75TH RANGER REGIMENT
CHANGE OF COMMAND
CEREMONY

26 JULY 2001
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA
THE 75TH RANGER REGIMENT

Ranger Battalions were first formed during WWII to conduct commando raids and to spearhead combat operations. Major, later Brigadier General, Williams O. Darby gathered 2000 volunteers and put them through a grueling training program in Northern Ireland to form the initial Battalion. Darby's Rangers spearheaded the invasion of North Africa, the landings at Cefalu and Licata during the Sicilian invasion, and saw fierce combat at Anzio. The 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions participated in the D-day landings at Normandy. The scaling of the cliffs at Point-du-Hoc is still considered one of the most daring operations ever conducted. The Rangers also earned their battle cry at Omaha beach, when the assistant division commander of the 29th Inf. Div. determined that they must advance inland or die. He turned to the commander of the 5th Ranger Battalion and directed "RANGERS LEAD THE WAY!" The 6th Ranger Battalion distinguished itself in the Pacific theatre with the heroic rescue of the allied prisoners at Cabanatuan, Philippines. Rangers from the 1st Ranger Battalion were the first Americans to see ground combat in Europe during the D-day raid in 1944. Rangers from the 6th Ranger Battalion were the first troops to return to the Philippines.

Lineage is also drawn from "Merrill's Marauders" who fought against the Japanese in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations. Organized into three battalions of two combat teams each under the command of MG Frank D. Merrill, these experienced jungle fighters penetrated deep into enemy territory and fought 5 major and 30 minor engagements, defeating the veteran soldiers of the Japanese 18th Div. The high point of the Marauders combat operations was the capture of the Myitkyina airfield, the only all weather airstrip in Northern Burma.

The need for a special brand of warfare quickly resurfaced during the Korean War. A total of 18 Airborne Ranger Companies were committed to combat and fought with distinction. The Airborne Ranger concept was carried forward into the Vietnam War where Ranger Companies were again called upon, this time performing raids, ambushes and long range reconnaissance missions to pinpoint enemy strong points. 15 separate Ranger Companies were formed, 13 of which served proudly in Vietnam.

In 1974, late GEN. Creighton Abrams, the Chief of Staff of the Army, ordered the formation of the modern day Ranger Battalion. His charter to the Rangers states: "The Ranger Battalion is to be an elite, light and most proficient infantry battalion in the world; a battalion that can do things with it’s hand and weapons better than anyone. The battalion will not contain any hoodlums or brigands and that if the battalion is formed of such persons it will be disbanded. Wherever the battalion goes it will be apparent that it is the best."

Thus the 1st Ranger Battalion was activated at Ft Benning, GA, on 31 January 1974, and jumped into Ft Stewart, GA on 1 July 1974, eventually establishing it’s headquarters at Hunter Army Airfield, GA. The 2nd Battalion was activated at Ft. Lewis, WA on 1 October 1974. The modern Ranger Battalions were first called upon in 1980 as elements of 1st Ranger Battalion participated in the Iranian hostage rescue attempt. Both battalions again "Led The Way" on 25 October 1983, by conducting an airborne assault on Point Salinas Airfield and rescuing the American students in Grenada.

As a result of their demonstrated effectiveness, the Department of the Army activated the 3rd Ranger Battalion and the Regimental Headquarters on 3 October 1994, both located at Ft Benning, GA. On 20 December 1989, the entire regiment participated in two simultaneous low level airborne assaults on Torrijos-Tocumen and Rio Hato airfields in the Republic of Panama, spearheading the drive to restore freedom and democracy to the people of Panama during operation "Just Cause". In 1991, elements from the 1st Ranger Battalion deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of operation "Desert Storm". In 1993, elements of the 3rd Ranger Battalion supported the United Nations' operation in Somalia. On October 3rd and 4th, they participated in an 18 hour long firefight in which the Rangers fought valiantly. The 75th Ranger Regiment also played an active role in the United States involvement in Haiti.

Today the 75th Ranger Regiment stands ready to execute its mission, to conduct special military operations in support of the United States policies and objectives.
SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Invocation
Sound Off
Adjutant Call
Inspection of Troops
Ranger Tan Beret Ceremony
Present Colors
Change of Command
Remarks
Pass and Review
COL P.K KEEN

OUTGOING COMMANDER
Colonel Ken Keen was born in Hyden, Kentucky and graduated as a distinguished military graduate from Eastern Kentucky University in December 1974. Commissioned in the Infantry, his initial assignment was to Fort Ord, California, where he served as an instructor with the Basic Combat Training Center, then as a Rifle Platoon Leader with 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry, 7th Infantry Division. In 1977, he was assigned to the 3d Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Gulick, Panama, where he served as a Special Forces Detachment Executive Officer, Detachment Commander, Battalion Training Officer, and Honduran Military Group Training Officer.

After completing the Infantry Officer Advance Course, he served in the 82nd Airborne Division from 1981 to 1985 as a Company Commander and Battalion Operations Officer for 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment. He also served as the Division G5.

Following graduate school and the Brazilian Command and General Staff College in 1988, he was assigned to Fort Benning where he was the Plans and Operations Officer for the United States Army Infantry Center, Regimental S5, and the Assistant S3 for the 75th Ranger Regiment. In 1990, Colonel Keen was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment where he served as the Battalion Operations Officer and Executive Officer.


In June 1998, Colonel Keen graduated from the Army War College and was assigned to Fort Benning as the Special Assistant to the Commanding General of the United States Army Infantry Center and Fort Benning. On 22 July 1999, Colonel Keen assumed command of the 75th Ranger Regiment. His next assignment will be as Commander, Military Group, in Bogota, Colombia.

Colonel Keen's education includes a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics and a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies from the University of Florida. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (two Oak Leaf Cluster), Special Forces Tab, Ranger Tab, Pathfinder Badge, SCUBA Diver Badge, Combat Infantry Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, and Master Parachutist Badge.

Colonel Keen and wife, Mary Ellen, have two sons, Ryan (21), a senior at the University of Georgia, and Jonathan (18), a sophomore at Georgia Tech.
COL JOSEPH L. VOTEL

INCOMING COMMANDER
Colonel Joseph L. Votel was born and raised in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He was commissioned in the Infantry upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1980. His first assignment was to the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division as a Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, Battalion Adjutant and Rifle Company Commander.

Following the Infantry Officer Advanced Course in 1985, COL Votel was assigned as a Small Group Tactics Instructor at the Infantry School until September 1988. Following this he was assigned to Headquarters, 75th Ranger Regiment where he served as the Assistant S3 – Plans from October 1988 until July 1990.

In July 1990, COL Votel attended the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Upon graduation he was assigned to the 1st Ranger Battalion where he served as Battalion Liaison Officer, S3 Operations Officer and Executive Officer.

From August 1994 until June 1996, COL Votel served as a Joint Staff Officer with Headquarters, Allied Forces Southern Europe in Naples, Italy and Headquarters, NATO Implementation Forces in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Upon return to the United States, COL Votel served as the Commander of 2d Battalion, 22d Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) at Fort Drum, New York from June 1996 until June 1998. He was subsequently assigned as Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment at Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia from August 1998 until July 2000.

Prior to assuming command of the 75th Ranger Regiment, COL Votel was assigned as a Student at the United States Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

COL Votel’s education includes a Bachelor of Science Degree from the United States Military Academy, a Masters Degree in Military Art and Science from the United States Army Command and General Staff College and a Masters Degree in National Security Studies from the United States Army War College. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal w/3 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Ranger Tab, Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Expert Infantryman's Badge and the Master Parachutist Badge with Combat Star.

COL Votel is married to the former Michele Belair also of Saint Paul, Minnesota. They have two sons: Scott (20), a junior at the University of Minnesota at Saint Paul / Minneapolis; and Nicholas (15), a High School Sophomore.
The Ranger Creed

Recognizing that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor, and high “Esprit de Corps” of my Ranger Regiment.

Acknowledging the fact that a Ranger is a more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle by land, sea, or air, I accept the fact that as a Ranger my country expects me to move further, faster, and fight harder than any other soldier.

Never shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong, and morally straight and I will shoulder more than my share of the task whatever it may be. One hundred percent and then some.

Gallantly will I show the world that I am a specially selected and well-trained soldier. My courtesy to superior officers, neatness of dress, and care of equipment shall set the example for others to follow.

Energetically will I meet the enemies of my country. I shall defeat them on the field of battle for I am better trained and will fight with all my might. Surrender is not a Ranger word. I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy and under no circumstances will I ever embarrass my country.

Readily will I display the intestinal fortitude required to fight on to the Ranger objective and complete the mission, though I be the lone survivor.

Rangers Lead the Way!