

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL JONATHAN F. BLAIR

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave young man from Fort Wayne. Jonathan Blair, 21 years old, died on November 19 in Bayji, Iraq when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle during a combat operation. With his entire life before him, Jonathan risked everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

Remembered for his thoughtfulness and patriotism, Jonathan joined the Army shortly after graduating from Elmhurst High School in 2002. The attacks of September 11 inspired him to consider military service, but Jonathan also saw the military as a gateway to further knowledge and a potential ticket to a higher education. One of his high school teachers fondly recounted to the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette that Jonathan was a patriotic and "cerebral" student who would contemplate fully any answer in class. Another teacher remembered, "Jonathan challenged you as a teacher to make him better as a student; he was just a really interesting kid."

Jonathan was killed while serving his country in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell, KY.

Today, I join Jonathan's family and friends in mourning his death. While we struggle to bear our sorrow over this loss, we can also take pride in the example he set, bravely fighting to make the world a safer place. It is his courage and strength of character that people will remember when they think of Jonathan, a memory that will burn brightly during these continuing days of conflict and grief.

Jonathan was known for his dedication to his family and his love of country. Today and always, Jonathan will be remembered by family members, friends, and fellow Hoosiers as a true American hero, and we honor the sacrifice he made while dutifully serving his country.

As I search for words to do justice in honoring Jonathan's sacrifice, I am reminded of President Lincoln's remarks as he addressed the families of the fallen soldiers in Gettysburg: "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." This statement is just as true today as it was nearly 150 years ago, as I am certain that the impact of Jonathan's actions will live on far longer than any record of these words.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Jonathan Blair in the official record of the U.S. Senate for his service to

this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy, and peace. When I think about this just cause in which we are engaged and the unfortunate pain that comes with the loss of our heroes, I hope that families like Jonathan's can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah, who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Jonathan.

REMEMBERING ARMY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS  
MICHAEL C. PARROTT

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise to reflect for a moment on the service and life of SFC Michael Parrott of Tinmath, CO. Sergeant First Class Parrott was tragically killed last month while serving this Nation in Balad, Iraq. Today would have been Sergeant First Class Parrott's 50th birthday.

Mike Parrott was a native of Canton, NC, where he graduated from Pisgah High School in 1974 and went on to earn a degree from the University of North Carolina at Asheville. His 6-foot-tall frame made him hard to miss in a crowd, but it was his easy smile and brown eyes that first drew the attention of his wife, Meg, when she was a student at UNC-Asheville almost two decades ago. Mike Parrott was honest, opinionated, and unafraid to speak his mind. His wife, Meg, knew how unique Mike was when she discovered that he kept Voltaire in his bathroom. They celebrated their 19th wedding anniversary last month.

Mike Parrott was an avid fan of the outdoors and could often be found biking, camping and hiking, activities he and Meg often enjoyed together. Mike rode his bike to and from work, and made it a point to run every day. In fact, this past year, on the day of the Leadville Marathon, Sergeant First Class Parrott laced up his running shoes and ran 26.2 miles in the blazing Iraqi heat.

Sergeant First Class Parrott was a true American patriot. Sergeant First Class Parrott served in this Nation's armed forces for more than 15 years in active and reserve duties. Three years ago, he signed up for the National Guard, looking to reach his 20 years of service. He was a member of the 115th Field Artillery Brigade in Cheyenne and was on loan to the 28th Infantry of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard at the time of his death. He had already completed a year's tour in Kuwait with his Wyoming unit but signed up as a loaner to return to Iraq.

Sergeant First Class Parrott was an inspiring leader for the men who served under him, some less than half his age. They looked up to his leadership and calm, affectionately calling him "The Old Man." Sergeant First Class Parrott believed that he had a mission to help younger soldiers. He looked forward to being a mentor.

Sergeant First Class Parrott and his wife both disagreed with U.S. policy in Iraq, but he did not shrink from his duties. Instead, he rose honorably to serve his Nation in the time it called for his aid.

Mr. President, what becomes clear upon reflection is that SFC Mike Parrott loved this Nation. He loved its spirit of dissent and discussion. He loved its wide open spaces and natural wonders. He loved it for providing him the opportunity to be with his wife and family, his friends of so many years that gave him so much. He was the embodiment of Voltaire's remark: "I may disagree with what you have to say, but I shall defend, to the death, your right to say it."

To the family of SFC Mike Parrott, including his wife Meg Corwin and his mother Suzanne Parrott, know that the thoughts and prayers of an entire Nation are with you today. We are grateful for Mike's courageous service to the people of America and Iraq. The values he lived by will remain far beyond our time on this Earth, a humble legacy that will live on in every life he touched.

A FALLEN HERO: ARMY SERGEANT LUIS R.  
REYES

Mr. President, I also wish to reflect on a life of promise taken too soon from us—Army Sergeant Luis Reyes of my home State of Colorado.

Sergeant Luis Reyes was 26 years old, a member of the 947th Engineer Company of the Colorado National Guard based out of Durango. He was killed in Kuwait while on his way to Iraq.

A native of Denver, Luis was a husband of 6 years to his wife, Christina, and a father of two: Sienna and Nikko. Luis was devoted to his family and community, a man known for helping his friends and neighbors with repair jobs and who loved to work on his truck.

After graduating Montbello High School in Denver in 1997, Luis enlisted with the Army and married Christina after finishing basic training. He had just re-enlisted for another 3-year term with the Army and in one of his last phone calls home marveled to his wife about his service in the Middle East, telling her it was a "whole other world."

When Sergeant Reyes was killed, his unit was on its way to help Iraq with the complicated task of rebuilding its infrastructure and roads. It was an important mission, which will allow the far-flung villages of Iraq to connect once more with each other and foster the blessings of liberty.

A friend of Sergeant Reyes remembered him as a man who would go "above and beyond" the call of duty. With his service to this Nation, Luis Reyes did just that. He could have stayed with his young family in the safe confines of Aurora. But he had a passion for serving this Nation and accepted great risk on behalf of all of us.

Isaiah 25:8 teaches us, "The Lord will swallow up death in victory; and the

Lord will wipe away tears from off all faces.' To Sergeant Reyes's wife, Christina, and his two young children, his mother Tomasa and his brother Roger, the thoughts and prayers of an entire Nation go with you during this difficult time. Luis served this Nation with honor and distinction and has left all of us forever in his debt. For that, we all offer our humble thanks.

TRIBUTE TO SPECIALIST GREGORY L. TULL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of our country's bravest, SPC Gregory L. Tull of Pocohontas, IA. Specialist Tull sadly died November 25, 2005, after an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee in Al Anbar province in Iraq. Specialist Tull served with the Iowa Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery based in Storm Lake, IA. He was only 20 years old.

I ask that all Americans join me in remembering and honoring Specialist Tull. He was an upstanding and courageous soldier who fell far before his time. Our country has survived these many years due to the brave men and women who have served in our Armed Forces, and it greatly saddens me to announce that another young man has made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and for the freedom of Iraq.

LTC Gregory Hapgood of the Iowa Army National Guard remembered that Specialist Tull was "a good guy that didn't shrink from responsibility," and was someone who "wanted in on the action." During this crucial time in America's history, we should all remember Greg Tull's courage and dedication to his country.

We should also stand with Specialist Tull's parents, Eileen and Gary, and his brother, Bryan, and all his family in their time of grief. Our thoughts and prayers also go out to Gregory's friends, classmates, and all others who were lucky enough to know him. Greg Tull did not die in vain, but rather gave his life defending America and promoting freedom around the world. He will be sorely missed but also fondly remembered.

#### WORLD AIDS DAY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, December 1, was World AIDS Day, and I wanted to take this time to both acknowledge the good work that is done around world to prevent and treat this disease and to acknowledge the need is still great around the world and in our own country to fund prevention, treatment, and support.

AIDS kills 3 million people each year, and 13,500 people are newly infected each day. AIDS has already left 15 million orphans in its wake. The theme of World AIDS Day 2005 was "Keeping the Promise." To date, the United States has led the world in contributions to the Global Fund, providing one-third of all contributions. However, the statistics tell us that while we have come far, we still have

far to go in preventing this tragic disease, including here at home.

We have experienced many medical miracles in the form of drugs that help people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS live healthier longer. Yet, we seem to be able to fund less and less of the services that help individuals stay healthy and maintain the structure of their lives.

I was recently visited by constituents who were either HIV positive or had full-blown AIDS. They told many moving stories about how their lives had been made better by programs that help them get health services, pay for their drugs, rent and provide other support services. Many of these programs are through the Ryan White Act.

The unmet need grows daily. For example, in Portland, the Russell Street Dental Clinic provides about \$60,000 worth of services to HIV patients each month compared with about \$15,000 a month 3 years ago. In 2003, a study was released that documented the service gaps in Oregon. The list of services for which there is not enough funding to meet the need is long and includes dental care, help with legal affairs, counseling, housing and help in paying rent or utilities, and transportation.

Despite an increased number of people living with HIV/AIDS, Ryan White funding has decreased. Many of the programs my constituents tell me help them are through Title I of the Ryan White Act. This title provides the vital core services of Medical care, mental health and substance abuse treatment, dental care, and case management.

The Oregon AIDS Drug Assistance Program has had to change eligibility and take other steps to limit enrollment because of budget constraints. This program helps individuals with their drug costs. I view it as a wise investment because it helps people stay healthier, working, and productive.

What I have heard from my constituents is sheer frustration that the programs they know work are yet again on the chopping block. I share their frustration. An investment in health care, whether abroad or in our own country, an investment in a community and in making that community healthier. I hope Congress keeps this in mind as we face difficult decisions about funding in the future.

I ask unanimous consent that my remarks be printed in the RECORD.

#### HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR PAKISTAN

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, this past year, the world has witnessed multiple natural disasters including the tsunami in South Asia and Hurricane Katrina in the gulf coast. Most recently, the devastating earthquake that struck northern Pakistan in early October has been equally catastrophic. More than 73,000 people were killed in the immediate aftermath, while tens of thousands more were wounded. Just as troubling, millions more have been left

homeless having lost their life's possessions in this tragic event.

As Pakistan approaches the bitter winter months, many are still without adequate shelter. The United Nations estimates that at least 350,000 will remain in the mountainous regions of Pakistan through the winter and will require sufficient food and materials to winterize their tents in order to survive. Exacerbating the situation is the recent cancellation of helicopter sorties that deliver humanitarian relief due to deteriorating weather conditions. In addition, UNICEF is conducting a massive immunization campaign to vaccinate individuals from the measles following an outbreak at a camp outside of Muzaffarabad in early December. For all these reasons, it imperative that countries honor their commitments to this ravaged country to ensure humanitarian relief is provided to the victims of this tragedy.

To date, the international community and private industries have pledged aid for relief and reconstruction, and the United States has led the effort. After recognizing that our original pledge of \$50 million would be inadequate to assist the victims, the United States substantially increased the amount of aid to Pakistan by pledging a total of \$510 million.

In addition, the United States has provided rescue teams and aircraft to assist in locating victims in remote areas. The U.S. military has helped deliver humanitarian supplies, as well as evacuating casualties from the region. Currently a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, MASH, unit has been established in the most devastated parts of the country to perform urgent surgery and attend to less critical patients.

While I applaud these efforts, we should remember that Pakistan has been a critical ally in the war on terror. Unfortunately, our image in the Muslim world has been distorted through propaganda and misperceptions of America's intent in the Middle East. Humanitarian aid can assist in dispelling these myths and will clearly demonstrate that the American people are deeply compassionate toward all those in need.

With the upcoming winter months, it will be vital that the international community continue to honor the commitments it has made to Pakistan. I believe that the United States should lead these efforts. We have a moral obligation to reach out and assist those who are so desperately in need, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure the victims of this earthquake receive adequate humanitarian assistance.

#### ALLOWING A CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the future of Air Force TSgt. Jamie Dana and her working military dog Rex.