

A VETERAN'S SUPPORT

written by: Holly Bourassa Jan/Feb 2008
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He goes by the name G.I. Joe, but his real name is Joe Bourassa. He is a Navy Veteran of the Vietnam War and currently has a popular Military display, including one Army and one Marine Jeep and a truck. He displays uniforms, photos, flags and other memorabilia at local car shows and parades.

Several people applaud as he drives by in parades. Patriotic music is played, and some people even get out of their chairs to show their support. Photos and flags are displayed on his truck for viewing.

"I love seeing people's faces as I drive by," says G.I. Joe. "Their smiles and waves make me thankful for what I do."

G.I. Joe has been supporting the troops by helping those who's loved ones are currently in the service, and those who did not come home. He has been there to listen to their stories and to tell his own.

G.I. Joe has won numerous awards in car shows and parades, but that is not why he does it. Being a Veteran himself, he is showing his support for the current soldiers.

G.I. Joe's military display means a lot to him. He restored both jeeps and the truck. His display does not just represent one branch of the military; it supports all of the branches. Because, "we should support everyone in the military," states G.I. Joe.

He says, "We should support and remember the soldiers and especially those who did not come home."

Currently there are several soldiers who are being sent to Iraq. Army Officer, Joseph Beatty, who is stationed in Iraq, was informed about what G.I. Joe does.

"It is nice to see people showing their pride in their country, as most people just take their freedoms for granted, and may never know what life is like without the freedom they are born into," Beatty states. He said that a lot of people say they support the troops, but you don't really see how until you come over here, and there are tons of great people sending care packages, letters and messages.

Also informed about what G.I. Joe does is Matthew Opalewski, from Monroe, Michigan, who is currently in the Navy.

"It's a great feeling knowing there are a lot of people back home depending on us doing our job. Even if we have the worst day in the world, we still get the same support," says Opalewski.

Opalewski would like to thank G.I. Joe for his service. He has seen pictures of G.I. Joe's display and thinks highly of what he is doing.

Many appreciate hearing about G.I. Joe's display, but it especially means a lot to the current soldiers who have seen it.

PVT First Class, John Maloy, of the United States Marine Corps, has met with G.I. Joe.

He is glad that there is still support for soldiers since there has been a "controversy over this war."

He thinks that by G.I. Joe presenting his military display in parades, it may interest children and teens in the military. He said that when he was a child, that is what interested him.

G.I. Joe would like to thank everyone for their support of him and his display and for everyone in the Military.

"It is important that we keep all of the soldiers in our thoughts and prayers," says G.I. Joe. "It is very hard to be away from home and especially having to sacrifice your life."

You can see G.I. Joe's display in Downriver car shows and parades. He can be contacted via email at, GI_Joe56@hotmail.com. He appreciates any military memorabilia and donations, so he can continue to display his military vehicles in parades and car shows.