

Dear Neighbors:

On Saturday, AnnMarie and I traveled to Verguita to spend some time with David, who resides in the home of Daisy Mae Johnston. We had a wonderful afternoon. Upon leaving, we stopped to talk with the small contingency of protestors who have established an "outpost" just across the unpaved road from Daisy's double wide trailer. They see the TV news, as we do here, thus recognized us instantly. This opened the door for us. I had the opportunity to hold a lengthy, rational and reasoned discussion with the group leaders. They were extremely interested in learning why we extended the offer for David to join us in our home. Therefore, I wanted to fully explain our motivation.

We exchanged email and telephone information. On our return to Albuquerque, AnnMarie and I put together a proposal. I have copied you on the details of this potential arrangement. I thought you might be interested in hearing the details.

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## **Faith: The Answer to Fear**

Great meeting all of you today. This is a very difficult situation for everyone. I respect your concerns. I understand the fear in your community. The bottom line is our system, our government, has failed all parties. Your community was cheated, as you didn't want this unknown and potential danger. Your limited law enforcement community can't protect you -- if he's the monster Mayor Chavez portrays him to be.

But David Siebers was cheated as well. If he's a monster, he must remain in an institution. He needs treatment. If he's not the monster our mayor created, he deserves a bit of human dignity. He never expected this to be easy. He knows what he did. He realizes he'll pay for eternity.

On the other hand, if the FBI Profile is wrong, this mass social hysteria is unjustified. If their assessment is accurate, the State of Michigan shouldn't have released him. We can't blame David for their error. But blaming doesn't solve the problem. All states are in the same situation. As a society, we don't know how to manage these offenders.

This is why I asked my wife to allow me to invite him here. I'm willing to take the risk, as there's no other solution at present. At some point, someone, some group or some community must take the risk. The question people are asking is why us?

I'll tell you why. We're not churchgoers, but we have tremendously strong faith. If we invite him here, my wife would stay with here family. We're careful also. If David would kill or harm me, God would protect me. But the world would have their answer. They would lock him up for good.

I'm only on this Earth to answer to Him. God spoke to my heart. I have a background in political science, criminology and sociology. I know how to talk to the media and politicians. I have resources at my disposal to help us find a permanent residence for him. He'll never find a suitable location if he's on the road and living in that trailer, being bounced from place to place. It's not possible for him by himself. He's looking for the "needle in a haystack" community, but he has absolutely no resources.

So, why me? It's my devotion to God and this great country. We'll soon have soldiers going into Iraq. They will put their lives on the line, these young men and women, to ensure our safety. How can I sit here and ask them to die for me, if I'm afraid to sacrifice for them at home? They're over there, while their families remain here. We must protect their families in return.

Over the annual Christian holiday, the people in Albuquerque said, "Not here. There's no room left at our Inn." They didn't want to help find a solution; they just passed the problem to someone else. And, this is the social illness in America today.

The bottom line is that we, as a society, have a disease I call "social selfishness." I submitted a Letter to the Editor recently on this topic, although the issue was different. As long as we're safe, we don't care about the guy next door. But the "buck must stop here," as there appears to be no community that wants this man...

Somebody had to step up to the plate. I waited... I watched our mayor make a mess of this. I saw the fear in our community, and in each additional community along David's journey. When he was attacked last week, I knew it would only be a matter of time until it escalated out of control.

But why here? Because here is all we have. We don't have much money. We can't fly him out of the country. We don't have a ranch in the country. What we have is private property, and under the laws of this nation, as long as he acts legally, we have the right to offer him sanctuary in our home.

What about my neighbors? This is by far the most difficult question. We love our neighbors. We love the kids in our area. I work for their safety all the time. People ask how I can put them in harm's way. Again, I rely on faith. There were four APD officers with you today. I trust in their abilities. If David were here, they would be out front. Some could be stationed in back.

In addition, if David came here, the media would descend on this entire neighborhood. Albuquerque is one of the largest media centers in the nation. In fact, this has created the biggest problem. As Mayor Chavez manipulated the media to such a degree, he marked David. He's scared people throughout the western region, with the result being he's also limited David's options for relocation.

My wife and I knew we could rely on the media as well. The combination of professional APD officers and their extended presence would ensure we'd have the safest block in the city. It would be like the White House.

Would it be good for Albuquerque? Absolutely not! It would turn the city upside down. Yet here's the billion-dollar question? What city or community wants him now? This has been the most horribly managed situation I've ever witnessed. Our political system completely failed here.

If you really think about it, if left alone, David's a dead man. He'll bounce from place to place until someone kills him. This creates two more victims -- David and the killer (more if the killer has a family). And, if he gets pushed enough, he might snap. Every human has a limit. Push that button and the human goes nuts. David could get so upset that he commits suicide -- but takes all of you with him.

We extended our invitation to David to provide him safe refuge. Our overarching objective was to buy everyone time, and allow us an opportunity to determine a better location. It wasn't the best solution, but it seemed like the only solution under the circumstances. Yet we also wanted to protect you. We didn't even know you, but we didn't want to see you harmed. Please consider the following:

I want to talk straight to the heart here. As I said, we don't know each other, but from a spiritual perspective, you are our brothers and sisters. Taken to the logical extension, if you keep banging that drum, taunting and shouting, honking and screaming, over and over, day after day, night after night, what's the outcome?

David's dug in. He knows if you win, each and every community from now on will employ your tactics. He's made his stand. He decided to resist, albeit peacefully, here and now.

Daisy's husband had a long, and illustrious, military career. She showed me their family decorations, as her husband was a hero. She has letters and invitations from former President Bush and Ronald Reagan. I don't know for sure, but it's likely they have weapons. Let's assume David's unstable. The FBI Profile alleges he is. Your continued taunts might cause him to snap. And, if he did...

If he did, you're all facing serious danger. You have your children out there with you. Although the police are in the area, there's no way they could get to you in time. If he ran out, with guns blazing, you would all be sitting ducks. You might end up dead. The police would kill David and the nightly news would have their tragedy. They'd be the only winners -- because blood sells.

Like I said today, I'm not here to judge you or suggest what to do. I mean this honestly. I'm just asking you to reflect on this situation. Possibly, you'll say I'm trying to help him. But think about it, your strategy is tantamount to psychological warfare. You're hoping to break him with your continued barrage of stress-inducing stimuli.

Be careful for what you ask!

On the other hand, I might suggest a less stressful strategy. Post your guards, keep watch, be prudent and diligent, and work with me. If he wants to stay, and if Daisy wants him there, it will be a battle of attrition. How long can you hold out? How long can he? I don't know.

Daisy is convinced David's her angel. She's dying. She probably knows it. She needs serious medical attention. And, the strange irony of the situation is the government has failed her as well. I talked with the social workers the other day. They said she could apply for a therapy program, but the waiting list is long -- it will take about two years. They're looking to see if they can get her assigned to "emergency status." In this eventuality, she only has to wait six to eight months!

This woman's the wife of a honored war hero. She has two sons in the military, currently in the reserves and in line for duty in Iraq. Yet she can't get the medical attention she needs. President Bush, what the "hell are we fighting for?" Why aren't her kids helping her now? Why does it seem everything's falling apart? So, yes, to Daisy, David is her angel. She claims her prayers brought him to Veguita, all the way from Michigan. In my understanding of faith, I don't question her claim.

Where does this leave us? Daisy believes she needs David. David needs a home. It's her property, so she has the legal right. Maybe they can help each other. Sure, David's presence upsets your peaceful community. I can understand your concerns. I saw the fear in the eyes of my otherwise decent and good neighbors. And, as you said today, we have a police force of nearly 900 here. You have only eleven.

You might continue your present course of harassment hoping to drive him mad with the barrage of noise, but that's dangerous. You can try legal avenues, but I don't believe you'll have much luck. The tenant of private property is a fundamental right in America.

Here's another idea. David's willing to subject himself to scrutiny. He admits he has a terrible, terrible history. He recognizes his integration into society won't be easy. He doesn't expect society to trust him, yet he wants to find a way to prove himself. He's mentioned he would consider wearing an anklet, a GPS device. This might allow electronic monitoring from the sheriff's station. We could request that he attend counseling sessions, begin therapy, join support groups and submit to psychological evaluations.

At this time, I understand Mayor Chavez plans to keep APD officers stationed there. You would have professional surveillance in the field. You could contact the governor, and work through legal channels. I would as well. I can't imagine how any of you would be a risk if David agreed to these conditions.

Additionally, David needs work. Daisy's home needs serious attention. He could use the time to fix things up for her. We could look into charitable groups for basic support, i.e., tools, materials, supplies. By fixing up the place, he might develop pride and self-esteem through his toil. Combined with therapy, electronic monitoring, police supervision and your community's diligence, it might be decent temporary solution.

Again, I'm not trying to force this proposal on you. It's your community. This is your home, and there are a great many dangers when dealing with the unknown.

I can promise you this. If you consider a plan such as this, I'll assist you from here. I'll work with David, keep you informed and put my energy into making this a win/win situation. I'm just one person, and I can't give anyone guarantees. Yet we can all continue looking for a better, more permanent resolution.

David doesn't expect you to trust him or let down your guard. But people today shouldn't anyway. There's fear and uncertainty throughout our world. It all comes down to a question of faith.

The way I look at it, faith is the opposite of fear. We must trust in each other, believe in our institutions and have the courage to face difficult situations. Life offers us no assurances. This is why we must live each day to the fullest.

But, in my professional opinion, your strategy of engaging in psychological warfare, with an individual the FBI reports to be highly unstable is an irrational plan. The future is always murky, but I'm not getting a good feeling on this one. This is why we extended our invitation in the first place. And, please believe me, we have paid dearly for making that decision. There will be no worldly gain for taking this step.

But we answer to a very generous Master. It's just a matter of faith.

God Bless!