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PAGE 8

# Reader's Digest

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## Best Patriotic Pitch

**Dayna Steele** (below, front) loves watching great sporting events. But a few years ago, when the 48-year-old media consultant attended a Houston Comets women's basketball game and stood at attention for "The Star-Spangled Banner," her enjoyment was interrupted by oblivious fellow fans chatting and guzzling beer. She recalled a story that her friend H. C. Thomas, a civilian contractor in Iraq, had told her about a Jamaican national who always choked up at the sound of the American anthem. "He said how lucky

we are that so many have given their lives to **protect our freedom.**" Recruiting Thomas's help, she hatched a plan in which U.S. servicemen in Iraq would videotape a "pro-anthem" message. Her website, [operationnationalanthem.com](http://operationnationalanthem.com), now offers the videos free for use before any public event in which the anthem will be played. Their effort is a tribute both to their military fathers and "to all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation," Thomas says.

PHOTOGRAPHED AT MINUTE MAID PARK, HOME OF THE ASTROS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY WYATT MCSPADDEN