Following graduation, he was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3 Battalion, 73rd Armored Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He served with the 73rd Armored for 33 months before deciding to retrain as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Specialist.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialists are the Army's preeminent tactical and technical explosives experts. They are warriors who are properly trained, equipped and integrated to attack, defeat and exploit unexploded ordnance, improvised explosive devices and weapons of mass destruction. The training is rigorous and tough, but he knew he was up for the challenge.

Despite the high attrition rate during 32 weeks of specialized training, spread between three phases, Specialist Freligh performed admirably and his training culminated with graduating from the U.S. Navy's Special Warrior EOD School at Indian Head, Maryland, was followed by additional training at the Redstone Arsenal in Alabama.

Upon graduation on November 26, 1997, then Specialist Freligh was assigned to the 832nd Ordnance Battalion, then at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, supporting the development of precision guided munitions, missiles and other devices used in electronic

counter-measure environments.

In 1999, Specialist Freligh was reassigned to the 734th EOD Company, 84th Ordnance Battalion at Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, California, and then again to the 707th Ordnance Company, 3rd Ordnance Battalion at Fort Lewis, Washington.

While with the 707th Ordnance Company, now Sergeant Freligh was deployed to Kuwait where he assisted with the ordinance and gunnery training of military aircrews on the Udairi Range.

Tragically, on March 12, 2001, a U.S. Navy F-18 Hornet dropped three 500 pound high explosive Mark-82 bombs, during a training exercise, on the range crew, standing watch and observing practice runs, from their Humvee at the Udairi Range.

The resulting explosion took the lives of Sergeant Freligh, his supervisor, Staff Sergeant Richard N. Boudrea, and their colleague, Specialist Jason D. Wildfong.

“It was a privilege to take part in this ceremony to pay tribute to Sgt. Freligh’s courage and dedication. On behalf of our community, and our nation, we thank Sgt. Freligh and his family for his service and sacrifice,” said Senator Young.