

Cpl Benjamin C. Dillon, 22, was a gun team leader assigned to 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment at Fort Benning, Ga. He was killed on Oct. 6, 2007, in Mosul, Iraq, while engaged in combat operations against known enemies of the United States of America in Northern Iraq. He was a veteran of operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. In the early dawn, Ben layed down gun fire at an unknown enemy driving a small vehicle loaded explosives toward the returning teams, that included many of the most elite military soldiers know: Special Forces Delta team, who honored Ben's name in their memorial garden, the Army Rangers, Navy Seals, and the Marines who were coming back from a very successful night mission that a few stories have been written about.

Ben initially entered the United States Army in his senior year in the delayed entry program in 2003. After graduating from Southeast High School. He then went to basic training on September 24, 2004. He completed One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning as an infantryman, receiving awards for receiving a "Superior Performance" for Physical Fitness Test and being selected as "1st Platoon Honor Graduate" in 2005. Next after graduating from the Basic Airborne Course, he was assigned to the Ranger Indoctrination Program also at Fort Benning. 3 months of training program that never let them sleep more than 15 minutes, eat in 5 minutes and took 20 pounds of weight off that he didn't have to give. It is said that RIP also takes 10 years off your life span.

He graduated from the Ranger Indoctrination Program in March 2005 and was then assigned to 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. He served there as a rifleman, grenadier, automatic rifleman, machine gunner, and gun team leader. His last assignment was as a gun team leader.

Dillon's awards and decorations include Army Commendation Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Parachutist Badge, and the Ranger Tab and scroll. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with V Device (for Valor), the Purple Heart and Meritorious Service Medal.

As a Ranger, Cpl Benjamin C. Dillon distinguished himself as a member of the Army's premier light infantry unit, and traveled to all corners of the world in support of the Global War on Terrorism, and fought valiantly to "uphold the prestige, honor, and high standards of the Ranger Regiment. He was a lifelong resident of the Edinburg township and a 2004 graduate of Southeast High School. He played baseball, basketball, and golf.

Ben spent many hours as a volunteer helping his community. As a baseball player he and the Dillon families helped to build the baseball fields at the Edinburg Park. He was an umpire for younger teams.

His legacy is not just about Ben and the Dillons who have been volunteers in the community. It is about the residents of the Edinburg and Portage County Community.

In the barracks, as they train, new rangers they have a cage. Rangers all kept in cages with all of their gear, and guns. This cage is where they learn to become brothers for life. It's here in Ben's cage with his picture and Army coat hanging above it that the story is told what our township of Edinburg did for their home town hero. This is the true reason that our rangers do what they do!

The story is told of a grateful community that filled the high school gymnasium saying thank you to Ben sacrifice and the all of the people who lined the seven-mile funeral procession with signs of thank you for your sacrifice, little boys standing with a salute, and so many people waving flags, it's about the five local Fire Departments that held up their ladders with an American Flag as a busload of fellow rangers came from Ft. Benning, Georgia to carry the casket. 3 star General Robert Wagner who flew in to attend the funeral and hand me the folded Flag. The funeral had over a thousand people who came to pay their respects and it was moved to the local High School gym. Both Rolling Thunder, and Patriot Guard Riders and VFW members with motorcycles standing guard through the funeral and trip to the cemetery to honor a fellow soldier.

It was a few donations that started to arrive from all over the world that we started the scholarship fund and the beginning of a nonprofit in memory of Ben. We now host a yearly Cpl. Benjamin C. Dillon youth Baseball Tournament ran by volunteers from the community for over 10 years. To date over \$50,000.00 in scholarships have been given.

The Portage County Commissioners: Christopher Smeiles, TommieJo Marsilio, Maureen T. Frederick. Made an Official Proclamation in honor of Ben and to all American of the lives lost in defense of our national freedoms, giving deepest thanks to all our veterans, honors our Gold Star Families and hereby declares  
October 6, 2012 HONOR AND REMEMBER DAY

The military honored Ben by putting his name in stone at the Ranger Battalion at Fort Benning, Ga., and the Special Operations Command headquarters in Fort Bragg, NC, and in the Delta Compound of the Special Forces Delta team in their memorial garden.

My family, my community and I would like to have Ben honored by having a road sign erected on Interstate 76 in Edinburg, Portage County Ohio. Thank you!

