



photo by Lucille Anne Newman/Paraglide

Sgt. Brandon Williams, Special Warfare Center Training Battalion, tries to stay afloat while swimming across Tucker Pool Oct. 19 during the Gilmore Paralegal competition.

Paralegal Challenge held in memory of fallen Soldier

by **Lucille Anne Newman**

Paraglide

When someone mentions that the lawyers and paralegal specialists will be holding a competition, the first joke to arise from that conversation would be, "Doing what? To see who can write up powers of attorney documents the fastest?"

But for Army paralegals, it's not about a nicely pressed suit, a comfortable office or even set work hours like their civilian counterparts — they're Soldiers first.

And they were willing to prove it Oct. 19 when 25 Army paralegals from the XVIII Airborne Corps and the U.S. Army Special Operations Command participated in the 2006 Bragg Judge Advocate General's Paralegal Challenge. Also known as the Gilmore Competition in honor of Sgt. Maj. Cornell Gilmore. Gilmore was one of six Soldiers killed when the Black Hawk helicopter they were flying in was struck by enemy fire and crashed near Tikrit on Nov. 7, 2003 in Iraq.

Gilmore was a legal advisor in the Army's Judge Advocate General Corps.

"This challenge gives us a chance to bring paralegals from throughout our community together for a team building, esprit de corps competition," said Master Sgt. Diana Clark, XVIII Airborne Corps Office of the Judge Advocate General.

"This idea was generated by Soldiers wanting an opportunity to compete in a paralegal skill competition," said Sgt. Maj. Michael Broady, XVIII Airborne Corps Office of the Staff Judge Advocate. "Part of that process is to make sure we progress our paralegals and (help them) establish milestones as we're interested in growing Soldiers of good character."

Broady said the friendly competition wasn't limited to Fort Bragg, as other paralegals from Fort Campbell, Ky., Fort Drum, N.Y., and Fort Benning, Ga., as well as Soldiers from Hunter Army Airfield in Ga., and Washington, D.C., participated in the event.

The competition began at

2:45 a.m., each Soldier tested in a 6-mile rucksack march, modified physical fitness test, combat swim, land navigation and common Army skills until 5 p.m. These challenges were in addition to written paralegal tests and facing a review board for oral testing.

Sgt. Kelly R. McQueen, 519th Military Intelligence Battalion, thinks testing will be her biggest challenge.

"I think my biggest challenge will be the board ... but, I guess we'll see how well I do," McQueen said as she prepared to take on the land navigation portion of the competition. "The reason I'm doing this competition is because it is in honor of Sergeant Major Gilmore who passed away in Iraq in 2003 and it's also a better way for us to meet other (paralegals)."

Broady said the end goal of the competition is to "essentially (let the Soldiers) prove themselves as one of the best paralegals in XVIII Airborne Corps and USASOC as well as promote esprit de corps and mirror all the skills we would need in combat."

'... May all your Knights be Golden'

by **Lucille Anne Newman**

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After six weeks, the new knights were finally selected and made part of the team Oct. 18 as they touched down on their target one after another before a crowd of cheering families, friends, and Golden Knights, past and present.

"We started with 16 guys and ended with seven. Even though hitting the target is important, jumping is just a small portion of the job," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Elliott, U.S. Army Parachute Team.

"(The assessment and selection process) is an awesome program and I'm extremely proud of these guys. I know these guys are going to keep the Army strong and I know they will do a great job representing the United States Army," he said.

Elliott said now the new knights will go to Yuma Proving Grounds, Az., for further training.

"It's an amazing

feeling," said Sgt. Mathew Acord, USAPT. "It was definitely a lot of hard work, a lot of sweat and tears ... but it's all worth it."

Sgt. 1st Class Khalida Hendricks agreed and added, "This has been an awesome experience."

After being knighted the new knights were greeted by the crowd along with present and former Golden Knights welcoming

them to the team.

"I just watched my son, (Specialist) Todd Beckel, jump and graduate," said Donna Lindsey who was overjoyed that he made the team. "I'm super proud of him. Well, I'm proud of him no matter what he decides to do."

Staff Sgt. Dale Bradley is a Marine who was determined to

become a Golden Knight from day one. He meant it when he said, "I want this more than anything else."

According to Bradley, it was a great honor.

"It's still the case," he said with a big smile. "And I expect to do as much as I can to benefit not only the team, but the Army and our great nation."



photos by Lucille Anne Newman/Paraglide

Members of the Golden Knights welcome and congratulate the newest members of the team, Staff Sgt. Dale Bradley, center, and Sgt. Andrew Starr, right, following the graduation and knighting ceremony Oct. 18 at Laurinburg-Maxton Airport.

Congratulations to:



Sgt. Mathew Acord



Spc. Todd Beckel



Staff Sgt. Dale Bradley



Sgt. 1st Class Will Fleming



Sgt. 1st Class Khalida Hendricks



Sgt. Andrew Starr



Sgt. Brandon Valle