



David Burke, left, composed "We Love the USA," a song that pays tribute to U.S. armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Kevin Powell edited the video, which can now be seen and downloaded at www.welovetheusa.net. Staff Photo: Christopher North

Tribute to the troops

Duluth musician completes patriotic song, video

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DULUTH — David Burke has been a musician for most of his life.

And that God-given talent was his way of paying tribute to American troops overseas when he sat down at his piano and composed the song "We Love the USA: A Tribute to Our Armed Forces."

Burke, a Louisiana native who now resides in Duluth, said a Detroit-based Christian music label in early spring requested that he compose a patriotic song to be featured with other songs from some of its new artists.

The label has also worked with other songs written by Burke in the past.

Burke said the melody was laid down in about two weeks, and the completion of the lyrics followed after two more weeks.

"The inspiration (for the song) is just what the troops are going through right now," said Burke, 51, a Fulton County government employee for eight hours a day and musician the rest of the time. "They're going through a lot of hardship, and they've been over there so long that the country has taken them for granted. It's basically just a real sad situation."

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Tribute: 'The big focus is that we're out there fighting for our country'

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"Now it's just become status quo that (people) turn on the radio and TV on and somebody's been killed or there was a bombing."

Burke said "We Loye the USA" stands alone from other patriotic ballads in that it focuses on the men and women risking their lives in the name of freedom.

"The big focus is that we're out there fighting for our country," he said.

Burke also said the video has been viewed by a number of people online, as the Web site featuring the video has received more than 10,000 hits in the past few weeks.

Others featured in the song are vocalists Cathy Biscan and Joey Kang, with Biscan singing the lead.

The instrumentation includes Burke, Kang and Michael Matejick.

As for Burke's love of music, he has been a musician since he was 6 years old. He

plays the piano, the bass guitar and percussion. Every now and then, he said, he'll play around with an acoustic guitar.

He is a graduate of the University of New Orleans with a bachelor of arts degree in music.

In the past, Burke has worked for various record companies, helping to boost sales of songs like "Arthur's Theme" by Christopher Cross, of which he received a gold record commemoration plaque from Warner Brothers for sell-

ing the most copies of the singles in the country; "Slow Hand" by the Pointer Sisters from Elektra Records; the theme from "The Greatest American Hero" by Joey Scarbury, also through Elektra; and "Urgent" by Foreigner through Atlantic Records.

The video, produced by fellow employee Kevin Powell, features photos portraying the battlegrounds in Iraq and Afghanistan and support from men, women and children here at home.

Powell, originally from Nashville, Tenn., said he was approached and asked to edit the video using photos already supplied by the military.

There was one piece of footage that he had in his possession prior to the video's production that fit perfectly, he said.

"It was on the Fourth of July at a school in Franklin, Tenn., called Battle Ground Academy. The school had thousands of small flags lined up on its front lawn," Powell said.

"When I saw that I said, 'Man, I wish I had a picture like that.'"

That was when he realized he left his equipment at home, and he asked his sister to shoot the scene from every angle for as much time as possible.

"It was a moving visual for me to see," he said. "I figured some time at some point along the line I'll be able to use that."

To view the video, visit www.welovetheusa.net. A copy of the video can also be downloaded from the site.