



Soldier’s family thankful for support  
Letter to the Editor:

Derek Brown, a 2004 graduate of Fruitport High School, joined the army in May of 2005. He completed his basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and went to Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas for further training. He was then stationed at Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. He stayed there for about a year before gearing up for his first deployment.

In the fall of 2006, he was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, where he served for 15 months. While in Baghdad, Derek was involved in many supply missions that helped other companies continue fighting in the battle. Upon returning from that deployment, he was promoted to Sergeant.

In January 2009, Derek was deployed to Kirkuk, Iraq, where he was stationed at the FOB Warrior for 12 months.

On September 30, 2009, in Kirkuk, Iraq, Sgt. Derek Brown, was in the lead vehicle of a convoy when his vehicle ran over an IED trip wire. The force of the blast lifted the vehicle and turned it sideways into a ditch. There were three soldiers and one interpreter in the vehicle, none of whom were seriously hurt. Derek was knocked out from the blast, and his foot was crushed by the GPS system within the truck.

When Sgt. Brown came to, his first thought was not for himself, but for the other soldiers on board. He made sure the other soldiers were okay and comforted them. It was only then he realized that he was hurt.

Sgt. Brown finished his tour of duty in Kirkuk, Iraq in December of 2009.

On March 12, 2010, Brown was honored in a ceremony and was presented with a Purple Heart for being hurt when his truck was involved in the IED explosion.

Sgt. Derek Brown, his wife and his family, Ronald and Debbie Brown of Fruitport, Michigan, want to say thank you to all the people who held Derek up in prayer. It means so much to Derek and his family to know how much the community cares for him. Once again, thank you.

Ron Brown  
Fruitport

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*(Submitted by Calvary Church)*

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- Your relationship is struggling and you feel alone.
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- You want a great marriage and haven’t given up.

Whether you are newlyweds or marital veterans, the goal of marriage is unity on the deepest level in all areas of your life. If you are willing to work at it, it can become a reality. You commit to the effort and God will do the transforming.

The New LIFEgroup starts Sunday, September 12 at Calvary Church, 5873 Kendra Road, Fruitport. The group meets from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in classroom E101. •

Garden club schedules meeting

**By Alice Pasarela**

The Muskegon County Garden Club will meet at noon on August 16. Members and guests will “brown bag it” at Margaret Drake Elliot Park to hear Shane Van Oosterout from the Ottawa County Extension Office. He will speak on selecting the best hand tools for the garden. A business meeting will follow his presentation. Call (231) 798-7625 or (231) 759-7031. The Muskegon County Garden Club is a member of the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. and the National Garden Clubs, Inc. •

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