

In Touch

Idea update for military families facing separations

Based on the books "I'm Already Home" and "I'm Already Home...Again"

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Holiday 2006

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What's new at:
www.ImAlreadyHome.com

1. **Speaking Events** tab to read about having Elaine speak at your conference.
2. **Blog link** directly to a blog where you can read and comment on ideas.
3. **Flat Daddy™** page to bring you photos, instructions, and how to get one for free!
4. **Operation Connect a Family** to provide books free to families.

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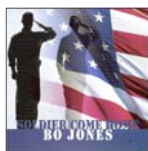


Message from Elaine: Christmas gifts for you - Fun stuff, Discounts and FREE Flat Daddy!

I'm really excited about this special Holiday issue. I've found stuff that's new, fun, deeply discounted or even FREE for you. After all, that's what this time of the year is for. I provide these as a service to help you stretch your dollar and find new things.

1. Operation Connect-a-Family - In partnership with Life Balance, Inc. I've started a new program/website called Operation Connect-a-Family designed to bring a sponsored (that's *free* to you) copy of "I'm Already Home...Again" to families whose FRG's don't have funds to purchase them. To make this a success, here's what I need from you: First, go to www.ConnectaFamily.com and read about what we're doing. Then, pass along that site to everyone you know (neighbors, family, friends, businesses) who wants to lend a helping hand and get the word out. Finally, email me at Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com to tell me if your FRG would like to be on the list to receive books as they become available. The number of books I'll be able to send you is directly related to how well we do with this project...so talk it up! I'm definitely excited about what this can develop into. Eventually, I'd like the site to be the place to visit for many more free opportunities for your families!

2. "Soldier Come Home" is a wonderful new song, and part of a 3 song introductory CD that has been recorded by country singer Bo Jones. I love all three songs and I think most of you will, too. You need to have a copy of this CD and it's being discounted to \$6.99 and is available on the shopping cart at www.ImAlreadyHome.com. \$1 of the purchase price is being donated to a foundation designed to provide continual help to military families. If you'd like to hear the song first, you can access a link to an MP3 file of *Soldier Come Home* at my website. I have 25 of them available right now, so get yours.



3. For Colorado based troops - A romantic reunion at Castle Marne luxury Bed & Breakfast. This is a beautiful restored castle and every room is designed to languish you in the private, intimate and romantic setting you and your spouse just might be ready for. They specialize in putting together packages to cover every need. How about renewing your vows...or even eloping there in a small ceremony! They are offering all military couples a 20% discount off all rooms and services! Visit www.CastleMarne.com for information. They are working to provide a nationwide network of B&Bs with military discounts.



FREE Flat Daddy™ for your family!

4. FREE...yes, that's right...FREE Flat Daddy™ sponsored by SFC Graphics!

I have the news that many of you have been asking for. SFC graphics in Ohio is partnering with sponsors like LexJet Corp. to secure funds and materials to provide one (1) Flat Daddy figure **FREE** to a military spouse! How great is that? (Note that this offer is good for as long as the sponsored funds last) If you're not a spouse (ex: parent, siblings or friend) you can get one from SFC Graphics for a nominal cost (\$40 plus shipping). This is still much less than the "Big Box" office shops. Here's how to get yours: Go to www.ImAlreadyHome.com and click on the great photo of a Flat Daddy along the left side of the homepage. That takes you to a page of Flat Daddy photos, ideas, instructions for making one, and near the bottom of the page, you'll find information for SFC Graphics, the wide-format printer who is garnering the sponsor funds to create one for you. We are working on a link to an order form, or you can call Eric to ask questions about ordering it. Please tell Eric that you came to him through me.

We are proud to have LexJet as a huge help with this project, too! They are a company that is providing all the printable adhesive vinyl that Flat Daddy will be printed on. Isn't that great? Printing on vinyl will ensure that Flat Daddy withstands lots of "hugging!" Please pass along their information to anyone who can use their services, and maybe a thank you note from you would be nice. More information about LexJet will be set up on my website.



1680 Fruitville Rd., 3rd Floor
Sarasota, Florida 34236
1-800-453-9538

regan.dickinson@lexjet.com

WANTED: Your Unit. SFC Graphics is looking for a unit of at least 100 families that would like to participate in a large scale Flat Daddy project. They may have a sponsor wanting to provide Flat Daddies to an entire unit similar to what Barbara Claudel did in Maine. If you're interested, please email me at Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com and let me know. I'll get you connected.

5. I found this children's book for the spirituality of Christmas.

And you can have it for **70% OFF!**

When I Was a Little Boy, by Jesus, retail \$19.95

Yours for only \$7.00! Shipping **included!**

Hard-cover book & interactive CD-Rom answer:

What games did Jesus play?

Did Jesus have a family?

What does God look like?

GIVE copies to other military families!

Each book signed by author.

What message will YOU be sharing this Christmas?

www.imalreadyhome.com to order.



FRG Idea Organize a "Parents Day Out"

Get volunteers from local churches, 4-H groups, Girl Scout or American Heritage Girls troops, as well as extended family members, women's Junior League and Democratic/Republican women's groups as they are always looking for ways to be of service.

Put a day together when your volunteers would gather at the armory, church hall or such and offer babysitting, games and snacks for all age kids. This would allow the non-deployed family member the opportunity to do Christmas shipping, run errands and pamper themselves without having to worry about the kids. This will also let them wrap and hide the gifts without little eyes peering around the corner!

Scams, Frauds and Consumer Abuse in the news

Why is it that the holidays, more than any other time of the year, bring out some of the best...and worst in people? There are a number of consumer scams and frauds going around that we want you to watch out for. To find out if something is a scam, visit this site:

<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/scamsdesc.htm>

Don't become a statistic!



Would you like to be in a book? (I got this email and was asked to pass it along to you on my newsletter list. If you're a fit...go for it!) Our names are Harith and Monica and we are trying to get the word out on our project. It's an opportunity for military families to give a gift of having their loved one featured in a book. It looks at a different side of the Iraq war - not the bloodshed, but one rather of hope and love. It can help families keep their loved one close at heart every time they open the book and see his or her face. Please have your readers go to www.raminibooks.com to contact us and find out more about the project.

This month's best submitted ideas...

Another take on "Birthday in a Box" from Debbie, Chairperson 1-101 FA FRG: *"My husband is currently deployed in Iraq. His birthday is coming up so we threw him a birthday party, with cake and all! I invited over his family and friends and kept it very simple. Then we packed up a place setting from the party, as well as a party blower and hat, hostess cupcakes for a cake and some gifts and sent it all over. So he should receive a birthday party in a box!"*



I loved this idea from Shannon Smithson and her wonderful family!
"I made my husband's uniform shirt into a pillowcase. It even has his undershirt inside. On the undershirt I did iron-on transfer pictures of him with each daughter. We call it their "daddy pillow." They cuddle with it each night just as if their dad was still home to tuck them in."

I wrote back to Shannon because I wasn't sure I understood how the shirt went together. I thought that maybe she stuffed it. She sent back the following description along with these wonderful pictures that helped even more!

"The daddy pillow is actually a pillowcase. His uniform shirt was sewn to his undershirt, and both were sewn to a standard size pillowcase. There was Velcro sewn into the case opening so that they could be shut and not worry about the pillow sliding out. It's easier to keep clean as a pillowcase. I sewed the uniform shirt closed past the third button from the top to help it keep its shape. I left the pockets on the front open, and the girls store notes and his dog tags in there."



Malorie and sister Melissa enjoy their "Daddy Pillows"



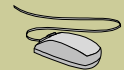
Photos on undershirt



Bookmark these Websites

The 2007 Scholarship program for Military dependants is now open. The children have to be under 23 years of age and not married. Check it out at:

www.militaryscholar.org



The following two sites were found to be very useful by the pregnant wife of a deployed soldier. At www.operationsspecialdelivery.com they provide labor & delivery support free to women who have husbands deployed during their baby's due date.

www.operationbabyblanket.com: They assign a sponsor to the mommy and check on here at least 1X a week by email or phone and send a hand-made baby blanket to the mother when she delivers and one to the father that he can send home as a gift!



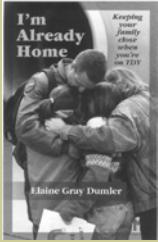
This is a beautiful site with the motto: "May no Soldier go unloved." It's full of links to many different donation and support sites designed to be sure that no service person is left without caring hands and support. Be sure to pass this one along to everyone you know.

www.soldiersangels.org

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We're on the web:
www.ImAlreadyHome.com

"The military recruits...the family retains."

Weekends are filling fast in 2007! Get Elaine booked for your State Readiness Conference, training, or briefing. Call 1-866-780-0460 toll free or visit www.ImAlreadyHome.com

#1 Cause of Headaches

Digestive trouble is the number-one trigger of headaches. Some food compounds are *vasospastic* - they cause the arteries to constrict diminishing blood flow. This affects blood vessels in the head and can cause headaches.

If you're susceptible to headaches, avoid the *vasospastic* foods which include:

- Dairy products
- Chocolate (bummer)
- Wheat gluten
- High-fructose corn syrup

These ingredients can bring on general, cluster and even migraine headaches.

You Know You are a Military Spouse When...

by Kathie Hightower & Holly Scherer

- you stand as they play our National Anthem before the start of the movie (and you know you are connected to the military if you are in a theater that plays the National Anthem at the start of a movie!).
- you say 1800 hours instead of 6pm.
- all your kids, including your two year old stop what they're doing and put their hands on their hearts whenever they hear the National Anthem.
- you know what someone means when they say "we lived on the economy," or "we lived in a stairwell."
- if you ever answer a question with HOOAH!
- you can move your daycare from one state to another and still have the same children enrolled.
- you refer to your bathroom as the latrine.
- you find yourself saying "let's police up this yard" to your kids.
- you ask someone to hold on a second by saying "stand by."
- you go to sleep with the sound of TAPS playing.
- you and your kids have spent at least one Thanksgiving in the Mess Hall (okay, some do call it the Dining Facility but old habits die hard).
- you don't know your own social security number anymore, but you know your spouses by heart.
- you yell at your kids by saying, "Don't make me email your father/mother!"

And right now, you know you are a military spouse when not a day goes by without you thinking about the war in Iraq, whether or not your own spouse is deployed.

Kathie and Holly are coauthors of *Help! I'm a Military Spouse - I Want a Life Too!* Information on their book, articles and workshops is at www.militaryspousehelp.com ©2006 Hightower and Scherer