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75 CENTS DAILY

VALPO SHOWS TROOP GREETER FILM DESIGNED TO LIFT SPIRITS



Taking flight

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VALPARAISO

Joan Gaudet seemed a reluctant movie star Tuesday as she talks about her role in the award-winning documentary "The Way We Get By."

The film, directed by her son Aron Gaudet, tells the story of the Maine Troop Greeters, average citizen volunteers who welcome home each plane of soldiers arriving from overseas at Bangor International Airport.

"It gets you out of the house, and you make someone feel really good," said Joan Gaudet, 76, in an understated description of the group's efforts.

Tuesday's screening at Ivy Tech Community College in Valparaiso and today's community breakfast with the Gaudets are part of Pines Village Retirement Communities' annual celebration of senior citizens during National Older Americans Month.

Since 2003, the Maine greeters have welcomed home more than 1 million service members from Iraq and Afghanistan. The group is profiled in the this week's issue of People magazine.

"The Way We Get By" focuses on three core members of the greeters who get out to the airport at all hours of the night and day to greet incoming military flights. They also see

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"THE WAY WE GET BY"

Pines Village Retirement Communities showed the movie "The Way We Get By," the story of the Maine Troop Greeters, Tuesday night at Ivy Tech Community College in Valparaiso. The film by Aron Gaudet chronicles the senior citizens who welcome each plane of soldiers from overseas at Bangor International Airport in Maine. Gaudet and his mother, Joan Gaudet, will discuss the film over breakfast today at Pines Village.

JESSICA A. WOOLF
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

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Film

off outgoing flights, but Joan Gaudet said she had a much harder time knowing what to say to departing soldiers.

Aron Gaudet said he was curious about what his mother was doing on her midnight trips to the airport. So he tagged along and found the seed for his next work.

"The Way We Get By" turns out to be a sneaky little film.

At first, it seems it's going to be a moving account of welcome and gratitude to the men and women who have borne the country's battles.

Then it turns into a powerful story of life, loss, death and, above all, community.

The senior citizens who are the central subjects of the film "were teaching us so much about life," Aron Gaudet said.

Gaudet said he hoped the movie would inspire viewers to get involved in their communities.

"It doesn't have to be this huge gesture to make a difference," he said.

IF YOU GO

Community breakfast discussion with director Aron Gaudet and his mother, Joan Gaudet
• 8 to 10 a.m. today
• Tickets \$20
• Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso