



War can't thwart promise

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Ray Koon kept his promise to his wife.

He was in Iraq, she was in Brunswick, but then distance is only a minor obstacle to those in love.

Ray and Melody Koon, with a little help from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and Freedom Call Foundation – not to mention 21st century technology – renewed their wedding vows via a satellite video link Thursday.

It was 10 years to the day of their wedding.

Ray Koon, speaking through the video link and stationed at Camp Fallujah in Iraq, said a rededication ceremony was something he and his wife had always dreamed of doing on their 10th anniversary.

"I told Melody, this isn't exactly the way I wanted to do it, but how many people can say they renewed their vows over a video conference when one of the spouses is in a war zone?" said Ray Koon, a NCIS training instructor at FLETC.

"I just can't describe what it means to me to be able to renew our vows like we had promised each other when we first got married."

The bride wore Capri pants and there weren't any wedding bells chiming in the background, but it was a wedding just the same.



Melody Koon waits to renew her wedding vows Thursday with her husband Ray Koon, on screen via satellite, in Iraq. (Michael Hall/The Brunswick News)

It just happened, though, to fall during Ray Koon's second deployment to the Mideast.

Melody Koon said it was just exciting to see her husband on screen.

"Ray actually came up with the idea. I just showed up, basically," said Melody Koon, standing in the director's conference room on the FLETC campus, where the ceremony took place.

And a second honeymoon?

If it happens, it will have to wait.

"Ray is coming home May 10," she said. "We haven't planned a second honeymoon yet, we're just waiting for him to come home."

Melody Koon is an employee at Camden County High School. Together, the couple have three children.