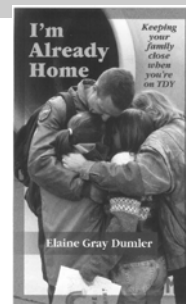


# In Touch

Idea update for military families facing separations

Based on the book "I'm Already Home"



Elaine Dumler • 6460 W. 98th Ct. • Westminster, Colorado 80021 • 866-780-0460 toll free  
www.ImAlreadyHome.com • Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com



Here's where I'll be speaking. If you're there, please stop me and say HELLO!



2 - Boston MA - National Family Programs conference (NGB)

13 - Atlanta GA - State Family Programs conference (NG)

15 - Denver CO - DoD spouse program

17 - Vandenberg AFB, CA Deployment briefings

20 - Breckenridge, CO State Family Program conference

## Inside this issue:

Message from Elaine Dumler with August speaking schedule 1

A true story... 1

Free chess sets 2

Airline Discounts 2

"Freedom is not Free" by Jacena Winburn 2

"Your Neighbor went to War" by Cpt "Diggs" Brown 3

Veterans Resources 3

Just for FUN! 4

Pentagon Channel 4

Volume 1, issue

Page 1

Summer 2005



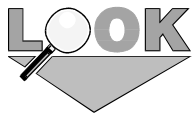
## Message from Elaine Dumler

**Happy Summer!** Boy, is it ever going fast. My son just graduated from Kansas University, and my husband decided to retire. Trying to prepare for all that really took a bite out of June. Life is always full of changes...that we all know. I also recently became a "step grandmother" so it got me to thinking about the role of grandparents, neighbors and other influential adults in the lives of the families of deployed service personnel. You can play an important part if you look for ways to share your life with children around you. As you sport your "Support Our Troops" yellow ribbon magnet on the car, think about the one that should say "Support Their Families." Pass this article along to those you think should read it and post it at work. Here goes:

1. Attend a school sporting event, concert or recital where the children of deployed neighbors or co-workers are performing.
2. Plan a Birthday party for a family member...yes, even the adult.
3. Are you baking cookies? Invite the "little hands" of a child to help. This takes some burden of childcare off of the parent for a moment and it's fun for you.
4. Send a card to let them know you're thinking of them.
5. Would you like a hand with some housecleaning or yard work? Many pre-teens would love a "job" to earn some money and put themselves to use.
6. Post the names of families with deployed members on a bulletin board at work or church. Ask the families' permission first to pass along that information.
7. Do you have your own young children in your home, or grandkids who come to visit? Next time invite the neighbor's kids over to play if they are similar ages.
8. Can you provide a technical service that would help? Examples would be tax preparation, car repair or computer help.
9. Keep expressing your thanks to the family for the sacrifice they are making so you can live free!

**A true story...** "I wanted to let you all know what happened to my daughter and myself tonight. We had gone into the Cracker Barrel in Shelbyville. When we came out my car had notes stuck in the doors, under my magnets, and in my windshield wipers. I had different people write the most touching things about how proud they were of not only my husband but all of our husbands and wives. And there were many thanking all of us here at home for the sacrifices we've gone through while our loved ones are over seas. You can only imagine the tears that were flowing from me while I stood there reading all those notes. I'm so proud of our loved ones and I'm especially proud of all the wives and husbands here at home. God Bless our soldiers and their spouses." - From a wife of the 2113th FRG

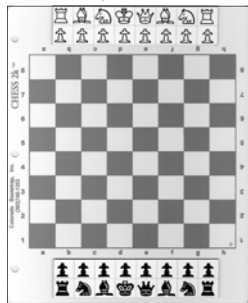
I'm so pleased to bring you a special contribution to this newsletter. **Jacena LouEllen Winburn**, a Senior at Henry County High School in Kentucky won the "Freedom is not Free" 2005 Essay Contest. Jacena is the daughter of MSG John Geisler and his wife, Debi. MSG Geisler is currently deployed to Iraq with the Paducah-based 2123<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company. He most recently was assigned to Service Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 138<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery in Louisville. **Please enjoy Jacena's writing:**



**United Airlines** is now offering reduces fares for active duty and reserve members of the Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force and National Guard. In addition, servicemembers' spouses and dependent children are also eligible. These special fares are not available at the United Airlines website. To purchase the special fares, service members should contact United Reservations at 1-800-241-6522 and identify themselves as eligible for military fares. All passengers eligible for these and other military fares must carry proper identification. Servicemembers can travel with these special fares all the way through January 31, 2006. For more information on Military Travel Specials visit [www.military.com/Travel](http://www.military.com/Travel).



*A Quick Note* 



I still have about 20 portable chess sets to give away so if you missed getting one last month, please see below and I'll get one right out to you. Yes...they are totally **free!**

### Here's how to get your Chess set

1. Send an email to: [Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com](mailto:Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com) with "chess set" in the subject line.
2. Tell me if you get the newsletter via email or postal mail
3. Provide your US mailing address and phone

*That's all there is to it!*

**Limited** to 1 set per family and to the first 20 responses.

## Freedom is Not Free

Freedom is not now, nor has it ever been free,  
just look at what it's costing someone even as young as me.  
The Army has taken my daddy away to that distant land,  
to fight for America and to make a democratic stand.

He was not here to put up our Christmas tree.  
In March, my eighteenth birthday will be very lonely.  
When April rolls around, he misses my first and only Senior Prom-  
We'll mail him the thousands of pictures that will be taken by my mom.

Summer and May, at High school graduation, it's all up to me.  
Then on to August, my first day of college, and where is he?  
Freedom is not free,  
the price is the absence of my Daddy.

"Cowgirl up," is one of the things he would say,  
"don't let those tears get in your way."  
I love and I approve of you-  
and I want you to be proud of me, too!

"You've got to stand for something,  
because someday, it will mean everything.  
Practice what you preach,  
live what you teach.

"Who you are shows in where you go.  
What you are shows in how you get there, so-  
mind your manners, live a full life and love God.  
Always be aware of the path that you trod."

The worry, sadness and pain in my Mother's eyes,  
show even when she doesn't let us see her cry.  
"Head up - chin out,  
God, duty and country IS what it's all about."

"We struggle to get by without him each and every day.  
Don't believe it - it doesn't get any easier, by the way.  
The flagpole in our yard holds the symbol of this great country.  
Sometimes it just reminds me that Daddy's not here with me.

But, I'll always love the strength in my Daddy's hands.  
He taught me to be patriotic, to volunteer,  
and what it means to be a true American.  
It's not how much money you have, or status quo,  
it's answering the call, when asked to go.

He raised his hand and said, "Here am I, send me,"  
No, to me, Freedom never has been and never will be "Free."  
The cost, I must willingly and without regret, gladly pay -  
Because, I am my father's daughter today and every day.

## Your Neighbor went to War by Captain "Diggs" Brown - special guest writer

*Editor's note: I invited "Diggs" Brown to share some "firsthand" knowledge of what it was like, and what meant the most to our service men and women in Afghanistan.*

It was hot. Not just hot, but searing. We had been in Afghanistan for nearly a month having arrived in late July and were acclimating to an environment unlike anything previously experienced. We had water, but only on a rare day was there enough for showers or laundry. Our drinking water was all bottled and something you would dare not waste, every drop was precious. Afghanistan was in its fifth year of drought and was so parched that each step would kick up billows of powdered soil. We had our engineers helping the civilians dig water wells and this was welcomed by the Afghan people. Everywhere we went we were given a "thumbs up" and hailed with "Thank you America! Thank you George Bush!" We had liberated a country and were now in the process of winning the hearts and minds.

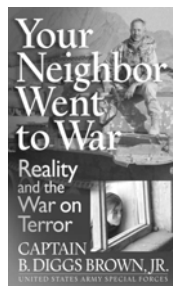
Our base was settled in the midst of a Russian vo-tech school that had been built years before. The intent of the training center was to teach the Afghans how to build and repair diesel engines. The Taliban had taken over the school after the Russians left Afghanistan, and we in turn, had a B-52 air strike drive out the Taliban just prior to the liberation of Kabul. The now bombed out concrete structure would be our home for the next seven months. The lack of glass, the crumbling walls, and rocket holes did little to keep the dust, the heat, and the flies out. The occasional snake or scorpion would find its way into our rooms and add another dimension of danger to an already perilous situation. Such was life in Afghanistan in 2002.

We had little along the line of comfort items. The nearest Post Exchange (PX) was at Bagram Air Base, a little over an hour away through a very dangerous valley. Through Bagram we would retrieve our mail and supplies twice a week. A lucky few could make the trip and stand in line for an hour to enter the tiny PX.

Our mail started arriving one month after we reached our camp. Soldiers anxiously waited to be summoned at mail call. The first delivery was a huge morale boost as gifts, letters and cards came from home. Videos of loved ones were received well and left not a dry eye in the house when they were shared with our fellow comrades. What we considered hot items were beef jerky, hand disinfectant, Handy Wipes, and assorted munchies. Tooth brushes, candy and Beanie Babies were excellent to hand out to the Afghan children, as they had none.

For my birthday a large box arrived, sent from my fellow employees at the bank. Opening the box I found packed in cooked popcorn a very large chocolate chip cookie, and assortment of candies and cards from my friends. I placed the open box and its contents in the operations center on a table for all to share. Needless to say, it did not last long.

Later in the mission the Chaplain and I helped rebuild a school that Taliban had destroyed. Without giving much thought to the process I sent an email home to a select few friends and asked for school supplies to be sent. Within three weeks boxes of supplies from friends, school children, and complete strangers began to arrive at our base. It turned out that my email was forwarded on over 5,000 times and the American public was giving out of the kindness of its heart to children on the other side of the world who they would never meet or receive a thank you from. Within three months we received over two tons of school donations! Americans, the most generous people in the world.

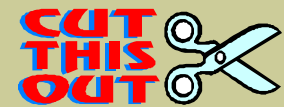


Diggs Brown is a US Army Special Forces (Green Beret) Officer. He spent seven months in Afghanistan where his unit organized and trained the Afghan National Army. Beyond fighting the Taliban and al Qaeda, they also won the hearts and minds of a nation. Captain Brown's story is chronicled in his book *Your Neighbor Went to War, Reality and the War on Terror*, which is on the shelves of your local books store. For more information go to [www.diggs.us](http://www.diggs.us).



### Women Veterans

The total veteran population in the United States and Puerto Rico, as of September 2004, was approximately 24.8 million. The population of women veterans numbered 1.69 million. States with the largest number of women veterans were California, Florida, Texas and Virginia.



### Helpful Veteran Resources

*Veterans Benefits Information:*  
[www.vba.va.gov/](http://www.vba.va.gov/)

*Info for Iraqi Freedom Veterans:*  
[www.va.gov/gulfwar/](http://www.va.gov/gulfwar/)

*Afghanistan Service Information:*  
[www.va.gov/environagents/](http://www.va.gov/environagents/)

*PTSD and Iraq Veterans:*  
[www.ncptsd.org/topics/war](http://www.ncptsd.org/topics/war)

*Women Veterans Health and Benefits Information:*  
[www.va.gov/wvhp/](http://www.va.gov/wvhp/)  
[www.va.gov/womenvet/](http://www.va.gov/womenvet/)  
[www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Topics/Women/](http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Topics/Women/)

*VA Health Care Enrollment:*  
[www.va.gov/elig/](http://www.va.gov/elig/)

*Online Benefits Applications:*  
<http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/>

#### Call Elaine for...

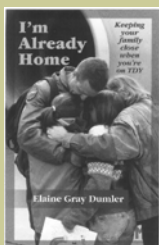
- Speaking engagements
- Sponsorship information
- Quantity book sales

Toll free:  
**866-780-0460**

**ELAINE DUMLER**  
**“I’M ALREADY HOME”**

6460 W. 98th Court  
 Westminster, Colorado 80021

Phone: toll free 866-956-0316  
 Colorado 303-430-0592  
 Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com



**We're on the web:**  
[www.ImAlreadyHome.com](http://www.ImAlreadyHome.com)

The Pentagon Channel broadcasts military news and information for the 2.6 million members of the U.S. Armed Forces through programming including:

- Dept. of Defense news briefings
- Military news and Interviews with top Defense officials
- Short stories about the work of our military

In addition to enhancing DoD communications with the 1.4 million active duty service, the Pentagon Channel will provide the 1.2 million members of the National Guard and Reserve and the 650,000 civilian employees of the DoD more timely access to military information and news.

The Pentagon Channel is available to all stateside cable and satellite providers; via American Forces Radio and Television Service, overseas; and via webcast worldwide right here at [pentagonchannel.mil](http://pentagonchannel.mil).

*“The military recruits soldiers...the family retains them”*

**Weekends are filling fast!** Get Elaine booked for your State Volunteer Conference or training. Call 1-866-780-0460 toll free

**Just for FUN!** Word search - **“From the Newsletter”**

Find each word on the word list, from this issue of the newsletter, in the diagram. They can be forward, backward or diagonal. The first one is done for you. Have fun!

N O I R N K I N D N E S S S  
 N E G R A N D P A R E N T D  
 I M E N I L R I A C A P A N  
 S U P P L I E S I R U U D A  
 U W D D I I L F E R G I I H  
 P O E S V R I T S H M E R C  
 P T A L I R E E T N U L O V  
 O V H G C V T E F A N N L B  
 R R W A B O R D R V C E F A  
 T O S I N O M C E R H R P K  
 C R L G D K S E E G I D R I  
 O R L A E S S T D A E L L N  
 I G D G E N E R O U S I L G  
 E D D H S W E E M N S H K E  
 Y I C S L L E W L O E C C A

~~AIRLINE~~  
 BAKING  
 BOSTON  
 CHESS  
 CHILDREN  
 CIVILIAN  
 CONCRETE  
 COWGIRL  
 DADDY  
 DAUGHTER  
 FLORIDA  
 FREEDOM  
 GENEROUS  
 GRANDPARENT  
 HANDS  
 KINDNESS  
 MUNCHIES

NOTES  
 SACRIFICES  
 SUPPLIES  
 SUPPORT  
 THANKS  
 VETERANS  
 VOLUNTEER  
 WELCOMED  
 WELLS