

Father records musical message for his son

By Diane Gale
staff writer

While most parents send letters to their children in Operation Desert Storm, Larry Kneeshaw of Canton wrote a song and hopes to deliver a cassette personally.

THE GULF WAR Hitting Home

Kneeshaw's ballad, "Desert Strength," is a musical note to his son, Scott, and at the same time applies to all troops in Saudi Arabia.

"I couldn't find the words to write you son, so I wrote this song to you, right that wrong. Your mother and I are very proud of you. So let our prayers be your Desert Shield."

"I'm sure all the parents would like to see their prayers serve as a desert shield," said Kneeshaw, a structural engineer who plays the guitar as a hobby.

His friend, Canton resident Eric Webster, owner of tropical fish stores Aquaria in Westland and Cichlid World of Garden City, produced the song and sings backup.

"Larry and I worked before on some songs," Kneeshaw said. "This was something that is happening right now and affected everyone in the entire world. I dropped all my other projects."

Farmington Hills resident, has promised the financial backing that will pay for 500 copies of the song, which will be donated to Desert Storm and Desert Shield support groups.

"They're calling their efforts Sand Aid, patterned after the national Farm Aid. Live Aid and Band Aid fund-raisers."

Ford, owner of T & M Asphalt Paving, Milford, said he was swamped with work-related matters when he got a call from Kneeshaw.

"I said I'll give you five minutes, Larry, and three hours later we were still talking," Ford said.

REGARDING WAR protesters, Kneeshaw said, their premise is that "there's too much blood being spilled for oil."

"We want the people who think this is a greedy move to see that the people over there are looking for peace."

"We're not promoting the war," Webster said. "We're promoting the people out there defending America."

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— Larry Kneeshaw



Canton residents Eric Webster and Larry Kneeshaw practice the song "Desert Strength." Webster, who owns a tropical fish store in Westland, produced the song and sings backup.

THEIR FRIEND, Tom Ford, a

KNEESHAW'S SON, Scott, 21, is serving in the 82nd Airborne and is a veteran of the U.S. invasion of Panama.

"The sun is going down in the desert sky. Bullets are flying, soldiers are fighting. Stand behind the flags that you represent. Let it be your desert shield. Moving through the sand like a Desert Storm."

Kneeshaw shook his head of thick blond hair and chuckled nervously when he recalled that after his son graduated from high school, he suggested that he join the military, and of course, he didn't know the danger that lay ahead.

"I'd rather have him home now, but at the same time, I'm proud as hell of him," Kneeshaw said.

"The last time I heard from Scott, was Jan. 11."

Kneeshaw said he and his wife, Sylvia, spend each news hour in front of the CNN (Cable News Network) channel, hoping they'll catch a glimpse of their son.

"We got all his personal belongings he sent home and that was the last we heard of him," Kneeshaw said, explaining that his son was preparing to go to battle. "It's kind of scary."

ALTHOUGH HE'S hoping to deliver a copy of the song to his son, the second best scenario, he said, would be to convince a media agency, like CNN or Stars and Stripes, a military newspaper, to deliver a copy.

"I want him (Scott) to realize what he and his buddies over there are doing," Kneeshaw said.

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