

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MIKE  
OVERTURF

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 9, 2003*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep admiration that I stand before this body of Congress to recognize the determination of fifteen year-old Mike Overturf of Olathe, Colorado, who is recovering from a recent stroke. The fortitude he has shown in the face of hardship, and the spirited manner with which he lives his life, are an inspiration to us all.

Although having suffered a stroke just a few short months ago, Mike has remained active. He has been riding his dirt bike, playing drums, making plans to go fishing, and even completing a major project in school in order to catch up on his studies. Mike's teachers note his remarkable performance and the extraordinary attention he has devoted to his schoolwork.

Throughout his ordeal, Mike has been a positive influence in the lives of his friends, family, and in his community. He has supported the performances of his school's band, even following them to Grand Junction for the Colorado West Band Festival. Mike plans to play with the band this spring and not only knows how to play the drums, but also the trombone, trumpet, saxophone, guitar, clarinet and flute.

Mr. Speaker, Mike Overturf is an inspiration to us all. His determination to overcome adversity and his commitment to recovery says volumes about his character and desire to succeed. Mike, I join your friends, family and all of Olathe in wishing you a speedy recovery and success in all of your future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO CAPT. MITCHELL A.  
SMITH

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 9, 2003*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of this nation's most dedicated citizens, Captain Mitchell A. Smith, of the Santa Rosa Sheriffs Office. This past Thursday, June 5, 2003, Mitch was taken from us. He tirelessly served Santa Rosa County for the past 25 years, leaving a lasting impact on the Northwest Florida Community that he came to know so well. We will forever miss Mitch, but his memory will never be forgotten.

Mitch began his adult life by dedicating himself to the United States Army. He chose to serve his country, defending the freedoms and liberties that we as Americans have come to hold so dear. It was this passion to serve and help others that would continuously be shown throughout his life.

In May of 1978, Mitch retired from the U.S. Army and came to the Santa Rosa Sheriffs Office. He began his career in law enforcement as a Deputy, but quickly showed his dedication and commitment to serving and protecting the people of Northwest Florida, resulting in his subsequent promotions to the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, and Lieutenant. Just two weeks ago, Mitch received the honor

and recognition of his final promotion to the rank of Captain.

Just two months shy of retirement, Mitch served everyday to the best of his abilities. Over the course of his career he received numerous letters of commendation for his service to the citizens of Santa Rosa County. He was an officer respected by his peers, admired by his community, and loved by his family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family of Capt. Mitchell A. Smith for their loss. Although his time with us was cut short, we will be forever grateful for the time that Mitch did have with us in Santa Rosa County. On this such occasion, we honor one of America's greatest citizens, Capt. Mitchell A. Smith, whose legacy will live on long beyond his passing.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RON LEWIS**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 9, 2003*

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, due to a death in the family, I was absent from the House on Wednesday, June 4 and Thursday, June 5. Had I been present, I would have voted the following way: rollcall vote 236—yea, rollcall vote 237—yea, rollcall vote 238—yea, rollcall vote 239—yea, rollcall vote 240—nay, rollcall vote 241—nay, rollcall vote 24—yea, rollcall vote 243, H. Res. 256—yea, rollcall vote 244—yea, rollcall vote 245—yea, rollcall vote 246—yea, rollcall vote 247—yea, rollcall vote 248—yea.

In particular, I would like to specifically express my strong support for H.R. 760, the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003. This has been a bill that I have supported for many years and I am glad that it has again seen passage in the House. For nearly a decade Congress has attempted to see this legislation become law, and I am pleased that my colleagues have yet again affirmed the message that partial birth abortion is wrong by passing this bill.

There has been overwhelming support for a ban on partial birth abortions. The partial birth abortion ban has been passed in various forms by the House eight times, including multiple veto overrides. Having been first considered during the 104th Congress, we have seen numerous state legislatures take action and vote to end partial birth abortions in their states.

I am pleased that we have acted strongly and unmistakably by voting once again to preserve life and ban the heinous practice of partial birth abortions. The administration has stated their support of this bill and is willing to take positive action and sign this ban into law.

I understand that the issue of abortion is difficult for many. Well-intentioned people on both sides of this debate will continue to disagree. How long, though, can our society continue to justify its denial of the right to life to the defenseless unborn? The value of life has been consistently cheapened.

Partial birth abortion is a graphic example of the worst of abortion. Congress has taken a stand to uphold the value of life, especially in these instances in which life is so blatantly being destroyed. I am pleased that many have

acted in support of this legislation. My colleagues have continued to support of human life and have voted in favor of a ban on partial birth abortions. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on this important bill.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO VERNA BARR

SPEECH OF

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2003*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to recognize the many years of public service that Verna Barr of Austin, Colorado has given to the citizens of my state. I would like to take this time to pay tribute to Verna's selfless contributions to the well being of so many children, seniors, and others who have had the pleasure of her company and her kindness.

Verna started her life of volunteer service at the age of eight, helping to print and fold her church's bulletin. Verna's mother, Florence Petersen, instilled in Verna a philosophy of life in which helping others has central importance. Over the years, Verna has volunteered her services to a number of worthy causes and projects, including preserving the history of Surface Creek Valley and Pioneer Town through disseminating information and indexing it for future generations. Verna has also spent a great deal of time and effort assisting the American Cancer Society, as well as the Colorado Cancer Society, from whom she has twice received official recognition for her assistance with Relay for Life. Even in her professional life, Verna's work continues the spirit of service. For seventeen and a half years Verna has worked with seniors at Horizon Health Care and Retirement Community, helping to enrich the lives of many with books, plays, music, and creative activities. Throughout this time, Verna's example has inspired scores of others to volunteer as well. Colorado is truly thankful.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration that I recognize Verna Barr for her innumerable contributions to the quality of life for the citizens of Colorado. I am proud to represent Verna in this body of Congress, and wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude for her life of public service. Colorado is now a more beautiful place. Good luck, Verna, and best wishes on all of your future endeavors.

TRIP REPORT ON VISIT TO IRAQ

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 9, 2003*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from spending two days in southern Iraq. I was there Sunday, May 25, and Monday, May 26. I also spent a day, Tuesday, May 27, in Kuwait, where I met with Kuwaiti government officials, members of the U.S. military, State Department officials and staff from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Today I want to share with our colleagues some details of my trip. On another day, I will