

"A Home Coming"

Over the years, I have gotten to personally know and respect a number of courageous men and women who have served or are currently serving in the United States Military like Specialist Josh Zehr, who is training at Walter Reed Military Medical Center; Adan Villanueva, stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico; and my brother-in-law, Staff Sargent Kenneth Karel, who has been deployed twice with the 45th Military Police Detachment Law and Order are just a few of those closest to my family, so we know first-hand the worries and fears that many face when a love one is serving overseas.

Though these stresses and worries may, at times, be difficult for adults to handle, they can be even more challenging for children. Luckily, the Columbus Public Library has a wonderful collection of fiction and nonfiction books that parents can use to help little ones better understand what is going on when Mommy or Daddy is called to duty.

Books like "While You Are Away" by Eileen Spinelli and "When Dad's at Sea" by Mindy Pelton can be extremely helpful to children because they allow young people an opportunity to talk about their worries and fears when Mommy or Daddy is called away. These texts also enable little ones to see that they are not alone and that other children are dealing with the very same emotions they are experiencing. I recently came across yet another great book that will help little ones deal with having a loved one stationed overseas, "Coming Home" by Greg Ruth. In this beautifully illustrated text, readers meet a young boy eagerly awaiting the arrival of a military family member. At first, the little guy is standing patiently behind a velvet rope at an airport with other numerous excited onlookers. Once that rope is dropped, individuals race to find their beloved kin. The child ventures by a loyal pup who sought out its devoted owner, a young married couple engaging in a loving embrace, and an expectant mother-to-be who is joined by with her doting husband. When the boy finally locates his cherished family member, readers will be surprised by who this special person actually turns out to be.

"Coming Home" will fill readers with excitement and anticipation as they tag along with a young boy eager to reunite with a very special military person. The child's journey, though stated with few words, comes full circle with amazing pencil and watercolor illustrations!

So if your child has a special person who has been called away to serve this great country of ours, be sure to stop by the Columbus Public Library and check out the many great resources we have to offer on this subject. And to those who have chosen to serve and stand up for the freedom for this great nation, I personal want to say, Thank you for all you have done!" If you have any questions about the books mentioned in this article, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4