

## Bulletin Board

Tuesday

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### **Sandy Post: Sandy teen snaps up photo prize**

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#### **Sandy teen snaps up photo prize**

***DeWolf chronicled construction of home for disabled veteran***

**By Lisa K. Anderson**



Taylor DeWolf grew up being grateful for military service. Her father served in the Navy, and she has always believed in giving back to people who have sacrificed for their country.

This month, DeWolf, 16, was awarded a \$5,000 prize from Fujifilm SeeHere.com for a photojournalism and fundraising contest in support of Kids for Our Troops. Beginning last September, she chronicled the building of retired Army Specialist Kevin Pannell's new home in Sandy.

On June 13, 2004, Pannell was on foot patrol on the western edge of

Baghdad when his unit was ambushed. Two grenades rolled against his feet and exploded, knocking him down and ripping his legs apart.

*PHOTO CAPTION: Taylur DeWolf / contributed photo  
Retired Army Specialist Kevin Pannell with photo contest winner  
Taylur DeWolf.*

Over 18 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he underwent 22 operations, including the amputation of both his legs.

Pannell, his wife Danielle and son Hunter lived in apartments and houses that did not accommodate maneuvering in a wheelchair with artificial legs.

The family filled out paperwork for Homes for Our Troops — a national nonprofit organization that benefits severely injured veterans and service members by providing specially adapted homes — and moved to Oregon in 2008. Soon after, they received word they would get a home.

During the past year, SeeHere.com selected students to document builds in the communities where Homes for Our Troops is working. Kids for Our Troops began as an effort to raise awareness and funds for the charity.

Each student received a digital camera, coupons to offer donors, marketing materials and an online page.

“It was a great experience to see the community come together for somebody who sacrificed a lot for our country,” DeWolf said. Many of the volunteers, she said, were from Advantis Credit Union.

DeWolf is a sophomore at Estacada Web Academy and Early College, a program that allows her to take classes at Mt. Hood Community College.

Besides the Kids for Our Troops project, DeWolf tutors second- and fifth-graders at Kelso Elementary School and received her silver award in Girl Scouts last year for starting a young mothers group in Sandy.

She is actively involved in Sandy Assembly of God, where she sings on the youth worship team and is planning a July mission trip to Mexico.

To compete for the prize, DeWolf created a book of her photos, illustrating the building of Pannell’s home and her fundraising efforts.

Ron Dillehay, marketing director for Fujifilm North America Corp., said the contest had three criteria: relevancy to topic, expression of thought, and creativity/originality.

DeWolf's patriotic theme, thorough approach, community focus and creative embellishments throughout her book caught judges' attention, Dillehay said.

"I was really impressed with Taylur," said Pannell, 32. "I know that she was a good photographer because she got some really candid shots. Some of the pictures she had taken are hanging on our wall now."

Pannell and his family have lived in their home since December. Beside the photos hanging on their wall, the family has a copy of the book DeWolf created, which she gave as a gift.

"He's a really humble, thankful person," DeWolf said of Pannell. "The house was beautiful — perfect."

DeWolf says she learned of the opportunity to document Pannell's home build in a newspaper ad. She then wrote an essay about what community service meant to her, which won her a spot.

Spending every other weekend onsite during the build, DeWolf was impressed with the passion and dedication of volunteers in helping Pannell.

One of Pannell's comments stuck with her.

When he is out in public, he often receives thank yous for his service and sacrifice.

To this he responds, "Thank you, but any person who's out there serving (in) the military would have done the same thing."

A volunteer landscape day will be held for the Pannell family June 11. For details, visit [homesforourtroops.org](http://homesforourtroops.org).

