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Best Wishes from the Battlefield

By Tim Thornberry



Timothy Foye and Keryn Christie's wedding was like most. Beautiful flowers, loving family members and friends, and a big wedding party, complete with Tim's big brother, Daniel, serving as best man.

What made their nuptials unique was that big brother, who calls Lawrenceburg home, didn't just jump in his car and drive a few miles to the ceremony.

Daniel, a corporal in the Marine Corps, is stationed thousands of miles away in Iraq.

His presence at the ceremony Friday was made possible through the magic of modern technology and the efforts of the Freedom Calls Foundation, an organization provides free video conferencing services for armed service members in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The idea for a long-distance best man came from the Foyes' sister, Allison Snider, who wanted her brothers to be together for the wedding.

"About three weeks ago at 1 or 2 in the morning, I was trying to figure out a way that Dan could be a part of the wedding, so I got on the Internet doing some searches and found Freedom Calls," Snider explained.

"I e-mailed John Harlow (the organization's executive director) and told him our story, and the next day I got an e-mail from him saying we could make this happen," she recalled.

"This is a dream come true. It has always been my brother Timothy's expectation that Daniel would be the best man at his wedding, but the war intervened. He even contemplated putting off the wedding until Daniel returns."

The ceremony took place outside in the garden area of the Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort -- with a live image of Daniel projected on a 6-foot screen and teleconferencing equipment making it possible for Daniel to see the wedding.

"I didn't want to let my brother down on his big day," the corporal said. "I wish I could jump through the screen."

Daniel seemed awed by the technology that made his visit possible.

"It's one of the most amazing things that I have experienced in my life, being so far away yet being connected in this way is basically like being there," he said. "It's overwhelming almost."

The emotion of the day became apparent as Timothy stepped to the screen to see his brother for the first time in months. He called out his big brother's name and shed a few tears, while Daniel smiled back at him. "I'm very glad you're a part of this," he told Daniel