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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FT. LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI



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FLW Soldier welcomes Vietnam veteran home

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – Capt. Ryan Ball, a Centralia, Missouri native, with the U.S. Army Military Police School at Fort Leonard Wood, spoke at the memorial service for Sgt. Rodney Griffin, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armored Regiment, 25th Infantry Division.

The Griffin Family invited Capt. Ball to speak at the memorial service and present an American flag to Griffin's wife, Donna, in memory of Griffin's service to our nation.

Ball, who served as a sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, said that his duty was performed in honor of Griffin and Soldiers like him every day.

"I thought of Rodney many days during my three-year tour," he said. "To have this Soldier identified is so personal to me. The military and U.S. effort to bring everybody home is amazing. I can't imagine what it's like to be brother and wife and finally having that closure."

Sgt. Griffin's remains were returned after 45 years to his hometown of Centralia April 23.

Griffin was killed May 2, 1970, while serving in Vietnam. A memorial repatriation service was held in Griffin's honor April 25 at Centralia High School, followed by a private graveside service at East Lawn Memorial Cemetery in Mexico, Missouri.

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More than 1,000 people gathered at the high school and thousands lined the streets from Centralia to Mexico to welcome Griffin home.

Griffin completed his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood in 1969.

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For more information, contact the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office at 573.563.4145

Encl. (2) Photos

Cutline:

DSC09857: Capt. Ryan Ball, a Centralia, Missouri, native, with the U.S. Army Military Police School at Fort Leonard Wood, speaks during the memorial repatriation service honoring Sgt. Rodney Griffin April 25 at Centralia High School.

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains more than 80,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, and the Army's largest Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting the 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, a large Forces Command unit that is responsible for all deployable capabilities at Fort Leonard Wood. A colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.
