

09-30-03 Iraq – Sgt Andrew J Baddick – Army PSD Rescue Attempt

SGT Andrew Joseph "A.J." Baddick

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=7974172>

Birth: Jun. 30, 1977
Coaldale
Schuylkill County
Pennsylvania, USA

Death: Sep. 30, 2003
Baghdad, Iraq

Army Sgt Baddick was assigned to 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He drowned as he tried to rescue another soldier whose vehicle had entered a canal near Abu Ghraib Prison. The vehicle plunged into the canal as troops responded to a reported mortar attack near the prison. Two soldiers in the vehicle swam to safety but a third was trapped in the vehicle and drowned. Baddick, who was part of a dive rescue team from the Fort Bragg-based 82nd Airborne Division, failed to resurface during the rescue and recovery effort and his body was found later.



AJ never thought twice before rushing to help someone. He feared nothing - there was no hesitation in him. Since he was a child, he had wanted to be a paratrooper like his father. Neighbors remember the youngster being a hilarious handful; one had even appropriated the nickname "Dennis the Menace" for the blondish mischief-maker.

As a teen, he helped out on rafting excursions on the Lehigh River and then worked as a river guide for several years after high school. More than six feet tall and an avid kayaker and swimmer, he was described by friends as having a "lean-and-mean" build. AJ was a 1997 graduate of Jim Thorpe Area Senior High School who enlisted in the Army in 1999 and re-enlisted for six years in 2002. He received the Enduring Freedom Army Achievement Medal this year and in 2002 he received the Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service. AJ was in Iraq about a month and in 2002 worked with computers tracing troops from Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. He was a volunteer fire fighter for Jim Thorpe Fire Company and a volunteer for the ambulance corps. AJ was engaged to be married. (bio by: [Brenda N](#))

Burial:
[Arlington National Cemetery](#)
Arlington
Arlington County
Virginia, USA
Plot: Section 60, Site 7890

Maintained by: [Brenda N](#)
Originally Created by: [Decal](#)
Record added: Oct 11, 2003
Find A Grave Memorial# 7974172

Died September 29, 2003 Serving During Operation Iraqi Freedom

<http://thefallen.militarytimes.com/army-sgt-andrew-joseph-baddick/256812>

26, of Jim Thorpe, Pa.; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Fort Bragg, N.C.; drowned Sept. 29 as he tried to rescue another soldier whose vehicle had entered a canal near Abu Ghraib Prison, Iraq.

As his older sister remembers it, Sgt. Andrew Joseph Baddick never thought twice before rushing to help someone. "He feared nothing," Elizabeth Hoherchak said. "Nothing. There was no hesitation in him."

Baddick, 26, of Jim Thorpe, Pa., drowned Sept. 29 when he tried to rescue another soldier whose vehicle had plunged into a canal in Iraq. He was stationed at Fort Bragg.

Baddick had been serving in Afghanistan before going to Iraq, said Charles McHugh, a family friend.

"I knew the boy all his life; I watched him grow up," McHugh said. "All he wanted to do was be in the Army and be a paratrooper, and he succeeded."

Paratrooper from Pa. killed in Iraq

Associated Press

A paratrooper stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C., drowned while trying to save another soldier in Iraq, the Defense Department said Wednesday, and a Veterans Affairs official said he was from Pennsylvania.

Sgt. Andrew J. Baddick, 26, died Monday, according to both a Pentagon news release and Charles McHugh, director of the Carbon County, Pa., Veterans Affairs Office.

According to the Pentagon, Baddick was trying to rescue another soldier whose vehicle had entered a canal near Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq when he drowned.

Military authorities did not say where Baddick was from, but McHugh said Baddick was from Jim Thorpe. McHugh, a friend of the family, said the military had informed Baddick's mother, Ann, of his death.

"I knew the boy all his life; I watched him grow up," McHugh said. "All he wanted to do was be in the Army and be a paratrooper, and he succeeded." McHugh said Baddick, a paratrooper with Headquarters Company, 82nd Airborne Division, had been stationed in Afghanistan before coming to Iraq one or two months ago.

Baddick, a 1997 graduate of Jim Thorpe Area Senior High School, enlisted in the Army in 1999 and re-enlisted for another six years in 2001, McHugh said.



<http://www.dogtagbrewing.org/sgt-andrew-j-baddick/>



Andrew J. Baddick, known as A.J., was born June 30th, 1977 in Coaldale, PA. Like his father, Joe, he served in the 82nd Airborne Division. While serving in Iraq in 2003, he sacrificed himself to save a fellow soldier. His fascinating story is documented in the book, *My Hero, My Son*, written by his father. Through anecdotes, personal letters, and interviews in this book, you can witness an adventurous teen's transformation into a soldier and an American hero.

A.J. graduated from Jim Thorpe High School in 1997 and entered the Army in 1999. He deployed to Afghanistan in August of 2002, and served six months at Bagram Air Base with Headquarters and Headquarters Company. Upon his return to Ft. Bragg, he was assigned to the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. He deployed with them to Iraq in the fall of 2003. Not long after his arrival, Andrew drowned as he tried to save another soldier whose vehicle

had plunged into a canal near Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq. After saving one soldier, Andrew unhesitatingly went back into the water to save another but did not resurface. "It doesn't surprise me that he died being a hero," Andrew Baddick's father, Joseph, said. "I'm sure he didn't even think about it. I'm sure that he'd dive right in to save someone's life. My son would do that."

Sgt. Andrew J. Baddick is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for heroism and Soldier's Medal for saving another soldier's life. A.J. was an avid kayaker and swimmer and guided rafting trips down the Lehigh River. He loved the outdoors and enjoyed hunting and fishing. He belonged to the Jim Thorpe Fire Department, and was a driver for the Ambulance Service.

The Baddick family has chosen to support Warriors and Quiet Waters through Dog Tag Brewing. This organization provides traumatically injured U.S. servicemen and women from Iraq and Afghanistan with a high quality restorative program, utilizing the therapeutic experience of fly fishing on Montana waters.