



Saving Tiny Digits

A Port Orchard woman's child-safety invention gets national TV exposure on 'The View.'

**By Sue Edwards | For the Kitsap Sun
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Port Orchard mom Jeri Homa Keating was flabbergasted when her invention, Digitsaver, was selected to be presented on the popular morning television program "The View" a few weeks ago.

Several people talked about their inventions, and as the last one to speak, Keating's presentation was cut a little short. But she couldn't have had a better endorsement when host Rosie O'Donnell gave some extra attention to her product — a cuddly, little stuffed animal that's used to prevent children from getting their fingers caught in doors.

"It hadn't been scripted at all when Rosie grabbed the Digitsaver and said she must have one for a child and asked if she could take it with her," Keating said.

The Digitsaver was selected from among thousands of child-safety devices submitted for presentation on the show — it was sent in by Orca Communications, LLC, which nominated it as their best product of 2006. It also was named "editors choice" by Baby Atlas.

The finger-saving device is a donut-shaped ring guard with an accompanying stuffed animal that can be attached to any door — there's a choice of a cat, dog, pig or bear. Basically, the ring attaches to the doorknob, then the animal head sticks out through the door jam to keep the door from closing on little fingers. The animals are about 7 inches long.

"It also serves to keep the door from slamming when a child is having a tantrum and tries to slam the door," says Keating.

Keating's first customer, Terri Schmidt of Port Orchard, says she's bought all four of the animals for her doors. She has two children, ages 1 ½ and 5.

"These work wonderfully, and if you have a breeze come up that can slam a child's door, they prevent that from happening, too," says Schmidt.

Born in Biloxi, Miss., to a career Air Force family, Keating spent a lot of time at Fort Collins, Colo., and ended up majoring in broadcasting and production at Colorado State University. She moved to Hollywood, where she got a job with Richard Dreyfuss Productions. That's where she met her husband, Steve, an architectural photographer.

The couple decided Puget Sound offered a better quality of life to raise a family, so they moved to Port Orchard in 1999 and now have a 7-year-old son, Nigel, and 5-year-old daughter, Miranda, who helped pick out the colors for the Digitsavers.

When Keating arrived here, she began working with high-tech start-up companies, which she says helped greatly in developing her skills for starting Digitsaver, her first owned business.

She developed the idea for Digitsaver when her children were slamming each other's doors. She went online to find someone to look at her prototype and come up with production ideas. She eventually began working with an Englishman whose company is based in Hong Kong.

But her first shipment, arriving just in time for a trade show, was not without some problems.

"They put something really heavy on top of the Digitsavers in the container and crushed their little boxes, but my kids and I salvaged and repackaged them in time for the show," Keating said.

In business less than a year, Keating garnered several takers at the trade show, including Port Orchard store Garden Baby Boutique. With a low price of \$4.59 to \$6.99 at various online sites (see her Web site), Digitsavers are doing a brisk online business.

And she's planning to release a new Digitsaver animal in a variety of pastel colors for early next year. What is it? Why a bunny, of course — just in time for Easter.

'Digitsaver'

What: Digitsaver, a child-safety device to prevent doors from slamming on children's fingers.

Who: Invented by Port Orchard resident Jeri Homa Keating

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