

THE LIFE OF PHIL ROOS

HON. JIM NUSSLE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a beloved member of the Dubuque, Iowa community. Phil Roos was truly a special teacher and coach and he was tragically taken from us at the age of 57. Phil leaves not only the lives of his family, but of those many students and athletes whose lives he touched for over 30 years. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize Phil and ask that the attached article from the Dubuque Telegraph Herald be placed along with my comments in the RECORD.

ROOS MADE EVERYONE FEEL SPECIAL

(By Bill Speltz)

Phil Roos had a special gift.

Oh sure, he was an excellent math teacher and tennis coach and one of the founding fathers of a strong intramural program at Hempstead. He was also a darn good athlete in his day, especially with a racket in his hand (legend has it he'd play his students in a game of badminton to 50, spot them 49 points and still win).

But there are a lot of good teachers, coaches and athletes out there. The fact Roos was all three is impressive, but it all seems small compared to his finest quality as a human being.

Phil was special because he made you feel good about yourself. He made you feel like you were an extraordinary person, and it motivated you to prove him right.

How do you replace someone like that? How do you make sense of Roos dying of brain cancer Sunday at the age of 57?

You don't.

"He had such a wonderful way of bonding with kids," said Natalie Nemmers, Roos' assistant coach for the boys tennis team the past three seasons. "We kind of built this family, and he would've done anything for the boys, because he was so proud of them."

"He used to get so nervous before meets. But he would never show it. He just wanted so much for the boys, and they knew he loved them."

Roos' Hempstead family stretched far beyond tennis players in his 33 years at the school. Between his teaching and an intramural program that has about 500 participants annually, countless young adults were touched by this upbeat, kind-hearted man.

"What a tremendous loss," Hempstead athletic director Harry Robbins said. "His students and his athletes just loved him, and the reason they loved him is because he was able to connect with them."

"The best way I can describe Phil Roos is he stood for all the right things in life. Great father, husband, role model for young people. Students would seek him out because he always had time to talk about whatever they wanted to talk about, just trying to help."

For all his tennis coaching success, Roos' most admirable moment may have come three years ago, when he ended a 15-year coaching retirement to help revive the Mustangs' struggling boys program. Not many would make the same move, mainly because tennis takes a ton of time and weather conditions in the spring are often cold and windy.

Concerned about all the time he would spend away from his family, Roos made Hempstead tennis a family affair. His son, seventh-grader Andrew, joined the team for practice every day. His "other" sons drank

in every bit of advice Phil offered, and the result is a program that's back on the upswing.

"A lot of times, on school (athletic) trips, guys will be fighting for the back seat of the bus because they never want to sit by the coach of the team," Hempstead senior Jason Burkle said. "For me, it was just the opposite with Coach Roos. I wanted to sit up front."

"What I liked most is the way he controlled the team, yet he still knew how to have a lot of fun."

For those who knew him, Roos' kindness was infectious and his calm demeanor admirable. Just ask Craig Olson, Hempstead girls tennis coach and Roos' former rival as leader of the Dubuque Senior boys tennis program in the 1980s.

"With him, there was no screaming or yelling, and he was the same way with his teaching," Olson said. "He'd inspire you."

"I was just tickled he came back to coach again these last few years. I remember when I first started out coaching, I was more of an enthusiastic, 'rah-rah' type of guy. Watching him, I learned patience."

Phil's spirit lives on in all his students, past and present, and all those who knew him. It lives on in his wife, Julie, and his best friend, son Andrew, who is truly a chip off the old block.

By the time Andrew is old enough to play his first high school tennis match, Phil's players are hoping to have the Hempstead courts named in the coach's honor. In the meantime, Phil's extended family will try to make some sense of his death at today's funeral.

That's going to be about as easy as trying to beat Phil in badminton.

"He made people," said Ryan Denman, Hempstead senior tennis player. "He taught us how to live our lives and taught us that it wasn't about winning or losing, but that we always gave 100 percent."

"It's going to be very rough playing tennis this season, from the first day to the last. We'll play the season for him."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BRENT RITTER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Brent Ritter, and thank him for enriching the lives of his Pueblo, Colorado community. As Pueblo's most distinguished singer, Brent has become a fixture in almost every musical event put on by the city. It is with great satisfaction and pride that I pay tribute to Brent for his many contributions to his community and state.

Brent's passion for singing developed during his youth while participating in his church choir, and has led him to a fulfilling career as a professional singer. His career took off while serving his country in the Air Force where he won local, national, and worldwide military talent shows. After Brent's service with the Air Force, he settled with his family in Pueblo, and soon became a fixture of the community through his performing in church choirs, with the Pueblo Symphony, and with local theater groups. Brent currently serves as Music Director for the Wesley United Methodist Church, and finds his most rewarding work singing at events where he is able to connect with the people in his community.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear Brent Ritter has a musical gift that he has used to greatly enhance his Pueblo community. His energy, big heart, and tremendous voice have become staples in Pueblo, and it is my privilege to recognize him today before this body of Congress and this nation. I would like to extend my thanks to Brent for being such a positive influence in Pueblo, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, on March 3, 2004 for rollcall vote 38, I was unavoidably detained. If I had been present, on rollcall vote No. 38, I would have voted "yea."

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RULING CONCERNING THE FCC

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to take note of the decision recently issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that upholds the intent of Congress in passing the Telecommunications Act of 1996. In the years since the Telecom Act was passed we have seen many important advances in the telecom sector, both technologically and in terms of lower prices for consumers. The Appeals Court found that the FCC did not comply with the Telecom Act when it voted 3-2 last year to adopt its Triennial Review Order. This marks the third time since 1996 that the FCC's rules have been rejected by U.S. Courts. The FCC's failure to get the rules right once again is damaging to consumers, the economy, and the industry. The seemingly never ending intra-industry legal and regulatory battles are resulting in continued uncertainty in the telecommunications and technology sectors. What is at stake is consumer choice, deployment of new and advanced technology, and the livelihood of tens of thousands of workers whose jobs have been lost in this telecommunications recession.

I urge not only the FCC but also the industry itself to end these battles and to devise rules that make sense and which will provide the certainty and incentives needed to free up major investment in the telecommunications sector. Consumers and workers will win only when this happens.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ROENA FRANK

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

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Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise before you to pay tribute to