

SPECIALIST VAL JOHN BORM

Mr. President, I rise today to honor Army SPC Val John Borm of Sidney, NE.

Specialist Borm graduated from Sidney High School in 2005. In his free time, his father Larry Borm says he liked to play computer games and was an avid paintball competitor. After graduating from high school, Specialist Borm enlisted in the Army. He was serving as an infantryman in B Company, 2nd Battalion with the 35th Infantry Division, based at Fort Shafter, HI.

On Thursday, June 14, 2007, Specialist Borm passed away when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle during operations in Kirkuk province. Two other soldiers were killed, and one was injured in the same attack. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, and other military honors. Specialist Borm was 21 years old.

In addition to his father, Specialist Borm is survived by his mother Lolita and his sister Kimberly, both of Sidney. I offer my sincere condolences to SPC Val John Borm's family. He made the ultimate and most courageous sacrifice in the name of freedom and hope to defend liberty. Specialist Borm was a man of incredible bravery; he will be forever remembered as a hero who sacrificed everything for his fellow countrymen and -women.

SERGEANT ADAM G. HEROLD

Mr. President, I rise today to honor Army SGT Adam G. Herold of Omaha, NE.

Sergeant Herold attended St. Cecilia Elementary and Omaha Roncalli High School. He earned his high school equivalency certificate in 2004 and joined the Job Corps in Utah to learn a trade. In 2005, he enlisted in the Army and first served in Iraq in October 2006.

On Sunday, June 10, 2007, while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, based in Fort Richardson, AK, Sergeant Herold passed away from injuries received from the detonation of an improvised explosive device near Karbala. Two other soldiers were also killed in the attack. Then-Specialist Herold was posthumously promoted to sergeant and was awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Good Conduct Award. He was 23 years old.

Sergeant Herold is survived by his parents, Lance and Debra Herold, and his brothers, Andy and Kyle Herold, all of Omaha. I offer my sincere condolences to the family and friends of SGT Adam Herold. He made the ultimate and most courageous sacrifice for our nation. I join all Americans in grieving the loss of this remarkable young man and know that Sergeant Herold's passion for serving, his leadership, and his selflessness will remain a source of inspiration for us all.

SPECIALIST JOSIAH HOLLOPETER

Mr. President, I rise today to honor SPC Josiah Hollopeter of Valentine, NE.

Specialist Hollopeter was born in Ainsworth and grew up in the Valentine area. He graduated from Valentine High School in 1998. Before joining the service, he worked construction jobs in Omaha, NE, and San Diego, CA. He also spent many summers working for a canoe outfitter along Nebraska's Niobrara River. Driven by a desire to join other troops fighting in Iraq after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks; to further his education; and to follow the example of his younger brother's service, 1LT Tyler Hollopeter, as an Army helicopter pilot in Iraq, Specialist Hollopeter enlisted in the Army in January 2006. But simply joining the Army was not all Specialist Hollopeter wanted to achieve; he also strived to become an Army sniper. According to his father, Ken Hollopeter, of Valentine, his skill as a hunter landed him on a sniper team. "There's a 60 or 70 percent dropout rate in that program. It's a lot of emotional strength, the ability to concentrate and focus on one goal; he'd accomplished most of that in life," said his father.

Specialist Hollopeter completed basic training at Fort Knox, KY. He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, based in Fort Hood, TX. On Thursday, June 14, 2007, while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Specialist Hollopeter passed away in Balad after suffering wounds when his four-man sniper team came under small-arms fire in al-Muqadiyah. He was 27 years old and had been serving in Iraq since October.

In addition to his father and brother, Specialist Hollopeter is survived by his wife, Heather Hollopeter, of Killeen, Texas; and his mother, Kelly Hollopeter, sister, Anna Hollopeter, and nephew, Kalen, all of Valentine.

I offer my sincere condolences to SPC Josiah Hollopeter's family and friends. He gave his life to save and honor the liberties of America, and his selfless passion and relentless determination to achieve this end will not be forgotten. Specialist Hollopeter will be forever remembered as a hero who sacrificed everything for his fellow countrymen and women.

STAFF SERGEANT KENNETH E. LOCKER, JR.

Mr. President, I rise today to honor Army SSG Kenneth E. Locker, Jr., of Burwell, NE.

Staff Sergeant Locker enlisted for military service while he was still in high school. His father remembers that serving "was probably the greatest joy in his life." He added that Locker viewed his military service as part of his responsibility as a father to not only his own children but to all children, remarking that "I'm fighting for the children, Dad—mine, yours, theirs, everybody's—that they may have a safer world to grow up in."

In January of this year, Locker made a trip back home after an injury he sustained the prior year when his humerus was struck by a land mine. His father remembered that during that visit, both he and his son felt it would be the last time they were together.

While serving with the 82nd Airborne Division, Staff Sergeant Locker passed away after a suicide bomb exploded on his base, northeast of Baghdad, on April 23, 2007. He was 28 years old.

Together with his father, Staff Sergeant Locker leaves behind three young sons, ages 7, 4, and 2; two sisters, a half-brother, and a half-sister. My sincere condolences go out to the family and friends of this brave servicemember. I join our Nation in grieving the loss of a true Nebraska hero and in celebrating his memory, his passion for service, his commitment to our Nation's future, and his love of our country.

MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT OF 2007

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Early in the morning of June 2, 2007, in Lowell, MA, three men severely beat 22-year-old James Nickola for being gay. Nickola, a transsexual, was walking alone on his way home from a nightclub when the three men began to follow him. When the men started to yell homophobic epithets, Nickola says he quickened his pace, but the men were able to catch up to him about 200 feet from a police substation. The men then attacked, hitting Nickola repeatedly in the face, knocking him down, and continuing to beat him. The assailants, whose attack partially severed Nickola's lip, allegedly continued to utter homophobic slurs and told him, "we don't want your kind in this neighborhood."

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Matthew Shepard Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

REMEMBERING CHARLES W. LINDBERG

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to remember a North Dakota hero who passed away last month.

About 3 miles straight west of this Senate Chamber lies the Iwo Jima memorial. Its centerpiece is a statue of six men raising an American flag to