

Bester has had a long and distinguished military career, which he began as a staff nurse before obtaining advanced education as a nurse anesthetist. He served at various medical facilities including Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, WA, Okinawa, Japan and Fort Sill, OK. His tremendous leadership skills led to his selection as a nurse instructor at the Army Medical Department Academy of Health Sciences in San Antonio, TX, and as a nurse recruiter in Indiana. He also served as a personnel management officer at the Army personnel command in Alexandria, VA, and as deputy commander for nursing at the medical facility at Fort Ben Harrison, IN. Brigadier General Bester served with distinction in a series of assignments as deputy commander for nursing at the Medical Department Activity, MEDDAC, at Fort Leavenworth, KS, deputy commander for nursing for the Sixty-seventh Combat Support Hospital, Wuerzburg, Germany, commander for Medical Task Force 67 assigned to provide comprehensive medical support to the National Support Element in Tazar, Hungary, during Operation Joint Endeavor, and finally commander, MEDDAC and director of health services, Fort Jackson, SC. In every assignment, Brigadier General Bester was recognized for his loyal, dedicated, and proactive leadership throughout the military community.

In 2000, Brigadier General Bester was appointed the twenty-first chief of the Army Nurse Corps. As chief, Brigadier General Bester planned, implemented and monitored all policy and programs for 3,415 Army nurses and over 13,000 reserve component nurses. He successfully implemented numerous recruiting and retention initiatives in his tireless pursuit to combat the impact of the nationwide nursing shortage on the nurse corps and the Army civilian nurse workforce. Brigadier General Bester was instrumental in obtaining congressional sanctioned direct hire authority for civilian registered nurses. This dramatically improved the fill rate of professional nurses in Army medical treatment facilities. With regard to recruiting Army nurses, Brigadier General Bester championed expansion of Reserve officer training corps nursing scholarships to almost 200 schools across the country and expanded the number of available slots for the Army Enlisted Commissioning Program for Nursing from 55 to 75. To meet the growing need for nurse educators and researchers, Brigadier General Bester and his Federal Nursing Service colleagues worked with the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and Congress to successfully establish a Ph.D. program in nursing science and a perioperative clinical nurse specialist program at the Graduate School of Nursing.

As the Assistant Surgeon General for Force Projection and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Health Policy and Services, Brigadier General Bester

shouldered the most complex policy and readiness issues. He consistently achieved positive results by fostering harmonious working relationships within the Pentagon and the Office of the Army Surgeon General. Brigadier General Bester was at the forefront of efforts to articulate the "medical position" to Army colleagues, Congress, TRICARE beneficiaries, and the sister services. He effectively oversaw and synchronized the conversion of the 91B and 91C Military Occupational Specialty into the 91W Future Medic—one of the most important and wide-ranging medical training initiatives of the past 20 years. Brigadier General Bester also championed the medical re-engineering initiative changes to the medical force structure, quality management techniques for the Army Medical Department, improved civilian personnel hiring incentives, and improved Reserve component integration.

As commander of the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, Brigadier General Bester effectively guided the only worldwide, medically matrixed health promotion and preventive medicine organization within the Department of Defense. He accelerated a transformation that enhanced the center's relevance to the Army and its ability to deliver effective support across the operational spectrum in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America. His emphasis on deployment occupational and environmental health issues, and the provision of operationally focused, health risk assessment guidance to combatant commanders within an operational risk management framework, directly contributed to saving the lives and health of our deployed soldiers in Turkey, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Persian Gulf.

Brigadier General Bester's accomplishments are eloquent testimony to his talent, dedication, loyalty, and determination to ensure that the best possible medical and preventive medicine support is always available to our soldiers, civilians, and family members. Brigadier General Bester has established a legacy of superior performance to be emulated by all, which reflects exceptionally on himself, the United States Army, the Department of Defense, and the United States of America. I extend my deepest appreciation on behalf of a grateful nation for his dedicated service. Congratulations to my friend, Brigadier General Bill Bester. I wish him Godspeed.●

IN MEMORY OF SEBASTIAN GARAFALO

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I speak in memory of the Honorable Sebastian Garafalo, who passed away on Wednesday, January 21, 2004 at 72 years of age.

Seb, as he was known, served the people of Middletown, CT for over 31 years, including four terms as one of its most popular mayors. This was no small feat. Seb Garafalo was a Republican

who was the mayor of a city with three Democrats for every Republican. But his hard work and his kind spirit won him supporters and friends on both sides of the aisle. Seb Garafalo was a friend and a gentleman first, and a politician second.

From an early age, Seb Garafalo was an individual who wanted to make a difference. As soon as he graduated high school in 1951, he enlisted in the Connecticut National Guard. During the Korean War, he was called up to active duty and was stationed in Germany. He reached the rank of SSG before being honorably discharged. For many years to come, Seb Garafalo would be intimately involved in veterans' causes in Middletown, including the founding of the Middletown Military Museum, Inc. just this past year. Until the day he died, Seb Garafalo never forgot his military service and those with whom he served.

After years of participating in community organizations, from the Elks Lodge and the American Legion to the St. Sebastian Church and the Holy Name Society, Seb Garafalo began his formal public service when he was elected to the Middletown Common Council in 1973. In 1983, he was elected to his first term as mayor. He would hold that post until 1989, and then again from 1991 to 1993. Seb helped renovate Middletown's schools, roads, and parks, and took the lead on building a trash-to-energy plant. He even put his own life on the line when he wore a wire for the Middletown Police Department while meeting with individuals suspected of organized crime.

After his final term as mayor, Seb spent 6 years as Middletown's tax collector, and then was elected, once again, to the Common Council. In 2001, he closed out a long and accomplished career by serving as assistant district director for my friend and colleague Congressman ROB SIMMONS.

Seb's commitment to service was obviously extraordinary. And that kind of commitment extended to his private life as well. Seb was married to his high school sweetheart, Marie, and they had two sons, Michael and Joseph. When Seb was diagnosed with the disease that eventually would take his life, he was given six months to live. But he was determined to be there with Marie to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. So for 2½ years, Seb Garafalo fought cancer with that dream in mind. And just a few months before his passing, he and Marie did have that golden anniversary celebration.

On behalf of the United States Senate, I offer my thanks to Seb Garafalo for his years of service to the people of Middletown. And I offer my most heartfelt sympathies to Marie, Michael, Joseph, Seb's sister Josephine, his grandchildren and great grandchild, and to everyone who knew and loved him.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN A. WILLIAMS
SR. OF PADUCAH

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to John A. Williams, Sr. of Paducah, KY for his diligence and commitment to the community in which he lives. Mr. Williams was honored for his civic work at the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner on Thursday, January 29, 2004.

In 1965, John A. Williams founded Computer Services, Inc., CSI, under the initiative to provide the finest bank date processing services in Western Kentucky and Illinois. CSI, which began with six employees and three customers, was an agreement of three Paducah banks to consolidate for the initiative. Mr. Williams continues as chairman of the board for CSI, which is now ranked as the fourth largest bank data processing company in the nation and continues to bring new technology and jobs to the region it serves.

Additionally, Mr. Williams has served on the board of every major business, civic, and cultural organization in Paducah. He is currently on the board of Paducah Power Systems, and has served on a number of Governors' Commissions for the Commonwealth.

The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce named Mr. Williams Distinguished Citizen for his work in securing money for the Luther F. Carson Four Rivers Center, leading a campaign that raised more the \$9 million for the performing arts center. The citizens of Paducah are proud of the beautiful, downtown Four Rivers Center and appreciate Mr. Williams and the other citizens that put so much time and energy into securing the funds for the center. The center opens at the end of February and will provide the entire region with a wide variety of entertainment, cultural, and educational programs.

Mr. Williams is a tribute to Paducah and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky. I thank the Senate for allowing me to recognize him and the contributions he has made.●

BILL WORKMAN

• Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Mr. President, thank you for this opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of one of my constituents Bill Workman.

I rise to commend him for his previous work as Mayor of Greenville, SC from 1983 to 1995, his many years of tireless community activities, and his most recent position as vice president of South Carolina District Operations of Piedmont Natural Gas Company. He is scheduled to retire from this position in February 2004.

Mr. Workman also serves as president of the Greenville County Research and Technological Development Corporation and as charter chairman of the Greenville Area Development Corporation.

Over the past few decades, Greenville and upstate South Carolina have slow-

ly been transformed from being a textile capital of the world to a much more diversified economy. Since 1985, engineering, telecommunications, retail and knowledge-based companies have joined manufacturing as major sources of new jobs. There is no doubt Greenville is now one of the Southeast regions' premier cities for business.

Bill Workman played a leading role in this evolution and has made many noteworthy contributions to Greenville and upstate South Carolina.

He served as a past president of the Municipal Association of South Carolina and is a recipient of the Order of the Palmetto, a graduate of Leadership South Carolina, and is listed in Who's Who in America. He was named the 1999 Nelson Mullins Business Person of the Year in Greenville and Volunteer of the Year for 2000-2001 by the South Carolina Economic Developers Association.

Mr. Workman is a graduate of The Citadel and served 2 years active duty. He has worked as a newspaper reporter for the Charleston News and Courier and the Greenville News. He later taught and served as dean of Allied Health Sciences at Greenville Technical College. He served 6 years on the school board of Greenville County and was a founder of the S.C. Literacy Association.

He served as executive assistant for natural resources and economic development for Gov. James B. Edwards. Mr. Workman's selfless efforts also include community economic analyses and siting studies involving hundreds of counties in North America.

He has two sons, three stepdaughters, and three grandchildren and is married to the former Patti Gage Fishburne of Walterboro.

We all appreciate his years of service to his community and wish him the very best in all his future endeavors. Mr. Workman may retire in February from his position with Piedmont Natural Gas, but as his past history has shown, he will never retire from his commitment to making Greenville a great place to live.●

NTCA 50th ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association as they celebrate their 50th anniversary. I take great pride in the fact that BEK Communications Cooperative of Steele, ND is among the founding members of NTCA. Forming soon after the Rural Electrification Administration, REA—today known as the Rural Utilities Service—was granted authority to make loans to telephone companies, BEK and its fellow members in the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, NTCA, have evolved from providing basic multiparty telephone service to offering a full array of advanced telecommunications services.

Rural telecommunications carriers owe a debt of gratitude to REA, and

those who sought to expand its role. The idea of expanding the scope and authority of the REA, began in the late 1930s when REA Administrator John Carmody wrote:

Personally, I have long felt there was a real opportunity for constructive assistance to rural people in the idea of Federal financing of farm telephone lines. It seems to me that the rural people have just as much right to up-to-date communication as they have to modern power. There's no question in my mind but that Government assistance will be required if the job is ever to be completed.

This idea remained just an idea until 1944 when Senator Lister Hill, a Democrat from Alabama, introduced legislation calling for the formation of the Rural Telephone Administration, modeled after the REA. Senator Hill was soon joined in his effort to bring telephone service to rural America by Representative W.R. "Bob" Poage, Democrat from Texas, who introduced similar legislation calling for the expansion of the existing REA to make telephone loans.

Following 4 years of failed attempts, Congress finally succeeded in passing the telephone amendments to the Rural Electrification Act. On October 28, 1949, President Harry Truman signed the measure into law, which granted the REA the authority to make loans for the extension and improvement of rural telephone service.

Soon thereafter, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, NRECA, created a telephone committee, composed of representatives of newly formed joint electric-telephone cooperative organizations. By 1954, representatives from these co-ops, with the encouragement of NRECA, decided that the time had come to form a separate national organization to represent telephone cooperatives.

On June 1, 1954, eight companies, including my constituent then known as BEK Mutual Aid Corporation, along with: Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative, Chase City, VA; Mark Twain Rural Telephone Company, Bethel, MO; Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative, Inc. Circle, MT; Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc. Metter, GA; Winnebago Cooperative Telephone Association, Lake Mills, IA, Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative Gainesboro, TN, and North Central Telephone Cooperative Lafayette, TN formed the National Telephone Cooperative Association, which was later renamed the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association.

BEK, whose name was formed by the initials of Burleigh, Emmons, and Kidder counties, was incorporated in 1952, and was one of the first recipients of telephone loans from the REA. In fact, the company received its first REA loan for \$371,000 in April 1952 to purchase and upgrade its Hazleton, ND exchange. In 1954, REA approved a second loan for \$1,499,000. This funding enabled BEK to expand their service territory with the purchase of several independent telephone companies and to