

Baseball is often called the "American Pastime," and with good reason. Few events are greater harbingers of the coming of summer than the first pitches in ball parks around the country. Millions of parents across this nation carve time out of their days to teach their child how to throw a baseball or to coach a little league team. And millions of American children count their first baseball glove among their most treasured possessions.

Baseball, however, is not only an American tradition. Rather, it is treasured with equal fervor and excitement by Cubans less than 100 miles from our shore. There, too, baseball is the national pastime. Countless Cuban and American children play little league baseball with visions of a future in the major leagues. Just as Americans eagerly count down to opening day, Cubans anticipate the first pitch of a new season with a mix of anticipation and excitement.

Not only do Cubans and Americans share their deep love of baseball, they also both play the game with great skill. Indeed, some of America's finest players hail from Cuba.

In spite of this close connection, however, politics has kept American and Cuban teams from visiting each other's stadiums for nearly four decades. This artificial separation remained intact until this spring when the Cuban National Team hosted the Baltimore Orioles in Havana. That game marked the opening day, not just of a two game home-and-home series, but hopefully of a new season in the relationship between two of the world's greatest lovers of baseball.

The series, which continued in Baltimore this month, would never have come about if it were not for the courage and dedication of Bud Selig. His efforts succeeded where those of hundreds of diplomats and politicians have failed: he managed to bring the Cuban and American people together to celebrate the game they love so dearly.

I recognize that the process of arranging these two games was rarely easy. At times, it seemed that the opening pitch would remain forever out of reach. Yet, Mr. Selig persisted and brought the two teams closest to our capitals—and their fans—together for two historic games. Our nation should be proud of and grateful to Mr. Selig for his efforts and look forward to additional contact between the Cuban and American peoples, both on and off the baseball diamond.●

I LOVE AMERICA DAY

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of Fulton, Missouri's "I Love America Day." Several years ago, the faculty of McIntire Elementary school became concerned that many of the students did not have a true sense of patriotism and national pride. What started out at one elementary school has spread to a communitywide celebration. Each year

they highlight all levels of government and place special emphasis on pride in the flag. This year's celebration will include a presentation of the colors by the VFW flag team, a twenty-one gun salute, taps to honor those lost in service, presentations by the VFW, Mayor Craghead, and others, and a special demonstration by the Army's Golden Knights parachute team. As you can see, Mr. President, this event has grown into a wonderful day of activities that will enrich the sense of patriotism not only in our youth, but also in the entire community. I commend the organizers of "I Love America Day" for the wonderful example they set for Missouri and the entire country.●

HONORING FEDERAL RESERVE CHALLENGE WINNERS

● Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate five outstanding High School students from University School at Milwaukee. Working as a team, these five students were recently named national champions of the 1999 Federal Reserve Challenge.

Mary Broydrick, Michelle Hill, Day Manoli, Nick Nielsen, all seniors, and Gus Fuldner, a junior, each received a \$10,000 scholarship for their presentation on monetary policy. The team was coached by John Stephens, a teacher at University School for 41 years. In addition, the school received a \$40,000 grant to develop an economics lab.

Their winning presentation included countless hours researching economic and monetary policy. Making recommendations based on their findings, the team was asked a series of grueling questions by Federal Reserve officials.

We are all extremely proud of our students from University School. They must be applauded for a job well done.●

TRIBUTE TO ILA MARIE GOODEY

● Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would just like to take a moment to pay tribute to Ila Marie Goodey of Logan, Utah. I have just learned that Ila passed away on Saturday.

Ila was a tireless and effective advocate for individuals with disabilities and served as an early and active member of my Utah Advisory Committee on Disability Policy. I have always appreciated her counsel on these issues.

In particular, she believed in independence and self-sufficiency, and she directed as much of her energy to assisting others to reach this goal as she did to helping herself. She served as the first chairperson of the Utah Assistive Technology Program Management and Implementation Board. This consumer-responsive, interagency program has been hailed nationwide as a model for other programs of its kind.

I know that her friends and colleagues at Utah State University and among the disability community in my state will mourn her loss. But, I also know that they, as I do, appreciate all that she has contributed. There can be

no doubt that Ila has made a real difference.●

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT ANDREW RAMIREZ

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Staff Sergeant Andrew Ramirez who has served his country with bravery and valor. For Sergeant Ramirez, a resident of East Los Angeles, public service runs in the family—his brother is a detective with the Los Angeles Police Department.

On March 31, 1999, Sergeant Ramirez was taken as a prisoner of war by the Yugoslavia Army while he was serving as part of a U.S. Army detachment assigned to a U.N. monitoring force patrolling Yugoslavia's southern border. Sergeant Ramirez was part of the 4th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division based in Wurzburg, Germany. He had arrived in Macedonia in early March to relieve another contingent.

I cannot begin to imagine the terror experienced by Sergeant Ramirez and his fellow soldiers, Christopher J. Stone and Steven M. Gonzales, when they were surrounded, and under heavy fire, taken as prisoners of war.

Just a few days later, the soldiers were shown on Serbian television, battered and bruised. It is a picture that every mother hopes she will never see. It is a picture that every American hoped was not true. But, it was true, and these three men paid a dear price of over a month in captivity. They did not know what fate would befall them and if they were ever going to see their families again.

During the past weeks, Kosovo has witnessed carnage and bloodshed unseen in Europe for almost fifty years. These events are the culmination of a decade-long campaign of terror and bloodshed in the Balkans—and it has created a refugee crisis unparalleled in recent years.

Sergeant Ramirez was in Yugoslavia because his country asked him to go. He was there to protect our promise that the civilized world will never again do nothing in the face of genocide, ethnic cleansing, mass rape and rampant violence to thousands of innocent people. If the most powerful alliance in the world fails to stop ethnic cleansing, it will send a green light to every tyrant and dictator with similar intentions that they can do the same, and that the world community will be unable or unwilling to muster the resolve to stop it.

None of these words would mean anything without individuals like Sergeant Anthony Ramirez. He is the truest of patriots—the bravest of the brave. Our country is forever indebted to him, and there are not words nor deeds that could ever repay his dedicated service—or that of his family. He is a testament to the human spirit that keeps the light of peace and human freedoms alive.

Sergeant Ramirez, we thank you, we honor you, and we are so very, very glad that you are home.●