



**U.S. ARMY CIVIL AFFAIRS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL  
OPERATIONS COMMAND (AIRBORNE)**  
***BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH***

*USACAPOC (A) Public Affairs Office, Fort Bragg, N.C. 28310  
(910) 432-2035 / [www.usacapoc.army.mil](http://www.usacapoc.army.mil)*

---

**Sgt. Thomas E. Vandling Jr.**  
**Died on Jan. 01, 2007**  
**Operation Iraqi Freedom**

---

Sgt. Thomas E. Vandling was born on April 27, 1980, in Pittsburgh. He was a trained psychological operations specialist assigned to the 303rd Psychological Operations Company, Oakdale, Pa.

He died from injuries sustained when an Improvised Explosive Device near Babil Province, Iraq, struck his vehicle. Vandling deployed to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

A resident of Pittsburgh, Vandling began his Army Reserve career Aug. 10, 2001, in the same city.

After completion of Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., Vandling went on to study his Advanced Individual Training as a psychological operations specialist at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, N.C.

His first and only duty station was with the 303rd Psychological Operations Company, Oakdale, Pa. While assigned to the 303rd, Vandling mobilized and deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003. He was attached to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he received the Guadalcanal patch.

Upon completion of his mission overseas in summer 2003, Vandling returned to collegiate life, attending The University of Pittsburgh. He doubled majored in both psychology and philosophy.

Three years passed before he answered the call to duty again in 2006 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Vandling was promoted to sergeant and entered the prestigious non-commissioned officer corps during summer 2006.

Vandling's military awards included the Army Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device and numeral two Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon and the Expert Weapons Qualification Badge. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, two Purple Hearts, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

He is survived by his parents Thomas and Dianne, of Pittsburgh. Vandling is also survived by his brothers and sister, James, Michael and Elizabeth, of Pittsburgh.

