

From: "Murer, Marguerite A."
To: "Kavanaugh, Brett M.", "Mamo, Jeanie S."
Subject: Support Gold Star Sample E-mails
Sent: Fri, 12 Aug 2005 14:06:09 -0500

BK and Jeanie,

FYI - following are sample supportive e-mails - 2 gold star families and 1 about to return to Iraq for 2nd deployment. BK - Please let me know if you would like them shared with anyone else.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed West [<mailto:jailcop42@comcast.net>]
Sent: Friday, August 12, 2005 2:43 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: We lost our son but we support you- Cindy Sheehan is wrong

"If I don't then who will"

That is the answer that my son Lance Corporal Phillip West gave me when he decided to go Infantry in the Marine Corp. I had asked him if he knew what he was doing by picking Infantry? He had scored well on the ASFAB and he had other options- Linguistics, Air Traffic Control, and Embassy Security had been discussed. He said "dad, If I don't, then who will"? It may seem like an arrogant answer, but it was a testament to his deep desire to fight for his country. Phillip was killed in Iraq on November 19, 2004.

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I outline the suffering that was inflicted, because all too often we hear 14 died, 7 died and it becomes numbers versus people. Every one of these men and women that died did so for this country. There are over 1800 families that know the pain that my wife and I and our two remaining kids know. The horror of seeing the service at your door, with a message that is not one you want to hear. It changes you for ever.

I don't know about these others that are catching headlines today. I don't know if their loved ones were not able to comprehend that the purpose of the military is to protect the country and engage in war when needed. Phillip was bright enough and intelligent enough to understand that he was going into danger. I actually asked him once- "let me understand that you want your mom and I to know that if something bad happens to you, and we are being interviewed, we should know that you are doing what you wanted to do."

His reaction was "hell yes dad".

President Bush did not lie to Phillip or anyone else. President Bush did not force our boys to sign on the dotted line. It is my understanding that Casey Sheehan had re-joined after being discharged, it is also my understanding that he had requested to go to Iraq. He was a young man that made decisions and performed for his country- thank you.

President Bush did not force Phillip to join the Marines and he did not force Phillip to pick the Infantry. It was the love for his country that my son joined and served and gave his all.

If a Fireman or Policeman is killed it is a tragedy, but it is not the fault of the police chief or the fire chief! It is disrespectful to Phillip and all the lost soldiers and Marines to even suggest that they were following blindly against their will, to stupid to know they were headed to war if they joined the military! That is an insult. We can not pull out now or they died in vain. These warriors would not want to stop after their sacrifice!

They have seen the evil and they know it! To pull out now will accomplish nothing and will leave Phillip dead in vain.

In closing I understand what Cindy Sheehan is going through. I fact I live 30 minutes form her. I do not know her, but I know what she is suffering. I and my wife and kids a our families are going through it. There are only 1800+ families that

know what we are all going through. You already 1800+ appeared in John Kerry ads, and you already have the attention you desire, now let the dead rest in peace.

In closing, we have not had the privilege of meeting the President. If anyone should be protesting maybe it should be us. However, we understand that this is not about us- it is about the decisions that our son and 1800+ others made and the commitment to their country and the sacrifice that they made and then ultimately we made. We are proud of Phillip and all the others that have gone and served.

President Bush is a very busy man. Run the war, get the changes done, then get our boys back in that order. Do not let our son die in vain. Then I'll cook you a steak and I would love to tell you and Mrs. Bush about Phillip Gordon West- Lance Corporal United States Marine Corp, Life Guard in American Canyon, want-a-be football star, brother son. I'll talk about him for ever-

Edward West, 209 Carolyn Dr , American Canyon Ca 94503

-----Original Message-----

From: John Dyer [<mailto:jdye@cinci.rr.com>]

Sent: Saturday, August 06, 2005 5:28 AM

To: Public Comments

Subject: Lcpl Christopher Jenkins Dyer

My son was one of the Marines killed in Iraq on Wednesday. Somehow, yesterday, I wrote the following message, and request. I know the volume of mail on this site must be overwhelming, but I sincerely believe the President would appreciate reading this note if at all possible.

My son was 19, and a member of 3rd Platoon, Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines, deployed near Haditha. He was an incredible human being and very very proud to be a Marine.

My phone number should you need verification this is sincere and original is 513-288-4617 and my address is 3760 Sherbrooke Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45241.

August 5, 2005

I wanted to thank everyone, on behalf of our family, the many outpourings of solace and support. This has been very comforting to us in these difficult days. Earlier this morning, I went through an indescribable breakdown sitting on my patio. It came to me that I was feeling sorry for myself, how badly I was missing my son, and will miss him forever. There are no words or imaginings to describe this.

As I type this, I have come to a Peace that is a blessing, at least for this moment. I know more tears are just around the corner.

I know for many of you the condolences seem hollow and inadequate and you want to do more. This came to me this morning. As we confront the forces of hate, we must remember that the power of Love will triumph.

I'd like to leave you with this remembering and one simple request.

The last words I spoke to Chris were: "I love you, son."

Our loved ones can be taken from us for any reason at any time. I am fortunate indeed to have those as my last words. Please hug your kids and loved ones today for me and be patient with them.

I have been in touch with Robert Derga whose son Dustin was in Lima Company and was taken from us in May. Bob has been a great aid to me.

We jointly have a vision forming about how we can live up to the standards set by our sons, or at least strive to, as I doubt I can match my son in that respect. My family, friends, and neighbors have come together as we seldom do in times of "normalcy". Please change that, if only a little. Hug someone, help someone, give someone something, any act of kindness to a stranger.

You may not have another chance. Let your last words be "I love you." and mean it.

I thank you all again for your condolences, which I know feel inadequate, but if you take some part of my words above to heart, that will carry the memory of my son, and the other Marines, into good works, something good that would not have happened except for this tragedy. Do one thing for him, and them, that you would not have done, and be blessed for it.

God bless you all, God bless the Marine Corp, and God bless the United States of America.

John C. Dyer

Evendale

-----Original Message-----

From: KTurc98297@aol.com [<mailto:KTurc98297@aol.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2005 12:13 AM

To: vice.president@whitehouse.gov; Public Comments

Subject: President Bush and Vice President Cheney

Hi, My name is Karen Turcotte and I am the mother of Sgt Frake stationed at Ft Campbell, KY. I will try to make this very brief. I talked to my son tonight and the reality of his forthcoming deployment (his Second) to Iraq is coming very soon. There were a few things that I needed to know before he deployed.

After seeing the lady protesting there at the ranch in TX, I was very disturbed. As a mother I understand her pain. But as the mother of a soldier there were a few things that I don't understand. Maybe I have this all wrong, maybe I should be questioning why we are at war.

After talking with my son, I no longer have questions. I am at peace with everything in my heart. My biggest question to my son was, "If something should happen to you, how should I feel" He point blank told me, be proud! Very Proud! That you had a son that was willing to die for what he believes in. It went on to tell me how just hearing about what this woman and others are doing, tears a hole in a soldiers heart. Of course they believe in what they are doing.

He told me that if something should happen the only reason he would want me to go to your doorstep is to thank you for being the Commander in Chief for my son.

Mr. President and Vice President, I just want to thank you both for being honorable men, for standing for what you believe and not backing down. Thank you for leading my son. I have raised him and pray that I did it right. Now he is in your command and I don't think there is another human on this earth that I would rather have leading him than a man that not only professes to be a Christian but also lives his faith. So THANK YOU and may God richly bless you.

Karen Turcotte

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Shreveport, La 71107

