

Ft. Campbell Soldier Will Cheer For Wildcats Before Deploying to Afghanistan



WISH #20

February 24, 2010

SPC Justin Hogue's only wish before deploying in May was to attend a University of Kentucky basketball game. With a little help from his wife and family friend, Justin will soon get to see his Wildcats battle the mighty Florida Gators.

Justin joined the Army in August of 2006, with basic training at Ft. Jackson, SC. He later went to Ft. Gordon, GA for Air Infantry training, and now resides at Ft. Campbell, with his wife, Danielle, and their two children, Rickie (2), and Makaylee, who was just born on February 9, 2010.

Although a young couple, Justin and Danielle already know the ups and downs of deployments, and have had challenges in the past dealing with the worry and heartache that goes with the job. The couple had a difficult time reacquainting after Justin's last deployment, which put an obvious strain on their marriage. Danielle saw how difficult Justin's transition was to life at home, after being in such a different environment in Afghanistan. The couple explained that they got through this tough time by becoming actively involved in their church, and since then, things have started to fall into place.

Now after the birth of their second child, and with Justin's deployment just months away, Danielle wanted to surprise Justin with tickets to a Kentucky Wildcats game – something he's wanted since before he and Danielle were married in 2006. Financially, though, that was not an option for Danielle, particularly now with two children.



Wish For Our Heroes surprised Justin at McDonald's



Justin with tickets



Volunteer, Dennis Lockhart, presented the tickets to Justin

THE WISH

Unbeknownst to Danielle and Justin, a family friend submitted the Hogue's wish to Wish For Our Heroes. The woman was a good friend of Danielle's grandmother, and wanted to do something nice for the couple before Justin left in May.

The wish was scheduled to be presented on February 24th, but the evening of Feb 23rd, Danielle was admitted to the hospital with complications from Makaylee's recent delivery. Determined not to miss the wish granting, Danielle said to move forward with the wish as planned. Danielle was able to leave the hospital for a short time and convinced her husband to stop at a local McDonald's for lunch. It was there that Dennis Lockhart, a foundation volunteer at Fort Campbell, presented Danielle and Justin with two tickets to the March 7th basketball game against the Florida Gators. Dennis was joined by Jake Lowary of The Leaf-Chronicle, who plans to write an article about Justin and Danielle's wish. Justin was very excited about the game, where he'll be able to spend time with his wife, rooting for the Wildcats.