

leave behind a continuing resolution so we can limp along for another few weeks without addressing the serious responsibility every Congress faces. So we will not only, in a new Congress, face a new agenda, we are going to have to finish the unfinished business of this Republican Congress.

Mr. President, I yield floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS GREGORY ROGERS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor this afternoon to honor Army SFC Gregory Rogers. Gregory Rogers was from Deer Park, OH. He was killed on April 9, 2006, when a roadside bomb detonated near his humvee in Iraq. He was serving in his third tour of duty in Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team. He was 42 years of age when he died.

Gregory Rogers grew up in Deer Park and graduated from Deer Park High School. During his 22-year career in the Army, he received dozens of service medals, including the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Achievement Medal.

After high school, Gregory worked with his uncle in vending. Although Gregory initially tried this career path, he could not ignore his passion—to serve in the U.S. Army. So he joined the military. His brother Kevin recalls that "It's what he lived for."

A career soldier, Gregory played an integral role in the first gulf war in 1991 and had also spent time serving in Afghanistan and in South America. He was in the initial invasion force in Iraq and spent a few years as a drill instructor and as an airborne Ranger, jumping out of combat helicopters.

He was highly regarded by all who knew him. Army BG John Bartley said, "We tried so hard to bring Gregory home unharmed. He will always be in our hearts and prayers. He will always be an American hero." Many of Gregory's comrades wrote letters about him, calling him "a true soldier in every sense of the word."

Gregory's father, Luther Rogers, said this about his son's commitment to service:

Being a soldier was what he always wanted to do, and he always did his job.

Gregory's brother Kevin echoed this sentiment, saying:

[Gregory] liked traveling the world; he was dedicated to his country.

Gregory came from a large family and was extremely close to his father and his mother Donna, as well as his two brothers, Jeff and Kevin, and his sister Tammy. His brothers communicated with Gregory almost daily through e-mails and instant messages. His older brother Jeff wants Gregory to know that "We're very proud of him, we miss him, and we love him."

Although he intended to retire in 2003, Gregory received orders to stay in

the service and ended up serving two additional tours of duty. His brother Jeff remembers that "[Gregory] believed in what he did—[and that was] making a difference."

Once he completed his last tour in December 2006, Gregory was finally going to retire. He would be able to spend more time with the love of his life, his wife Sandy, and their two daughters, Whitney and Chelsea. Tragically, however, in 2005, Sandy died. Although she had suffered from type I diabetes since childhood, Sandy had just received a new insulin pump and her sugar levels were coming under control. Connie Root, a caretaker for Sandy during her illness, said her passing came as a shock. "Greg loved his wife very much," recalls Connie, "and he took care of her and was always very supportive."

Even in the face of his beloved wife's death, Gregory wanted to give hope to another family. Before his wife Sandy died, she and Gregory had agreed to donate her insulin pump to a child who needed it. Gregory wrote that if Sandy would have had the pump when she was a child, she would still have been alive today. Beth Smith, a senior diabetes management consultant for MedTronic, which manufactured insulin pumps, said that in the many years of working with diabetic patients, she has never known anyone to donate a pump specifically to a child.

Before Gregory Rogers could choose a recipient for his wife's insulin pump, and just 2 months after her death, he was deployed to Iraq. While there, Gregory received information about Jessica Burkhart, a young girl in need of Sandy's insulin pump, and he decided to donate it to her. He chose Jessica as the recipient of his wife's pump. Just 13 years old, Jessica Burkhart had been diagnosed with type I diabetes and needed the pump to regulate her blood sugar levels. Her family could not afford a new pump, which costs around \$6,000. When Jessica heard the news that she would receive Sandy's insulin pump, she could not wait to thank the man who was giving her new hope in life. Jessica and Gregory then became pen pals. In her first e-mail, an elated Jessica wrote:

Thank you so much for choosing me over so many people. Thank you so much again.

Rogers responded a week later, writing:

I know you must hate shots. I know I hated my wife struggling with her sugar and having to take sometimes up to 14 shots a day, so I know what a pain it must be.

It turned out that Jessica and Gregory shared something other than the struggle against diabetes. They both loved softball. Gregory told Jessica he loved the game and looked forward to coming home so he could play again. In every e-mail, Jessica thanked Gregory for the pump. She updated him on how it was already changing her life for the better. He always signed his letters to her "Your friend Greg." Gregory's father Luther learned about the donation after his son died. He said:

I'm really proud of my son for doing that.

Mr. President, Jessica Burkhart is just one of many who will miss Gregory Rogers. No sacrifice was too great for the man who dedicated his life to protecting his country, his family, and the life of an unknown child in one of his darkest hours.

He was a good son, husband, brother, and father. Though he will be missed tremendously, he will never be forgotten.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Gregory's family in our thoughts and in our prayers.

(Mr. COCHRAN assumed the Chair.)

STAFF SERGEANT GORDON G. SOLOMON

Mr. President, I rise today to honor a fellow Ohioan and a brave Marine who gave his life in service to our Nation. On August 24, 2006, Marine SSG Gordon G. Solomon was killed by an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq. He was 35 years old.

Growing up in Fairborn, OH, Gordon was eager to begin serving his country in the military. He graduated from Fairborn High School in 1990 and joined the Marines in June of that same year. For Gordon, there was simply no time to waste.

In April 2006, before leaving for Iraq, Gordon joined the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, based out of Camp Lejeune, NC. Once in Iraq, he was selected to work with the Iraqi Army as a part of the Military Transition Team.

As an infantry unit leader in charge of a platoon, Gordon left a great legacy. His heroism and leadership were evident to all, and his service earned him many awards and medals. His decorations are too numerous to list here, but they include a Purple Heart with a gold star, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, a Combat Action Ribbon, an Iraqi Campaign Medal, and a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Those who knew and loved Gordon will always remember him for his dedication to his friends. Back in 1920, MG John A. Lejeune stressed the importance of camaraderie in the Marines Corps. He wrote that "the spirit of comradeship and brotherhood in arms, which has traditionally existed throughout the ranks of the Marines Corps, is a vital characteristic of the Corps. It must be fostered and kept alive. . . ."

Over 85 years later, those words still hold true today. Looking at the lives of Marines, like Gordon, we can truly say that they have never lost the spirit of comradeship and brotherhood. It is certainly alive today.

On September 8, 2006, Gordon's life was honored—along with six of his Marine brothers—at a memorial service held at a chapel in Iraq. More than 200 Marines and sailors attended the service, where the seven rifles were placed in front of the chapel, each inverted

with the helmets resting on top. Identification tags for each Marine hung from the rifles.

Gordon's friend and fellow Marine, SSG Frank Lipsak from Lima Company, spoke about Gordon during the service. He remembered how Gordon became known for always being a team player. That's simply the type of person Gordon was—always willing to work with others, always willing to do his best for the greater good. "He and I became pretty good friends in the short time that he was with us," the Staff Sergeant recalled. "When you talked to Gordon Solomon you were dealing with a man, a Marine, and a staff non-commissioned officer—in that order."

He also said that even after Gordon left Lima Company, he still made time to come back and visit with his old company. This is what he said:

[Gordon] would come back to our company area from time to time to hang out with us and see how things were going with our Marines. I have faith that Gordon is in a better place. He was our brother, and we miss him dearly. Our prayers are with his wife, son, and the rest of his family.

At the memorial service, LT Todd S. Desgrosseilliers, the battalion's commanding officer, spoke of the bravery and courage that Gordon and his fellow fallen Marines exhibited.

Look no further for heroes. We know seven of them. . . . We memorialize them because, in the end, they were true to their word. They swore an oath that they would follow orders and defend our Nation against all enemies foreign and domestic. They gave a part of themselves to be a part of something larger than themselves. We honor their sacrifice and their courage in the face of danger. They will forever be with us.

Unquestionably, Gordon Solomon was a man who believed in the greater good. He served America selflessly—more concerned for the safety and well-being of others than for his own. He defined bravery and courage.

When I think of the sacrifice made by SSG Gordon Solomon, I think of words once spoken by one of our country's greatest leaders, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, when he said:

Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.

Indeed, Gordon Solomon never lied down on those tracks. Instead, he was moving into the future, making history as he went. He was wise, and he was brave. With his life and actions, he changed the world so that we all live in a better and safer place. He did not sit idle. He did not rest. Rather, he willingly chose to serve our Nation the best way he knew how—as a United States Marine.

We are eternally grateful for the incredible service that Gordon provided during his time with the Marines. It is clear that he had a great impact on the men and women with whom he served. A dedicated Marine, who loved his family and his friends, Gordon will be deeply missed. His death is a loss to us all.

As 1LT Barry Edwards noted, "[When] losing a Marine, especially a

well-decorated one like this, the loss will be felt by the unit and Marine Corp-welt."

My wife, Fran, and I will continue to keep Gordon and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

SERGEANT ADAM KNOX

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Army Sergeant Adam Knox, who was killed on September 17, 2006, when his patrol encountered small-arms fire during combat operations in Baghdad, Iraq. Sergeant Knox was assigned to the 346th Psychological Operations Company, based in Columbus, OH. He was 21 years old.

Adam was born on January 26, 1985. As a life-long resident of the Columbus area, he developed strong relationships with his family and friends. Friends describe Adam as a "man's man," who loved rebuilding and taking care of cars, especially his prized possession—a Z28 Camaro that he would "scrub inside and out every weekend." Friends say that Adam's inclination to precision and order made him well-suited for the Army.

Adam graduated from Westland High School in Galloway, OH, and shared with his friends and family his love for the Ohio State University Buckeyes football team. In fact, Adam was probably one of the Buckeye's biggest fans—he would cheer so loudly during football games that his friends said "people two counties over could hear him." Adam even missed his homecoming dance at Westland High School to watch an Ohio State football game. While living in Columbus, Adam was also a dedicated worker at a Meijer store, Skyline Chili and, just before he mobilized with his unit, at a business-products wholesaler operation.

Adam loved his family and was very proud that his father, Jay Knox, had served in the Army. In fact, it was his father's service and influence that played a major part in Adam's own decision to join the Army Reserves in 2003, just after he graduated from high school. Although Adam's father Jay was sick with an inoperable spinal tumor when his son enlisted, he lived long enough to see Adam complete most of his training. After the loss of his father, Adam sought to continue his father's legacy of fighting for our country.

In March 2006, Adam deployed with the 346th Psychological Operations Company to Iraq. Part of the company's job is to help the United States develop relationships with the Iraqi people. Adam handed out candy and soccer balls to Iraqi children, and he ate dinner with Iraqi officials. Adam loved his mission and truly believed in what the military was doing in Iraq.

Indeed, Adam touched countless lives through his service to America and his support of the Iraqi people. Adam would often tell friends that people should focus on the good that individual soldiers were doing in Iraq. It was this optimism and strength that made Adam so special.

Even while serving in Iraq, Adam was still a die-hard fan of Ohio State football. During the Ohio State versus Texas game, he eagerly stayed up until 2 a.m., so he could watch. Adam also scheduled his leave around the Ohio State versus Michigan game, so he could be in Columbus at the time. Adam's goal was to attend The Ohio State University after his military service. I am certain that Adam would have reached this goal, and that his family and friends would have been very proud.

The same qualities that made Adam an outstanding human being made him an exceptional soldier. He was a dedicated and courageous soldier, who was greatly respected by his comrades. When his patrol team found a weapons cache, he was the first person to go through the entrance to the building. Adam's fellow soldiers looked to him for his bravery and support.

Because of his hard work and commitment in the field, Adam was quickly promoted to Sergeant on September 15, 2006, after only three years in the Army. He had told his mother that he had only about another week left of dangerous missions in Baghdad, and then he would be sent back to his unit to train other soldiers.

For his bravery and service to our Nation, Adam received multiple awards, including the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

MG Herbert Shuler, who commands the Army's Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs and who served with Adam, said this about him: "Every generation has its heroes. Adam Knox is a hero for this generation."

One of Adam's friends and fellow Marines, SGT Travis Watson, spoke at a memorial service in Adam's honor in Iraq. And on an Internet tribute website, Travis left the following message for Adam's family:

I send my sympathies for your loss of Adam. He was a dear friend of all of us at the 346th, and he will be terribly missed. I feel extremely fortunate to have spent the time I did with him and to have deployed with him. He was a very good soldier, and an even better friend.

Adam was an outstanding person—someone who was loved dearly by his family and friends, his fellow servicemembers, the children of Iraq, and simply anyone else who came in contact with him. Adam truly is a symbol of bravery, sacrifice, and honor. We owe it to him to celebrate his life—a life devoted to helping others and keeping us safe. It is in these good deeds that his memory lives on.

Adam Knox was a caring, brave, and selfless man. He will be remembered as a devoted son, a kind brother, and a beloved friend. The world is a better place because of him.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Adam's mother Deborah and his brothers Tom and Tony in our thoughts and prayers.

CORPORAL ROBERT WEBER

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a young Ohioan who lost his life while serving our Nation on his second tour of duty in Iraq—Army Corporal Robert Weber, from Western Hills. Corporal Weber was killed on September 30, 2006, when his military vehicle overturned. He was 22 years old.

Mr. President, as a soldier, Corporal Weber took great pride in reconstructing Iraq. He told his family that he and his fellow soldiers were building schools, roads, and churches. He was a brave young man who was deeply committed to serving and aiding our Nation. For his dedicated service in the Army and his unwavering courage, he earned the distinguished Bronze Star Medal.

Robert, who was called “Bobby” by those closest to him, grew up in Delhi Township outside Cincinnati, as the only child of Cathy and Martin Weber. Robin McIntosh, a family friend, describes Bobby as, “a sweet, caring young man, who died doing something he believed in. He knew the risks, but felt he was doing the right thing.”

Bobby was dedicated both to his family and to his country. His aunt, Debbie Niehoff, recalls that Bobby loved children and enjoyed spending time with his younger relatives, wrestling and playing. They all looked up to him.

Bobby’s love and dedication to children compelled him to dream about one day becoming a history teacher. To pursue his goal, he enlisted in the Army several months after graduating from Dater High School in 2003. Mary Ann Ellis, an English teacher at Dater High School who taught Bobby for 2 years, said she enjoyed his quiet nature and thorough work ethic. “He was very giving, loving, and funny,” she described.

Fresh out of basic and advanced training in May 2004, Bobby was assigned to the artillery battalion of the 3rd brigade, based in Fort Lewis, WA. Major Robert Bennett was the artillery battalion’s operations officer at the time. He said this about Bobby:

Weber was one of those kids who never met a stranger in his life. He was outgoing, very friendly. He was just a good kid. He always wanted to be helpful.

Jason Thompson, who served with Bobby, described their time together in a message on an Internet tribute website:

[Bobby] was a very good man. I served with Weber in his first tour to Iraq. He spent a lot of time on my truck as a gunner. He had a wonderful sense of humor and always kept a smile on my face. He will be missed.

Mr. President, between his first and second assignments in Iraq, Bobby stopped by his old high school. By the stories he shared there, you could tell that he really felt like he was doing the right thing. His former teacher, Mary Ann Ellis, explained that “he was very excited about serving his country . . . and proud of the work he was doing.” Principal Beverly Eby remem-

bers that during his visit, Bobby explained to staff that the tour conditions were very hot, but that “he had found his place.”

While e-mailing his family back home, Bobby described his work in his second tour in Iraq as tougher and more dangerous. He worked as a gunner and was put in many difficult situations. But his positive attitude kept him—and his fellow soldiers—going. Major Robert Bennett recalls one of his upbeat moments:

Even if we were in the field, [or] if it was raining like crazy, up to our knees in muck and mud, he’d say “Sir, it rained about five percent less in my tent last night, so I’d say things are looking up!”

Bobby was light-hearted and good-natured. He enjoyed teasing Major Bennett about baseball. Bobby was a fervent fan of the Cincinnati Reds and never missed a chance to rib his senior officer about baseball. Major Bennett remembers, “He used to give me unending grief about my beloved Chicago Cubs.”

Besides his passion for the Cincinnati Reds, Bobby also loved the mountains and talked about living there after this tour of duty was up. His aunt Debbie remembers when Bobby first spoke of joining the military. “I wasn’t thrilled about his decision,” she said. “But, he was very adamant about serving his country.” She remembers how proud Bobby was of the rebuilding work he was doing with the Army.

Of course Debbie, as well as Bobby’s other family and friends, will remember much more than just his bravery and service in Iraq. They will remember his good character and willingness to help anyone in need. Debbie remembers a snowstorm that hit during the 2004 Christmas season. Bobby came over to her house and shoveled her driveway. Afterwards, he went over to his aunt’s neighbor, who was home with her two children, and did the same for her. But he didn’t stop there. “He worked all day helping neighbors,” Debbie recalls.

Bobby and his bright blue eyes are dearly missed. His bravery is matched only by the size of his big heart. He was a good person, who was full of life and had a passion to serve.

I think the marquee outside his high school on the day of his funeral said it best: “Out of our lives. But not out of our hearts.”

Indeed, Mr. President, Bobby Weber will remain always in our hearts.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

MASTER SERGEANT BRAD CLEMMONS

Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of MSgt Brad Clemmons, from Chillicothe, OH. On August 21, 2006, Master Sergeant Clemmons died when his convoy in Iraq was hit by an improvised explosive device. At the time, he had been serving in Iraq for only two weeks. He was 37 years old.

Master Sergeant Clemmons was the husband of Rebecca and the devoted fa-

ther of Isabelle, Nicholas, and Zachary. He was also the son of David Clemmons and Pamela Clemmons, and the brother of Amy, Shelley, and Michael Clemmons. He is also survived by his grandparents—Cecil and Anne Clemmons, and Richard and Marjorie Graves.

Two days before his death, Brad’s wife Rebecca told him that he was going to be a dad for the fourth time. She remembers that Brad, a doting father, was delighted by the news. It is, indeed, tragic that Brad did not live to see his new baby. However, the child is expected to be born in April, and Rebecca says it will be named Brad if it’s a boy.

Even as a child, Brad felt drawn to the military. His childhood friend Marcus Bost remembers the days when he and Brad would play war games together; that is, if they weren’t already busy chasing snakes or catching crawdads in Stoney Creek. Brad’s mother recalls that her son would even pretend to make bombs out of tubes of Old Spice deodorant.

Explosives interested Brad. And it was this interest that led him to a successful career in the military, where he an explosive ordnance disposal craftsman—someone who helped diffuse bombs.

Brad entered the Air Force in 1987, after graduating from Southeastern High School. He had signed up to join even before his 18th birthday. According to his father, Brad had always known that the military was going to be his career.

Brad was deployed to Iraq as a weapons intelligence flight team leader for the 354th Civil Engineer Squadron, based in Alaska. His work in Iraq was both critical and dangerous. According to LTC Frank Freeman, Brad’s job was to lead his team in collecting crucial evidence and post-blast analysis of improvised explosive devices—IEDs—the number one killer in Iraq. Brad would then take what he learned and teach his fellow servicemen how to remain safe from IEDs.

Lieutenant Colonel Freeman particularly remembers Brad’s leadership capability. During a memorial ceremony for Brad in Iraq, he said the following:

One of his best qualities was [Brad’s] leadership. His team couldn’t wait to get back out after the incident, because they know that is what Sergeant Clemmons would want them to do. In times of war, we see human nature at its extremes. We see it at both its absolute worst and absolute best. Today, we honor one of the best. Brad was a true hero; a hero who put service before self and died in the line of duty.

Lieutenant Colonel Stan Giles, a chaplain, also remembered Brad’s extraordinary bravery, saying this:

Nearly 20 years ago, Brad entered perhaps the most dangerous of all career fields. He became an instructor in the most dangerous of all professions and then volunteered to work in the most dangerous of all neighborhoods here in Iraq.

Brad spent nearly 20 years of his life serving our Nation in the Air Force.

When he died, he was on a mission to analyze two reported IEDs—simply, he was working to keep his fellow servicemembers safe. For his bravery and dedication, Brad received both the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

Clearly, Brad was an exceptional Airman, but he was also an exceptional human being. Pastor F. Douglas Hudson is a reserve military chaplain in Rammstein, Germany, where Brad had once been stationed. Hudson came to know both Brad and his wife Rebecca well, and baptized their daughter, Isabelle. Hudson recalls that he was always impressed by Brad's wit, knowledge, and devotion to his family. This is what he said about Brad:

He was always talking about training the soldiers and getting them prepared for the worst-case scenario. If there's one thing I can say about Brad, I'm not sure if he was afraid of anything.

Brad was a wonderful man, completely dedicated to his family and those he loved. His parents recall that he was an honors student who consistently held himself to the very highest standards. Pam remembers, "He was one of the most honest people that I've ever met in my life."

It was while serving in Germany that Brad met Rebecca—the love of his life. She remembers that she was first drawn to Brad because of his way with children. "He was Uncle Brad to everybody," she recalls. As a couple, Brad and Rebecca were always happiest simply spending time with family and friends, doing things like going to church or playing board games.

Before Brad left for Iraq, Rebecca put her feelings into a poem she gave to him. This is what she wrote:

As you leave tomorrow, promise we won't be far apart.

As you leave tomorrow, promise the love will never part.

Brad kept this poem close to him until the day he died. According to Rebecca, "He didn't like you to know he was a sentimentalist. He carried it around in his wallet."

Brad will always be a hero to his family, not just because he served in Iraq, but simply because of his love and compassion. In Rebecca's words, Brad "was a great person. He was a great father, a great husband—a dedicated father, dedicated to serving his country."

Brad's mother remembers his last words to her—"That he loved me," she said. She continued, "And that's one thing that I always knew—that his family and his country were uppermost in his life and God is number one. And my son is with God tonight."

Mr. President, I was fortunate enough to attend the calling hours in Brad's memory. I am honored that I had the opportunity to meet his wife Rebecca, his mother Pam and his father David. As I learned talking to them, Brad Clemmons was, indeed, an exceptional human being, who was loved by his wife, his children, his parents, his family, his friends, his fellow Air Force airmen, and anyone else who

met him. His Aunt Jackie Arbaugh remembers that he simply had a magnetic personality. As she put it, "He was a fine young man. He was just loved by everyone who knew him."

Brad Clemmons was a good person—someone who will always be remembered both for his laughter and his intelligence. Because he lived, our world is a better place. My wife Fran and I will continue to keep his family in our thoughts and prayers.

SERGEANT JUSTIN TYLER WALSH

Mr. President, this afternoon I come to the Senate floor to pay tribute to a selfless marine from Cuyahoga Falls, OH—SGT Justin Tyler Walsh. Justin died on October 11, 2006, after he had been critically wounded by an improvised explosive device 1 week earlier in Al Anbar Province in Iraq. Justin was 24 years of age at the time of his death.

Justin enlisted in the Marines shortly after graduating Cuyahoga Falls High School in 2001. Greg Roth, his advanced placement U.S. History teacher, said that Justin had talked about going into the Marines from the time he was a freshman. He had a great sense of humor but a serious side as well. Roth said:

Justin [just] seemed to know what was important and what wasn't. You're talking about a fantastic young man.

At Cuyahoga Falls High, Justin played football. He also wrestled. Don Ross was Justin's football coach there and remembers that Justin was extremely hard working. He recalls this about him:

Justin wasn't your biggest lineman, but he made up for his lack of size with hustle. He always had a tremendous attitude and always had a smile on his face. He was a great kid. As a football coach, you don't always remember all your players. But, he was one of those players who you always remember.

Justin was also involved in the school's student council and was a member of the Latin Club, National Honor Society, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Humanities teacher Joel Morgan remembers that Justin was a focused young man who led by example.

I remember his leadership skills in the classroom. He did it in a way that the other students didn't know he was doing it. If you needed him to bail you out of a quiet, non-participating event, you could count on Justin to get the conversation going.

Upon entering the Marines in 2001, Justin trained to become a nuclear, biological, and chemical defense specialist. He was deployed to Kuwait as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom on January 9, 2003. He served for 6 months in his first deployment and returned to Iraq less than 1 year later for his second deployment. It was during this deployment that he was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

Still, Justin pushed himself further. He requested a lateral move within the Marine Corps to the Explosive Ordnance Disposal field where he would be working on bomb disposal.

Justin quickly learned the new skills needed for this job and graduated from

EOD school in November of 2005. Eager to continue his service and to utilize his new training, he left for his third Iraq deployment in August 2006. During this time, he conducted numerous EOD combat missions where he rendered safe roadside bombs. Ultimately, though, this was the work that would take Justin's life.

On October 5, 2006, Justin was disassembling a roadside bomb, working to ensure the safety of his fellow marines, as well as other military and civilian personnel. A second roadside bomb in the area detonated, critically wounding Justin. He received medical care both in Iraq and Germany before being transferred to the National Naval Medical Center in Maryland.

Justin died from his wounds on October 11, 2006, with his family and close friends by his side. His father James said his son was proud to be a marine, and he was glad Justin passed away in the country that he died fighting for.

After his death, Justin was honored by his alma mater during their homecoming football game. His jersey number, No. 56, was painted in the end zones and his picture appeared on a giant poster with a banner reading "Fallen Hero."

Those who knew Justin weren't surprised that his leadership skills and selfless nature transferred over to his career as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps. One friend recalled this about him:

Justin had every opportunity to do other things in his life, and he chose to do this. There aren't many kids who want to be a bomb specialist, especially for the Marines.

His brother James said that Justin chose a dangerous position in the EOD unit because "he felt he could save some marines' lives by doing that." James recalled that:

Justin took his job very seriously. But as far as life went, he enjoyed life. He lived in the moment.

He was also selfless. Justin was constantly concerned about the well-being of others, more so than his own. Kara Desmarais, whose husband was stationed with Justin in North Carolina, shared this memory of Justin:

At our cookouts, he was helping me in the kitchen—mostly telling stories or the latest gossip to make me laugh—on the grill helping my husband, or playing with the kids to help out. We are going to miss his funny stories, his laugh, his smile, and, most of all, his friendship.

SGT Jeremy McAbee wrote the following on a tribute Web site to Justin:

Thanks for leading the way and bringing out my true colors. You were always a hero to me, even when I pinned sergeant on you.

Justin is truly a hero. With his selfless courage, leadership, and service, he was the model of what every parent dreams their child will become. Today we remember the sacrifices of this fine marine and resolve that his life will not be forgotten but rather emulated by all who are left behind to cherish his memory.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Justin's father James, his mom and his

stepfather, Terry Walsh-Silvey and Thomas Silvey, brother James, and sister Heather in our thoughts and our prayers.

CAPTAIN MATTHEW C. MATTINGLY

Mr. President, this afternoon I wish to speak in the Senate to honor the life of Army CPT Matthew C. Mattingly from Reynoldsburg, OH. Captain Mattingly, a decorated officer, commanded Troop A of the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division based out of Fort Bragg, NC. On September 13, 2006, he was killed when direct gunfire struck a reconnaissance helicopter he was copiloting near Mosul, Iraq. He was 30 years old.

Growing up in Reynoldsburg, Matt, as his family and friends called him, loved sports, particularly softball and football. And according to his father Dennis, he had a passion for flying ever since he was a small boy. As a student at Reynoldsburg High School, Matt proudly wore No. 63 as a member of the football team. Dan Hoffman, the former principal of Reynoldsburg High, recalls this about Matt:

He was a top-flight kid, the kind of kid you would want defending your country—a solid kid from a solid family.

After graduating from high school, Matt attended Xavier University, where he seized the opportunity to serve his country by joining the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, ROTC. One of Matt's classmates wrote the following in a message posted to an Internet tribute Web site in Matt's honor:

Matt always had a smile on his face and was always having a good time. He loved life, and he loved the Army. I have no doubt that Matt was as superior an officer as he was a superior cadet. I will miss him very much.

Matt graduated from Xavier University in 1998, after which he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and went into the Army. In 1999, he successfully completed aviation officer basic training.

Matt was a committed and dedicated soldier. In 2002, he served in Bosnia with the 25th Infantry Division as part of the NATO stabilization force. In 2003, he deployed to Iraq and served with distinction in the 4th Infantry Division. During his first deployment, his actions earned him the Bronze Star and an Air Medal with Valor honor for his bravery and for his heroism. In 2004, Matt was assigned to the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade and returned to Iraq.

According to his father, Matt was planning on making the Army his career. Family friend, Beverly Denney, said that Matt saved the lives of several soldiers on the ground during the battle with his helicopter—the battle in which Matt tragically lost his life. In Beverly's words, Matt "was a very kind, considerate, respectable young man. He was truly always thinking about others."

COL Kelly Thomas is the commander of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade. This is what Colonel Thomas had to say about Matt:

This is a huge loss. I've known Matt since he was a lieutenant in Sarajevo. He was a

professional warrior, a combat veteran, a caring troop commander. He was a dynamic officer. He served his squadron and nation doing what he did best, leading and caring for his troopers.

For his brave actions in Iraq, Matt was awarded the Purple Heart.

Matt had another love besides the military, a love that was strong, and that was for Alicia Burke. This past July, before being deployed to Iraq for a second time, Matt became engaged to Alicia, a captain in the Air Force. She was truly the love of his life.

Matt's family and friends fondly remember his wonderful sense of humor. At the funeral, his sister Michelle read a letter from a first sergeant who had served with him. In the letter, the first sergeant remembered how he would puzzle all day over something Matt had said that morning that seemed particularly smart, only to have Matt tell him that evening that he just made it up.

Those who knew Matt will always remember how he liked to sing karaoke and that he was a fan of the Ohio State University Buckeyes. His sister Michelle will remember him as the best brother she ever could have had—a childhood rival and then a friend and then a role model.

Army Captain Mattingly truly was an extraordinary American. He was a man who loved God, family, and country. Selfless and humble, Matt put the needs and concerns of others above his own.

Sergeant First Class Martinez served with Matt in both Texas and Hawaii. He remembers Matt's caring nature and will always treasure a special hat he gave him. The sergeant said this about his friend:

I'd served with Captain Matthew Mattingly while at Fort Hood, Texas, and in Hawaii, while he was my platoon leader, my mentor, and most of all, my friend. . . . We did learn a lot from each other and even though I'm dealing with this great loss, I'm also celebrating his life and treasuring all the great moments we'd shared. . . . I do promise that you will never be forgotten.

Motivated by a sense of honor and duty, Matt always tried to do what was right and not what was always necessarily easy. We are eternally thankful for Matthew's enduring convictions, his character, and for his service.

I conclude with the words of Matt's sister, Michelle, who wrote the following in tribute to him:

It is overwhelming to know how much Matt was loved by the Army and to know the love from Ohio was the same. I wanted to thank his troop and Officer Quinn for bringing my brother home. My brother loved flying and his family even when we weren't there. The only thing that saddens me is that Matt never got to have a family. He would be a great dad. But knowing that the 1-17 Cavalry was his family gives me great peace. Thank you so much.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Matthew's family—his father and stepmother, Dennis and Barbara Mattingly, his mother and stepfather, Randi Mattingly and Ron Fridley, his sisters Michelle, Kethryn Mattingly, and his fiancée, CPT Alicia Burke—in our thoughts and in our prayers.

CORPORAL TIMOTHY DAVID ROOS

Mr. President, this afternoon I would like to pay tribute to Marine Cpl Timothy David Roos from Delhi Township, OH. On July 27, 2006, Corporal Roos was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated while he was conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar Province in Iraq. He was 21 years old at the time and just a month away from returning home to Ohio.

Timothy was a vehicle commander for the 2nd Platoon of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment. He joined the Marines with his cousin Jeffrey. He had wanted to be in the Marines ever since he was a very small boy. Timothy's father Rick had also served as a marine and had spent time in Vietnam. His dad remembers how Timothy and his brother Adam would always play in the woods as boys. As Rick recalls:

Timothy always had my old uniforms on, and that's what he wanted to be: A marine.

Timothy's family remembers him as a brave young man who was so proud to be a marine. "He loved doing his job and loved the Marine Corps," his father said.

His brother Adam recalls this about Timothy's career as a marine:

Tim was a great marine. He loved his job. He loved doing it. There really wasn't much that Tim wasn't proud of about his service.

Since joining the Marines in 2003, Timothy had faced major attacks several times. He was deployed to Haiti in the year 2004 and came under fire twice in Iraq in 2005. Just this past May, Timothy's humvee ran over an IED that exploded. All of the marines in the vehicle escaped uninjured.

After the humvee incident, Timothy told a Marine Corps news publication that working as a marine could be frightening. This is what he said:

The explosion shattered all of the glass in the vehicle, popped all 4 doors open, and sent shrapnel ripping through the engine. It's scary, and if you are not scared, there is something wrong with you. But it is our job, so you've got to do it.

Those were very brave words from a young man who was only 21 years old.

Timothy graduated from Oak Hills High School in Bridgetown in 2003. A dedicated swimmer, he still holds some of the local records. Before graduating, Timothy also attended Diamond Oaks Vocational School in Dent, OH, where he studied automotive technology and was active in their Reserve Officer Training Corps Program.

Along with the rest of his family, Timothy was an avid fan of the Green Bay Packers football team. The day before he was killed, he spoke with his father, and they made plans to see a Packers game and to go camping.

Timothy was scheduled to return to Ohio on brief leave so he could see his wife of 3 years, Sara, and their newborn daughter Annaliese, who was born just 2 weeks before he died. Tragically, Timothy never had the chance to—never had the chance to hold his baby girl.

His brother Adam recalls that Timothy was ready to be a dad. He was excited and a bit nervous. Timothy's

brother-in-law Brian Pearson remembers how important family was to him. "He was very much looking forward to coming home and seeing his daughter," he says.

Days after Timothy's death, "It's a girl!" signs were still posted around the house. As his wife Sara recalls:

He was all about having a baby from day one. He was just so excited, so excited to be a father.

Sara was indeed the love of Timothy's life. They had been sweethearts ever since their time together at Delhi Junior High School when they sat next to each other in their eighth grade math class. Sara fondly remembers their school days together and the time when Timothy transformed from a quiet boy into a tall man. As she recalls:

My jaw hit the floor when I realized who he was. He was skinny and as handsome as could be.

Timothy and Sara were made for each other. They so enjoyed their time growing up together. Sara often laughs about their punk phase when the two of them sported dyed hair and pierced ears. Outside of the classroom, they often attended concerts together. Sara once commented:

I don't think a lot of people really believe you find your soulmate when you're 17, but we did. I doubt many people ever have what we had.

Timothy and Sara were married just a month before he left for boot camp in North Carolina. While home on leave in March 2006, Timothy visited his old high school. His former teachers there remember him so well. As the school's public relations coordinator Rebecca Beckstedt said:

He felt very connected to the students and staff at Great Oaks. There's nothing harder for a school to lose than a student. It's heartbreaking.

Those who knew Timothy will always remember him for the way he made everyone laugh. At school he had a reputation of being a great kid with a great sense of humor. As his brother Adam said at Timothy's funeral:

He was hilarious. He was always doing something goofy.

Timothy's dedication and sacrifice continue to be an inspiration to those who knew him. Even though he had survived previous attacks and was well aware of the dangers of life in a combat zone, he often spoke of reenlisting. In the words of his brother: "That's why he's my hero."

Adam also knows his brother Timothy died doing what he wanted to do—serving our Nation. In Adam's words:

Deep, deep in Timothy's heart, that's what he wanted to do.

The hundreds of people lining the Delhi Township streets to watch Timothy's funeral procession were equally moved. As the procession passed, 8-year-old Vincent Neely commented that he, too, wants to be a marine when he gets older. "It's the biggest sacrifice anyone can make for anything," he said.

His family friend Diane Heileman said:

It really gets your heart when you know we lost another one, but if it weren't for them, we wouldn't all be here—our freedom, they're protecting all of us.

Indeed, our world is simply a better place because he lived. He was a young man who genuinely loved life and had compassion for others. His dedication to his family, his friends, his fellow marines, his local community, and his country is inspiring.

Let me conclude by mentioning, as I was preparing to speak today in honor of Timothy, I saw in his biography that he had served in Haiti. I recalled when I was there visiting our marines. I went back to some photographs that were taken during a trip that Fran and I took there in 2004. When we were there, we made a point of visiting with the Ohio marines who were serving in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I went back through the individual pictures we took of them and I found one. I found one that I had taken of Timothy. Here is the picture. I am privileged to have had a brief meeting with Timothy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I saw then firsthand the differences our troops were making in Haiti. I know the Chair in his travels and the other Members of the Senate have seen what I have seen when we have seen our troops overseas. They are the best. They are people who are making a difference every single day. Timothy made a difference in Haiti. He made a difference in Iraq. He made a difference wherever he served. Of that, Mr. President, I am certain.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Timothy, his wife Sara, their daughter Annaliese, his parents, Rick and Janice, and his older brother Adam in our thoughts and in our prayers.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JAMES P. "J.P." WHITE,  
JR.

Mr. President, this afternoon I would like to pay tribute to a remarkable young man, Army PFC James P. "J.P." White, Jr., from Huber Heights, OH. On August 11, 2006, Private White was killed in Afghanistan when enemy forces attacked his platoon with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire. He was just 19 years of age at the time of his death.

Mr. President, it is impossible to make sense of the death of anyone so young. J.P. lived a great deal of life in his all too brief 19 years on this Earth. It is important that we recognize that he died for something he believed in, doing an important job he loved. J.P.'s grandmother Amy Phipps perhaps said it best:

J.P. always, always wanted to join the Army. He thought he should protect us by fighting the terrorists. I'm proud of everything he has done. We were very blessed. He gave his life for us.

J.P. was indeed a blessing to all who knew him and to those of us who did not. He was one of those special and courageous individuals who spent his life defending others. And for that, we owe him and his family a debt of grati-

tude which we simply will never ever be able to repay.

Growing up in a family with a rich military tradition, J.P. knew early on he wanted to serve his country, and he nourished that desire every chance he got. At Wayne High School he joined the Reserve Officers Training Corps where he rose to the rank of cadet captain and class leader his senior year. He captained the Armed Exhibition Drill Team, a unit that he led to within a single point of a trophy in local competition. His friend and teammate, Joshua Shea said:

J.P. was disciplined. He knew what he was doing.

For all of his focus and determination, J.P. was also a very fun-loving person. Like other teenagers, he enjoyed computers, video games, and hanging out with his friends. Many of his friends remember him playing a game which they had improvised. It involved bouncing a racquet ball off a wall using only a player's head. Not surprisingly, J.P. referred to it as "head ball." One of J.P.'s friends, Casey Sullivan, said that underneath the disciplined Army soldier was a big goofball at heart. His friends loved him dearly.

Upon graduation from Wayne High School in 2005, J.P. immediately enlisted in the Army. J.P.'s father James said that they discussed at length his decision to join, but there was never a moment's hesitation on his son's part. As James put it simply: "He was sure."

J.P. joined the military along with a childhood friend, Marine LCpl Ryan Pennington. The two kidded each other all the time about who had joined the better branch of the military. Between a committed Army man and a committed marine, I am not sure this was an argument they would ever resolve, but both knew what it meant and understood what it meant to serve.

Ryan recalled that J.P. was extremely committed to serving and was prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice.

I know J.P. knew the risks. We all do, and we accept them.

In July of 2005, J.P. shipped out for boot camp at Fort Drum in New York. He completed basic and advanced training at Fort Benning, GA, to be an infantryman. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Division, 3rd Brigade Combat Team for the 10th Mountain Division. In March of 2006, his platoon was deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Serving in the field and frontline is precisely what J.P. had envisioned when he was growing up. According to his high school ROTC instructor, SGT Michael Cannon:

J.P. probably could have had any job in the Army. He didn't want a desk job. He was doing exactly what he wanted—combat and convoy operations.

After several months of deployment, J.P. returned home for his sister April's high school graduation in June

2006. Tragically, this would be his last time with his family and friends at home. He left on Father's Day.

Before leaving, J.P. and his father talked about the war and his experience of fighting for our country. In spite of all the danger, J.P. was resolute in his commitment to the fight for freedom. His father said:

He never feared going back. He just told me he was doing his job. He was proud to serve his country. I believe that he's a great hero.

News of J.P.'s death this past August came as shock to all his family and friends. When his father got word, he knew that there was no way he could tell J.P.'s other relatives in Illinois over the telephone. Instead, he got in his car and drove his family the 4 hours from Huber Heights, OH, to Mount Pulaski, IL, to deliver the news in person.

"It was a long ride to be driving and crying," his father said. "He was a wonderful kid—very well behaved and well respected."

J.P.'s life and sacrifice were honored at a funeral on the morning of August 21st at St. Peter Catholic Church in Huber Heights. Reverend Darrell Perry presided over the ceremony. He closed by reminding everyone that "J.P. gave his life doing what he believed in."

With flags flying at half staff throughout Huber Heights, a procession took J.P. to his final resting place at Dayton's National Cemetery, where he was buried with full military honors. During the procession, 30 Patriot Guard Riders from across the State of Ohio joined J.P.'s family. These men came from all over on their bikes to serve as part of a color guard for J.P.

Bryan McCoy, one of the Patriot Guard Riders who joined family and friends at the service, traveled all the way from Akron to pay his respects to J.P. and his loved ones. "I'm too old (to join the fighting overseas)," he said. "I just want to offer my support."

At the Cemetery, BG Joe Orr presented J.P.'s family with the Bronze Star on his behalf for bravery, heroism and meritorious service.

"He's going to be very, very sadly missed," said J.P.'s grandmother Amy. "But we know he's in God's arms."

Yes, J.P. is in God's arms and in the hearts and minds of all who had the good fortune to have known him.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep J.P.'s parents, James and Robin, his sisters April and Denise, and all his family and friends in our thoughts and in our prayers.

LANCE CORPORAL TIMOTHY MICHAEL BELL

Mr. President, I rise today to honor a fellow Ohioan who was killed while serving in Iraq—LCpl Timothy Michael Bell, Jr., from West Chester. Lance Corporal Bell was killed in Iraq, on August 3, 2005, when a roadside bomb exploded underneath his military vehicle. He was 22 years old.

Timothy Bell—"Tim" to family and friends—was a man who greatly respected his country—a man who was proud of every day he served our Na-

tion as a Marine. As Greg McDaniel, Pastor at Impact Baptist Church, said about Tim:

He loved the Marine Corps. [Tim] always said, "I want to be a [Marine]." The day he graduated from boot camp, he told his mother, "This is why I was born. This is my destiny."

From the time he was 6 years old, Tim knew that he wanted to be a Marine. His room was full of Marine posters and memorabilia, and a camouflage Marine blanket even covered his bed. For Tim Bell, there was never any question of what he wanted to be when he grew up.

Most Ohioans know Tim's family as a baseball family. His uncle Buddy was a star player for the Cleveland Indians and the Cincinnati Reds, and I remember his grandfather Gus was a star player for the Reds when I was a kid. Buddy currently manages the Kansas City Royals. Tim's cousins, David and Michael Bell, also played Major League Baseball.

But, there is another uniform that has been very important in the Bell family—and that is the uniform of the U.S. Marine Corps. Two of Tim's uncles and an aunt wore the Marines' uniform. While many boys dream of becoming professional athletes, Tim saw his relatives in their military uniforms and decided that he wanted to be just like them—that joining the military was going to be his dream. Tim's admiration for these family members, including his grandfather, who had served in the Navy, compelled him to follow in their footsteps.

Those at Lakota East High School, where Tim graduated in 2003, remember that Tim always displayed a strong affinity for military service. In fact, he enlisted even before he graduated. Principal Ruth Barber said that "when Tim settled his mind on being a Marine, he couldn't wait to serve his country."

When the news came that Tim was shipping overseas, his family and friends remember that he was excited to go. When his parents dropped him off in Columbus for training with Lima Company, Tim told them that this was simply what he was born to do.

Before leaving for Iraq, Tim gave his father something special for safekeeping—his Marine Corps ring. "Wear this until I come home," he told his dad. Well, Mr. President, Tim Bell, Sr. wore that ring every day his son was in Iraq—and will continue to wear it every day.

Tim's discipline was extraordinary. Not only did he undergo military training, but he also had a black belt in judo. He did not express fear, and he never doubted his purpose as a marine.

During one phone call home, Tim proudly told his father that their battalion commander had said they were the most active company since the Vietnam War. According to his dad, "They were busy every day fighting. Every day."

Tim was scheduled to return home in September 2005. He was thinking of

buying a motorcycle was looking forward to visiting family in Kansas City. Nothing was more important to Tim than family. While at Marine base camp, he would call his father about once a week. He would relive the excitement of his adventures over the phone, but also always took the time to ask how his parents and siblings were doing.

"It seemed he was more concerned about me than himself," his dad recalls. "The concern was how everybody was doing. Every conversation I had with him ended with 'I love you dad' and 'I love you Timmy.' Every conversation. I am going to miss those calls."

Tim's dad went on to say:

My son was a brave and wonderful man. All he ever wanted to do was be a Marine. He felt like it was an extremely important job. I was fortunate to get to tell him that I loved him every week when he called.

Tim's stepmother Vivian said this about Tim:

Tim is a hero and we are proud of him. He liked to live and just do what he wanted to do. He didn't think about danger or anything like that or consequences. When he wanted to do something and thought it was something worth doing, he just stuck to it.

In addition to the weekly phone calls home, Tim also exchanged e-mails and instant messages over the computer with his sister Jamie. He shared with her his plans to return to Iraq for another tour of duty. He believed strongly in his role in Iraq.

"He was there for a reason," his dad said. "Everybody needs to know that. And it's not just my son—it's all the young men and women over there. They're over there for each and every one of us."

On a night shortly after Tim's death, the Kansas City Royals honored him with a moment of silence before the game. The stadium announcer asked everyone to remember the United States Marines from Lima Company who had been killed in Iraq. He particularly asked the stadium to remember the sacrifice of Tim Bell, the nephew of Royals manager Buddy Bell.

According to Mike Sweeny, the team captain for the Royals, the moment of silence for the slain marines had a special meaning for them. "It was the most meaningful moment of silence I've had since we resumed play after 9-11," he recalled.

Tim Bell lived the Marine credo—he was always faithful—faithful to his family, faithful to the Marine Corps, and faithful to our country. His father described him as the "last of the John Waynes, but tougher." Tim loved the Marines and the reason they serve.

We celebrate the life of this brave young man and honor his dedication to preserving our freedom and liberty. Fran and I continue to keep the family and friends of LCpl Timothy Bell in our thoughts and prayers.

MAJOR MICHAEL D. STOVER

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a fellow Ohioan—Marine MAJ

Michael D. Stover from Mansfield. Major Stover died on June 3, 2006, while serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He was the executive officer for the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, based in Twentynine Palms, CA. He was 43 years old.

Major Stover is survived by his sister and his brother-in-law, Cheryl and Kim Meister, and by his brother, retired MAJ Edward Allen Stover. He also leaves to cherish his memory many nieces and nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins. He is preceded in death by his parents LaVern "Smoky" and Doris Stover.

Michael Stover craved adventure from the time he was a boy. His sister Cheryl remembers that her baby brother's nickname was "Monkey," "because he was always falling out of trees, breaking his arm, riding bicycles and flying over the handlebars and ending up in hospitals." Michael grew up an avid outdoorsman, joining the Boy Scouts and quickly rising in their ranks. He wrestled while in junior high and always sought out physical activities that pushed him as an individual.

In 1980, Michael graduated from Malabar High School in Mansfield. Michael was an excellent student and though there were many career paths he could have chosen, his older sister and brother weren't surprised when he decided to enlist in the Marines. They had watched him grow up and knew that the Marines provided the kind of adventure and physical challenge he had always loved. As his sister Cheryl explained: "Anything that was exciting or extreme, Michael had to be involved in."

Although Michael's parents—aware of their son's love for books and literature—were initially skeptical of his decision to become a Marine, it quickly became a source of pride for them. Michael remained close to his family throughout his time in the service, calling and writing frequently.

After enlisting, Michael reported for recruit training at Parris Island in January 1981. This was only his first step in a military career that exemplified the core Marine values of honor, courage, and commitment.

Books and reading had always been important to Michael, and as a Marine he was able to use his talent for writing and communicating. He was designated a Public Affairs Marine and underwent training at the Defense Information School, where he learned how to tell the stories of the U.S. Marine Corps. He then completed an enlisted tour with the Fleet Hometown News Center in Norfolk, VA, which sends out press releases on Marine achievements.

According to his brother Edward, Michael hadn't joined the Marines intending to make the military his career. But, he fell in love with the service and decided to stay so that he could become an officer. He accepted a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps Marine Option scholarship and was released from active duty so that he could attend the Ohio State University.

Not surprisingly, Michael was a leader at OSU. He became a residential assistant, a position in which he was an important role model for incoming freshmen. It was his job to guide those younger than he and used his Marine training to do it. His residents looked up to him, not only as a resource, but also as a friend and even a big brother.

Michael graduated from OSU in 1990 with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism. He was then commissioned as a Marine Corps 2LT and became a logistics officer in an engineer support battalion—eventually serving as platoon and then company commander.

After then being promoted to Captain, Michael served as a logistics officer while also attending the Amphibious Warfare School from July 1994 to June 1997. From 1998–2005, he then served in different capacities in California, Hawaii, and Arizona. Throughout these years, Michael was a leader and an educator for young marines, helping to shape and mold the following generation.

Lieutenant Chris Kaprielian was just one of the many young marines who Major Stover inspired. This is how he described his former commander:

[Major Stover] was like a father to our [operations] section. The amount of knowledge he brought in from his prior experiences in the Marine Corps was incredible. Like a father, he looked out for the men in his command. And like a father, he was very demanding.

He particularly remembers Major Stover's commitment to duty. "We all worked really long hours," he said, "but he was there before anyone else and stayed even later. I never knew anyone who worked as hard as he did."

Michael was serving as the executive officer for the Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 when the squadron was deployed to Iraq in February 2005. After returning to the United States the next September, he was then temporarily assigned to another squadron in October. The Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 was preparing to deploy to Iraq—and Major Stover was needed to help prepare the marines for war.

His sister Cheryl remembers his exact words. "It's my job," he said. "If I don't go, young Marines will be dying. I can go and prevent their deaths." No other words better represent Major Stover's selfless and compassionate commitment to the young men and women whom he could train to become excellent marines. With his actions, he was saving lives every day.

The day Michael died, our Nation tragically lost a wonderful brother, a caring mentor, and a truly outstanding marine. At the time of his death, Michael had been recently selected for promotion to the rank of lieutenant colonel. His brother Edward—a retired major with the Ohio National Guard—knew it was a promotion that he richly deserved. It would have been the first time that Michael outranked his older brother. Edward eagerly anticipated his brother's promotion. "You'll never

know how proudly I looked forward to that time," he said.

Major Stover's 26-year career of leadership and fortitude earned him more decorations and honors than I can name here. They include the Meritorious Service Medal, three Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, and the Iraq Campaign Medal. But his best reward, perhaps, is simply the respect and admiration felt by all who knew him.

At Michael's funeral, numerous mourners gathered to pay their respects to the departed marine, paying tribute to the lifetime he spent teaching the young marines who would come after him. Reverend David Pound said that Michael "took great pride in the young Marines that he could teach and develop." And, LTC Phillip Woody, Michael's commanding officer, said this:

The only way for a mortal man to be immortal is to teach. Those you teach will remember you forever. Mike will be remembered forever. It was an honor to call him a friend. It was an honor to call him a comrade.

The world is a better place since Michael Stover has been in it. He was a brave man, with a genuine commitment to service, leadership, education, and excellence. His dedication to his country was tremendous and his commitment to his fellow service members was unparalleled. My wife Fran and I continue to keep his family in our thoughts and prayers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I ask I be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RETIRING SENATORS

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I have listened carefully to our colleague from Ohio, spending his few minutes in the Senate talking about brave men and women who serve our country. It is the mark of our colleague from Ohio, the kind of person he is—not just the kind of Senator he is—that he would come to the floor of the Senate in his last few days as a Member of this institution and focus on others, focus on those who have given the ultimate for their families, for our country and for our future. It shows us, once again, that Senator DEWINE is the consummate Senator.

I am here this afternoon to recognize and thank and pay tribute to our colleagues who will be leaving the Senate. They are a varied group. Again, I can think of no finer example of this group of public servants than one of Senator DEWINE's last speeches in the Senate to recognize others.

I thank you, Senator DEWINE, for your service.

As we recognize, it is a distinct privilege and high honor to serve our country. It is a distinct privilege and high