

# REMEMBRANCE

The Being There-Reaching Out newsletter for the Wisconsin families of our fallen military  
Vol 2 Issue 2



We will not forget your sacrifice.

The Mission Statement of Being There-Reaching Out

Focuses on assisting you, the families of our Wisconsin men and women lost in the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan:  
To be there for you emotionally, physically, and economically; And to reach out to you by organizing, primarily private, gatherings  
which will offer you the opportunity to continue to heal through one-on-one communication and sharing with one another.

This 3<sup>rd</sup> newsletter is an honor to put together. BT-RO has been very active since our last newsletter, and we have some additional components for you to participate in: The first being our Prayer Wheel. In each newsletter we will include in this section those you wish us to pray for. In some instances it will include "why," in others let's simply accept the request and pray. Please feel free to contact me with your requests and to keep us updated on how your loved one is doing.

### Remembrance Prayer Wheel

Please keep all of these special friends in your prayers:

Mary Bosveld and her son Craig who is on his way to Iraq. Mary has already lost her daughter Rachel to the war (10-26-03).

Daniel Easterhoff who was injured in Iraq when Travis Wichlacz was killed (2-5-05). He is finally home but still has hearing loss, mid range and eye problems.

Karrisa, daughter of Kaia Kalschereur and niece of Mat Kading (Iraq, 10-31-05), is finally home from the hospital. But she returns every 2 weeks to visit a doctor.

Our son's friend, SPC Andrew Neumeyer was injured in a roadside bomb. Neumeyer was the soldier holding our son, SGT Andrew Wallace when he died on September 26, 2005. I will keep you posted with any new information Thanks to all for your prayers and support of our family. **Joel and Janie Brockman**

### From our friend Rita Jerabek, Mother of Ryan (4/6/04-Iraq)

I just returned from a 10-day trip to California. I went to the wedding of **Ryan's** squad leader and spent time with our Marines. I heard great stories and have new photos of Ryan from Iraq that are **priceless**. I can't even find words to describe how much it meant to me to hug and thank the Marines/Corpsmen who were

with Ryan in Iraq. This trip was just incredible and I will hold those memories forever dear to my heart!!

My 'home-base' was Laguna Beach and I traveled to San Diego, Palm Springs, Santa Barbara and Riverside. I had gone to Camp Pendleton for several visits; one was to visit the Corpsmen. They had a wonderful BBQ lunch for us, we talked, hugged, and took photos. I traveled with another Marine Mom from 2/4 whose son is stationed at Camp Pendleton and was deployed with **Ryan**. She was able to meet the Corpsman who saved her son's life when his Humvee exploded from an IED. The meeting was an encounter that they will cherish for a lifetime!! We spent time with Betty's son nearly each day of our trip.

Our other companion for the trip is a dear friend who has become a sister to me because of our sons' ultimate sacrifice. We are family because of our sons honor, courage, commitment, love and blood. Her son was a Corpsman for 12 years and was in Ryan's Humvee. Doc Fernando Mendez was a healer and brave warrior who also died on April 6, 2004 with Ryan. It is hard to believe that nearly 2 years has passed by since Ryan's death. We just keep trying to move ahead on this journey.....

We are working on the Memorial run/walk event, the **Pfc. Ryan Jerabek, USMC Memorial Challenge** that will take place in our Village of Hobart on August 12th at 9 AM, starting and ending at Four Season's Park. There is a local Vietnam Vets motorcycle group called "the Rolling Thunder" who plan to attend with all their spirit of patriotism and flags a-flyin'!

The event includes a children's run, 2 mile walk, and a 6 mile run/walk. The Marines from the Reserve Center will help by supplying water, tents and also an obstacle course for the kids and teens. We plan to have music and food. There are also 2 volleyball courts and a softball diamond for those interested in that. The local Boy Scouts will be setting up grills and will sell hotdogs and burgers, etc. People may also "tailgate" if they chose to do

so. Please tell all the Gold Star Families to join us.

SEMPER FI and "Always Faithful"

With love and respect,

Rita



### BT-RO "Taking it to the Troops" Blood Drive of March 12<sup>th</sup> Wrap Up

You would have been proud! Very, very proud! Our Being There-Reaching Out "Taking it to the Troops" blood drive on Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup> was hailed as a great success by many! Not only by those of us from BT-RO who helped organize it, but also from Lifesource, the blood collection company contracted by the Great Lake Naval Base to collect blood for our service men and women. We collected enough blood to credit the Base \$12,500.00 worth of blood! This is enough blood to help between 120-140 active military and Veterans in need of blood.... and in the words of the blood collection staff, it was "wonderful" "heartwarming" "brought us to tears" "we can't wait to come back."

Your Being There-Reaching Out crew can't even begin to thank those who donated to this very important and first of a kind blood drive. Words would only serve to pale the heart-felt reasons many had for donating. So instead I will share some of their "reasons" with you:

**Rose and Randy Scannel** drove in from Green Bay with 6 relatives to donate, to “give back” because they knew first hand the importance of donating. Their son Ben Edinger lived for 9 days after being injured in Iraq, receiving blood that helped keep him alive until he very sadly succumbed to his wounds on 11/23/2004.

**Bob Cornell** donated in the name of his son Todd who was killed in Iraq on Nov. 9, 2004. As Bob sat down to donate I heard him say “This is for you, Todd.”

Some of our very important week-end warriors, our Reservists, came to donate. They were very quiet....they knew.

The **Vietnam Veterans** came in force...like they always do these days...feeling the need to watch the backs of today’s soldiers, and to be there for their fellow Veterans.

A **Sheriff for Milwaukee County** came to donate: his son left for Afghanistan 2 days later. He prayed, you could see him praying and feel his deep hope that his son would not need blood.

**Alan Lewis**, a Iraq Purple Heart Veteran who lost both of his legs to an IED in Iraq, came with his young daughter, to stand tall and show all of us the importance of donating blood to the military...it saved his life.

The blood collection crew from Illinois, who were so nurturing and kind, made everyone feel

comfortable immediately, and they’re looking forward to working with us in Milwaukee again. Meanwhile, we have our next Being There-Reaching Out "Taking it to the Troops" Blood drive planned for Armed Forces week in Madison.

Lastly, a special thank you to Dave Drent, Executive Director of the Milwaukee County War Memorial for allowing us to have the blood drive there free of charge (otherwise a \$1500 rental) and for having his wonderful crew available for anything we needed all day long. We’ll be back, Dave...and there will be more of us!

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**Here’s a must do for all of you!**

**Vietnam Veteran Michael Reagan is doing free portraits of our Fallen for you. Several of our families have already had portraits done by this world renowned artist and are very pleased with them. There are no strings attached to this.....BT-RO wouldn’t support it if there were. So please contact Mike, tell him I sent you, and talk to him about the portraits. They’re beautiful! His phone: 425-745-3170.**

**His email: [mikier@comcast.net](mailto:mikier@comcast.net)  
His website <http://www.michaelgreaganartist.com>  
Then please consider contacting me with permission to place a smaller copy of the portrait on the BT-RO website.**



From **Jim Karlson** (Father of Warren Hansen, 11-15-03-Iraq)



Jarhead Red is a wine made by Marines, for Marines, at Firestone Vineyard on California's Central Coast. The current vintage is a 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon. Net proceeds from the sale of this wine benefit the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, which provides educational assistance to children of U.S. Marines, with special attention given to children of fallen Marines. Buy it at [www.ShopFirestone.com](http://www.ShopFirestone.com).





**The Bill named for our fallen  
Marine Brian Prening is now law!**

It Passed!!! Hot of the Press!! This information is right out of the newspaper... The law, proposed as Assembly Bill 384 or the **Brian Prening Bill**, allows Wisconsin hunters who meet an untimely death to transfer accumulated preference points to a minor chosen by their family. It was named for **Brian Prening**, 24, an avid hunter who was killed by enemy fire Nov. 12, 2004, in the city of Yusufiyah, Iraq.

"It was exciting. It was something that we were hoping for, and it's an honor to my son because of it," said Prening's father, **Bill Prening**, 49, of Plymouth. "We didn't want Brian's points to go to waste."

Hunters get a preference point from the Department of Natural Resources each year they apply for a hard-to-get license, a bear license in **Brian Prening's** case. Prening had accumulated eight of the nine points he would likely need to get a permit, his father said.

Under the new law, those points will be given to a terminally ill child with a wish was to go bear hunting, **Bill Prening** said. He, with the United Special Sportsman Alliance, will select a child to receive the points and therefore the permit. Prening has also found a group of hunters willing to help the child find and shoot a bear.

By helping young hunters, Prening said the law will be a tribute to the son he taught to hunt. "I was there when he shot his first deer, his first turkey, his duck, his goose. And I was right there when he shot his first bear, so it's kind of special having this happen," Prening said. "It's just something that we wanted to do to give a youth the opportunity to enjoy what he did."

**Brian Prening** and his twin brother both killed bears on a 1998 hunting trip, the last time they accumulated the points needed to get licenses. The bill allows an individual seeking a license to hunt bear, Canada geese, wild turkey and elk, along with otter and fisher trapping and bonus deer permits, to designate another person to select a minor to "inherit" the applicant's preference points. Other unused licenses can also be transferred.

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From **Nancy Olsen**  
(Wife of Todd, 12/27/04-Iraq)

Dear family and friends,  
This morning I spent some time with Kirk Rodman director of the HighGround. The HighGround is a Veterans memorial park that pays tribute to the dead, and honors the survivors, their service and their sacrifices. Some of you might remember that we placed a

Meditation Stone last fall at the park. A family member of another soldier that was killed in action in Iraq had approached me about helping organize a tribute at the park for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

There are of course several steps which would go into a tribute. There is also some interest in making the tribute to include Desert Storm. If you are interested in helping with something like this please let me know.

The HighGround is one of the few manned veterans memorial parks in the US and is located 4 miles west of Neillsville, Wisconsin on Hwy 10 and 30 miles east of Osseo.

Website: [www.thehighground.org](http://www.thehighground.org)  
God Bless, **Nancy Olson**

Note from Judith: Many of you joined BT-RO at the HighGround gathering last August when several of our families laid Legacy Stones in memory of their loved one Fallen in Iraq.

**Heidel House Gathering  
Feb 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>**

Again we met. And again there were Gold Star Families, who joined us for the first time, and again you welcomed them warmly into your arms, and again you got to touch base with those you have met in the past. And that, my friends, is the most important focus of Being There-Reaching Out (BT-RO)... your meeting each other and spending time together.

Watching **Belle Wichlacz** (Travis, 2/5/05-Iraq), **Deb Prening** (Brian, 11/12/04-Iraq), and **Mary Donahue** (Richard Warner, 12/13/04-Iraq) sit

together and talk like the best of friends, warmed my heart. They are there for each other...all the time. And what fun they are! I'm rooming with them next time!

Having **Peg Gabrielson and Angela McFall** join us for cocktails and laughs drew us all closer to them ... we are all so happy they joined us. Both are very strong women, **Peg** having lost her husband, Dan (7/9/03-Iraq), and **Angela** having lost her son (Andrew Halverson, 10/9/04-Iraq) took the first step and attended their first gathering. Now they have us in their hearts and they are in ours.

**Janie and Joel Brockman**, who also attended for the first time, spoke to all of us on the Memorial to the Iraq and Afghanistan war Veterans they and **Nancy Olson** (Todd, 12/27/04-Iraq) are hoping to build at the HighGround Veterans Memorial Park. They also spoke of the "Peace Dove" Memorial they placed there for their son, Andrew Wallace (9/26/05- Iraq). Being There-Reaching Out will help build that memorial to your loved ones....we hope you will too (see information on it in Nancy's note in the newsletter).

We also had two Gold Star Mothers from Illinois join us at this gathering, **Angela Collins** (Jonathon 8/8/04-Iraq) and **Angie Giannopolous** (Peter, 11-11-04-Iraq). Angie and **Rita Jerabek** (Ryan, 4/6/04-Iraq) found out their sons were in the same unit in Iraq and shared stories about their sons. Angel and Angie are planning a BT-RO gathering of the Illinois Gold Star Families for this September in Chicago. Hopefully, some of you will join

Joe and I at their gathering to reciprocate the beautiful show of support we received from them.

I think everyone was moved by the speech given by **Master Chief Pamela Jacobsen**, who was on the **USS Cole when it was bombed in October of 2004**. She lost 17 friends on the ship that day, but being responsible for all communications on the ship forced her to continue to do her job to save the rest of the crew members and the ship. This forced her to put aside her sadness at having lost 17 friends, until the ship was once again under control. She continues to mourn them today, and spoke of how the gatherings with other USS Cole crewmembers helps her continue to heal today....comparing it to the gatherings BT-RO has for you and how important they can be in your healing. Thank you, Pam, and God Bless.

**Joe and Bobbie Cantafio** (Ryan, 11/25/04) and their family joined us for the first time at the banquet. Bobbie, who initially had a very difficult time herself, put her feelings and fears aside when she saw that one of our other Mothers needed some emotional support after having received the flag flown over the Capital in D.C. in her son's name. Bless your heart Bobbie...Bless your heart for "being there and reaching out" to another Mother.

Those of us who met **Jonah Hunt** (Isaiah Hunt, 11/15/04) at the HighGround last summer smiled when we got to see him again. There's something special about Jonah that instantly warms your heart when you see him. His mother, **Pam Bodart**, said he got that from his

big brother, Isaiah, who closely watched over Jonah and taught him how to be what he is today: A joy to all.

**Bridget and Robert Warns** (Bobby, 11/8/04-Iraq) had to leave early Saturday afternoon, but we all fully understood.....their granddaughter, Bobby's daughter Payton, was going to be visiting them. What a blessing you are Payton.

**Mary Bosveld** (Rachel 10/26/03-Iraq) brought her wonderful, creamy, hand-made soap to sell...they were gone in 5 minutes. Perhaps you need to bring more next time, Mary. Dah! For those who didn't have an opportunity to purchase any let me know and I'll put you in touch with Mary. And you can pick your flavor...the lavender is relaxing and the peppermint perks you up!

#### **Karlson's July 1<sup>st</sup>**

Don't forget the **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Gold Star Family Pig Roast** at the lakeside home of **Jim and Beth Karlson!** We need your **RSVP, ASAP.** Please get your hotel rooms now because they rent fast in the summer! Beth has reserved 7 rooms at the County Inn and Suites in Shawano. Make sure you say you are with Being There-Reaching Out for the discount. There's a flyer included in this newsletter. See you there for fun in the sun! And lots of food!

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**From Belle Wichlacz:**

The members of Freedom Quilts – WI Sisters will hold its next quarterly meeting Sunday, April 23, at 2:00. Come to visit and sew a little. We will meet at my home: 713 Marshal Ct., West Bend, WI 53090. Please RSVP at 262-335-0318. Monetary donations or donations of fabric (reds, whites, and blues) can be sent or dropped off at the address above. **Remember we're making these quilts specifically for the Wisconsin families who have lost a loved one in Iraq or Afghanistan. Join us!**

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**Calendar of Events**

**April 23:** WI Gold Star Family quilting at Belle Wichlacz's - she promises laughter.

**May 31-Memorial Day**

4 PM: BT-RO and Vietnam Veterans Chapter 324 will lead the Memorial Service at Milwaukee's lakefront prior to the lift-off of 20,000 POW-MIA balloons, the largest in the USA.

**July 1<sup>st</sup>** - The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Gold Star Family Pig Roast at the Karlson's in Clintonville

**August 12<sup>th</sup>** - The 1<sup>st</sup> Ryan Jerabek Memorial Walk/Run in Green Bay (Hobart)

**September** - Illinois BT-RO gathering

**October 14<sup>th</sup>** - BT-RO Fundraiser

5:00PM-at Milwaukee's Zoofari Center on the Zoo grounds...Help us gather some cool items for the auction:>)).

Our next gathering??



*Duty*

*I am a Knight and this Hum V my horse. I awake every morning not knowing my course. Run here go there, to fight an enemy I can't see clear, and every day God knows I have my doubts, not understanding what this is all about. To help a people who don't want me in their land, and I know they wish I'd lie forever in this sand. The twisted grin on their faces as they hide in the dark, I can only pray "God don't let me miss my mark." I am the few, the proud, a Marine, yet all my accomplishments my loved ones have never seen.*

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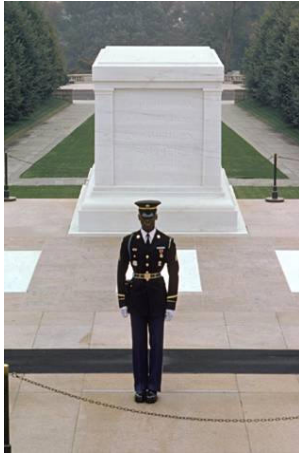
*A heart of stone and a face weathered by the storm, with all the dreams of a boy but in a uniform, my story will probably never be told.*

*But know that what I've been through the average man would fold.*

*When you lay down for bed every nigh, know I've offered my life and am the first to fight!*

*For those I love I'm out here doing my very best. I've given my life to protect and I'll never rest-Born to fight trained to kill I'm ready to die but never will.*

- PFC. Andrew J. McFall-Halverson, Fallen 10/9/04-Iraq



Remembering Our Fallen

#### April

- 5<sup>th</sup> 2004 CPL Jesse Thiry
- 6<sup>th</sup> 2004 CPL Ryan Jerabek
- 9<sup>th</sup> 2004 Spec. Michelle Witmer
- 17<sup>th</sup> 2004 Spec. Michael McGlothlin

#### May

- 19<sup>th</sup> 2003 SGT Kirk Straseskie
- 23<sup>rd</sup> 2005 PFC Kyle Hemauer
- 26<sup>th</sup> 2003 Major Matthew Schram
- 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 SGT Mark Maida
- 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 CW2 Joshua Scott

#### June

- 5<sup>th</sup> 2005 Spec Eric Poelman
- 13<sup>th</sup> 2005 LCPL John Mattek Jr
- 24<sup>th</sup> 2004 SSGT Charles Kiser
- 26<sup>th</sup> 2005 Spec. Charles Kaufman

#### July

- 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004 SSG Stephen Martin
- 9<sup>th</sup> 2003 SGT 1<sup>st</sup> Class Dan Gabrielson
- 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 Spec. John Tollefson
- 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 Capt. Benjamin Jansky



And Let us not forget our Prisoners of War  
and  
Missing in Action from the wars in the  
Middle East

Lieutenant Commander  
Michael "Scott" Speicher...1/17/1991

SGT Matt Maupin...4/9/2004

Join us this Memorial Day to  
Remember them.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Being There-Reaching Out Fundraiser on October 14<sup>th</sup>, will attempt to raise \$35,000. This money will be used for scholarships for the children of our Fallen, the siblings of our Fallen, and you the Families of

our fallen who might be in need of financial assistance. It will also be used to cover expenses when we gather together allowing us to gather more frequently as a "special" group.

#### We hope you attend.

If you want to donate items to the auction, whether you've made them or sought them out, you will be helping us to achieve this goal of helping you. Please contact me if you desire to participate.

The next newsletter will be sent out  
August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Feel free to send up-dates, articles, event information, and photos of you and your family so I can keep everyone informed on what and how you are doing in between our gatherings. This is your newsletter...all I do is put it together and send it to you. Please become a part of it. And remember to visit our wonderful **BT-RO website: [war-veterans.org/Btro.htm](http://war-veterans.org/Btro.htm)** so generously mastered by "Doc" Dentice, Medic, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Vietnam War Veteran.

With Love and Respect,  
Judith (414-476-0558)  
Joe (414-607-0527)

being there



reaching out



Lucien Neng Lee the National President of the Lao-Hmong American Coalition. The Hmong were our allies during the Vietnam war, and now their children serve in Iraq.



Dave Drent, Director of the Milwaukee County War Memorial who supported our idea of a blood drive for the Troops and helped us make it happen.



Vietnam Veterans who donated, with Master Chief Pamela Jacobsen who was in charge of communications on the USS Cole when it was bombed in October of 2004. She lost 17 friends in that bombing, but saved many more friends and lives with her quick and skilled response to the bombing.



My presentation of the BT-RO necklace to Randy and Rose Scannell



Randy and Rose Scannell and their family came from Green Bay to donate blood to the troops in honor of their son Ben Edinger, who had received blood for 9 days before he, sadly, succumbed to his injuries (11/23/04-Iraq).



The Scannells with Alan Lewis and his daughter. Alan lost both of his legs to an IED explosion while serving in Iraq.



Carol Knuth, Being There-Reaching Out volunteer and Chairperson of the Auction Committee for the BT-RO fundraiser on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006



County Sheriff whose son left for Afghanistan 2 days after he donated blood

Got me!



The "blood collectors" from Illinois. Bless their warm hearts



Bob Cornell looking more afraid of BT-RO Co-founder Joe Campbell than the needle:>))



Reservists....they know.



Serving in more ways than one. God Bless them.



The greeters:>)))

And a very special thank you to photographer Nancy Aycock for spending the day with us and taking some heartfelt photos at no cost to BT-RO. She can be reached at 414-8803-3017 and [nancy@nancyaycock.com](mailto:nancy@nancyaycock.com) if you want to thank her. Thank you Nancy.

## Being There-Reaching Out Gathering Feb 24-25<sup>th</sup> at the Heidel House in Green Lake



Rita Jerabek, Jim and Beth Karlson,  
Connie and Pastor Zeke Mazemke



Marilyn Blake, Luann Ackerly, Peg Gabrielson  
Standing Julie Splanger (UAW and BT-RO volunteer) and me.



The Girls!! Belle Wichlacz, Deb Prening, Mary Donahue and  
the new recruit to their shenanigans, Angela McFall



Mary Bosveld, Anne and Andy Hemauer, and  
Candy Knutson (BT-RO Volunteer)



Standing: Pam and Bill DeGroot  
Sitting: Dave Pelis (Counselor and Iraqi war Veteran) and  
Joel and Janie Brockman



Beth Karlson with Bob and Bridget Warns



Janie and Joel Brockman receiving their Gold Star Banner



Jennifer Cook, Bob and Sandy Selheim Receiving their Gold Star Banner



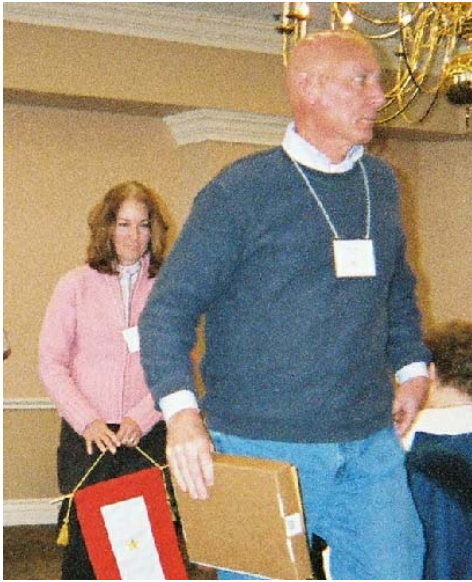
Angela McFall reading the poem her son wrote. The poem, "Duty" is in this newsletter.



Part of the Gold Star Family Breakfast Club, obviously they're all full!



Dorothy Moore (BT-RO volunteer), Kaia Kalscheuer, Leslie Campbell and Karla Kading.



Diane and Ray Maida with their Gold Star Banner



Peg Grabielson with Jack Stone of the Paralyzed Veterans of America



The Cantafio Family: Tony, Rose, Joe, Bobbie and Kassie at the Saturday Evening banquet



Standing: "Mike" McFall with Ashton.  
Angela McFall is sitting due to a leg injury.  
She used crutches all weekend (well, almost)



Joan Uhl in the center sharing pictures of her son Eugene with everyone.



Anne and Andy Hemauer receiving their Gold Star Banner

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006 Memorial for LCPL Travis Wichlacz, Fallen in Iraq, 2/5/05



Belle and Dennis Wichlacz, parents of Travis who was killed 2/5/05 in Iraq  
the Memorial for Travis



Mary and Pat Donahue, parents of Richard Warner who was killed in Iraq on 12/13/04, lighting a candle in his honor, at  
the Memorial for Travis



Pam and Bill DeGroot, parents of Brent Vroman who was killed in Iraq 12/13/04,  
lighting his candle at the beautiful display Belle set up to remember all the  
Marines from Travis' unit who were Killed in Iraq



Bill and Deb Prening, lighting their son Brian's candle. Brian was killed 11/12/04 in Iraq.