
A Wish Come True

By Captain Thomas Cieslak



Thanks to the military police of Fort Bragg, North Carolina, one young man's dream has come true. Paratroopers of the 503d Military Police Battalion (Airborne), 16th Military Police Brigade, partnered with the Make-A-Wish Foundation to give Ryan Beaulieu a taste of military police life.

And the military police, who were inspired by his courage and eagerness to learn, were excited to meet Ryan. "Anytime you get to make a less fortunate child's dream come true, I'm very honored," said the 503d Military Police Brigade 2009 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, who served as the escort for Ryan and his family during their visit with the brigade.

Soon after arriving, Ryan found himself sitting in the driver's seat of a garrison patrol vehicle. His escort—a military police investigator—helped Ryan operate the lights, sirens, and loudspeaker, while explaining how he and other Soldiers ensure the safety of Fort Bragg families.

One of the brigade's four-legged members was the next to meet Ryan. A military working dog and his handler demonstrated how they work as a team to locate narcotics and apprehend suspects. The noncommissioned officer in charge of military working dogs at Fort Bragg explained how the military working dog and handler make use of each other's special skills. The noncommissioned officer presented Ryan with a set of trading cards featuring military working dogs and military police equipment.

After briefing Ryan and his mother on the capabilities of the armored security vehicle, a squad leader from the 65th Military Police Company, along with a team of military police, gave them a ride in the vehicle.

Ryan was then escorted to the 16th Military Police Brigade Fallen Soldier Memorial, located outside the brigade headquarters building, where his escort described the bravery and valor of many of the fallen Service members whose names are engraved on the memorial.

In a ceremony conducted in the 503d Military Police Battalion Hall of Heroes, the unit executive officer made Ryan an honorary member of the Nation's only airborne military police battalion. He then presented Ryan with a battalion shirt and other items that could be used to show pride in the military police.

Before visiting the 503d Military Police Battalion, the XVIII Airborne Corps treated Ryan to a day on Fort Bragg. During that visit, Ryan got a close look at helicopters and met the commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps, Lieutenant General Frank Helmick.

When Ryan Beaulieu left the 503d Military Police Battalion, his wish to see Soldiers and military equipment and to experience the life of his military police heroes had come true.

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