

empowerment'' brought together a fragmented community to march for freedom for Americans with disabilities. He taught us that disabled does not mean unable.

When President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law and gave the first pen to Justin, he protested the fact that only three disability activists were on the podium, because he believed that the ADA would never have been accomplished without the power of hundreds of people with disabilities who made the difference. When he finally received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Justin sent out replicas of this award to hundreds of disability rights activists across the country, writing that "this award belongs to you."

Even in his final words to us he talks of the power and importance of equal rights for all people. Disabled people across the country and around the world owe a great debt to Justin Dart for his love and his commitment to Justice. He is a hero not just to those with disabilities, but to all of us who learned from him and served with him in the great causes he inspired.

As President Kennedy once said, "As the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we too will be remembered, not for our victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit." Justin Dart brought the human spirit of the disability movement to life, and his spirit will live on through the lives of those he touched.●

HEROES OF OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

● Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased to insert in the RECORD the heroic accounts of the 354th Wing and 18th Fighter Squadron at Eielson Air Force Base in Anchorage, AK, for the vital role they played in Operation Enduring Freedom.

The accounts that follow describe the daring mission of three pilots who were involved in a difficult rescue operation. Both Alaska, and the Nation, appreciate and honor their heroism that helped to save lives. I, along with my fellow colleagues, am extremely proud of our men and women who are at this very moment, much like the 354th Wing and 18th Fighter Squadron were doing, defending freedom and democracy around the world.

Today we are a nation at war. A war against the evil of terrorism. Make no mistake, there are evil people in this world. There are people whose sole purpose on this earth is to harm and kill innocent people. Let us not forget what happened in our country just a short time ago. America's freedom, our freedom, the freedom of this Chamber and of millions of people all over the world, are protected by the men and women who serve in the armed forces.

It is with utmost respect and appreciation that I share the heroic events that took place during Operation En-

during Freedom. But before I do, let me personally comment on why lives were saved based upon the acts of three fine soldiers. It all comes down to training. Our military has an extraordinary ability to prepare our soldiers for battle. Our soldiers are the best in the world. I commend the armed forces for preparing our soldiers for battle and for bringing them home safely. It is no coincidence that our soldiers, who face grave and dire situations, prevail.

Thirty nine lives were saved because of the actions of Lieutenant Colonel Burt A. Bartley, Captain James R. Sears, Jr. and Captain Andrew J. Lipina. The tale of this mission surely seems unreal. A MH-47 helicopter was shot out of the sky. The enemy was fast closing on the downed helicopter where 10 injured soldiers were in need of immediate medical attention. Time was of the essence. Instantly, a rescue operation was put into motion. And this was no simple rescue.

When the enemy is armed and looking to kill, it is imperative that all available resources are put to their maximum utilization. After all available artillery were depleted, a 500 pound bomb was dropped within 100 meters of the crash site, creating a barrier between the wounded soldiers and the advancing enemy. 100 meters, the length of a football field. This allowed the rescue operation to be successfully carried out. As you will read, this was America at its best. I applaud the heroism and bravery of all those involved in this daring rescue.

I ask that the summary of the heroic actions of the 354th Wing and 18th Fighter Squadron at Eielson Air Force Base, be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR TO BURT A. BARTLEY

Lieutenant Colonel Burt A. Bartley distinguished himself by heroism and courageous action as F-16CG flight lead, 18 Fighter Squadron, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Upon learning of a downed MH-47 helicopter, Lieutenant Colonel Bartley departed assigned airspace to immediately support the recovery of thirty-nine personnel on board. Enroute to the site, Lieutenant Colonel Bartley established deconfliction with two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and two F-15Es near the crash site to provide maximum support to the rescue effort. With the F-15Es out of ammunition, Lieutenant Colonel Bartley immediately employed 20mm cannon fire to neutralize the enemy troops that were directly firing upon the survivors. He made two strafing runs with little regard for his own safety into rapidly rising mountainous terrain, and directly in the face of the same small arms fire that downed the helicopter. He then provided a rapid talk-on to his wingman, who was experiencing radio problems, to suppress the advancing enemy troops. His skill and determination forced the enemy troops to stop the attack on the downed helicopter crew and friendly forces and concentrate on digging in for cover approximately 50 meters from the crashed MH-47. After expending all 500 rounds of 20mm ammunition he stayed with the Ground Forward Air Controller (GFAC) on the radio while his wingman passed all critical information to command and control assets and

located the tanker. His actions resulted in the flight's ability to maintain continuous contact with the GFAC and continue to threaten the advancing enemy forces for over two and a half hours. Upon returning to the crash site, the GFAC reported that the previously pinned down enemy had begun to close in on their position again. After his wingman had verified from command and control that no other airborne assets had 20mm or light ordnance, Lieutenant Colonel Bartley informed the GFAC of the impending danger and at the GFAC's request dropped 500 pound bombs within 100 meters of the crash site in order to keep the enemy forces at bay. Meanwhile, a second GFAC reported two more critically wounded soldiers requiring immediate evacuation. Lieutenant Colonel Bartley pinned down the enemy, and directed his wingman to coordinate for the air evacuation. He offered to escort the helicopters through the area with numerous small arms threats and Rocket Propelled Grenads. His quick thinking and superior coordination allowed friendly forces to maintain a secure location in extremely close proximity to the impact points and undoubtedly saved the lives of 21 uninjured survivors and 10 wounded in the crash site, and enabled the safe recovery of all 39 Americans. The undaunted leadership, extreme heroism and courageous actions of Lieutenant Colonel Bartley are consistent with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force.

ANDREW J. LIPINA: DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS NARRATIVE

Captain Andrew J. Lipina distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism and gallantry in action as F-16CG fighter pilot, 18th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. During the third day of Operation ANACONDA, Captain Lipina learned of a downed MH-47 helicopter with the survivors actively taking fire, and departed assigned airspace to immediately support the recovery effort. Thirty-nine personnel were on board when a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) attack disabled their aircraft. Enroute to the site Captain Lipina quickly took control of external communication and coordinated with command and control assets to relocate air refueling tanker assets to support the rescue effort. He further deconflicted with two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and two F-15Es near the crash site. His formation quickly coordinated with the Ground Forward Air Controller (GFAC) to establish situational awareness. With the F-15E out of ammunition, Captain Lipina immediately employed 20mm cannon fire to neutralize the enemy troops that were directly firing upon the survivors from within 100 meters. He made two strafing runs, each closer to the crash site than the previous, with little regard for his own safety in order to help protect them from being overrun. These strafing passes were not only into rapidly rising mountainous terrain, but also directly in the face of the same small arms that downed the helicopter. His skill and determination forced the enemy troops to stop the attack on the downed helicopter crew and friendly forces and concentrate on digging in under the cover of a tree located approximately 50 meters from the crashed MH-47. After expending all 500 rounds of 20mm ammunition he coordinated with command and control assets to inform them of the disposition of friendly casualties and the location of their tanker. With their assigned tanker experiencing an air-refueling malfunction, Captain Lipina rapidly pointed the formation to the next closest tanker and masterfully coordinated to move it toward the crash site. Upon returning to the crash site from air refueling, the GFAC reported that the previously

pinned down enemy had begun to close in on their position again. His actions resulted in the flight's ability to maintain continuous contact with the GFAC and continue to threaten the advancing enemy forces for over two and a half hours. After he had verified from command and control that no other airborne assets had 20mm or light ordnance, Captain Lipina's flight lead dropped 500 pound bombs within 100 meters of the crash site in order to keep the enemy forces at bay. Captain Lipina expertly sanitized the area for MANPADS and anti-aircraft artillery in the hostile and hazardous region of the downed helicopter. This was extremely important since a previous flight has been engaged by MANPADS. Meanwhile a second GFAC reported two critically wounded soldiers requiring immediate air evacuation. While his lead continued to work on pinning down the enemy, Captain Lipina began to coordinate for the air evacuation and offered his remaining bombs to escort the rescue helicopters through an area with numerous small arms and RPG threats. Additionally, he coordinated for other assets to move into position to support the survivors on the ground. The undaunted courage and heroism of Captain Lipina undoubtedly saved the lives of 21 uninjured survivors and 10 wounded in the crash site and enabled the safe recovery of all 39 Americans.

**JAMES R. SEARS JR.: DISTINGUISHED FLYING
CROSS NARRATIVE**

Captain James R. Sears Jr. distinguished himself by heroism and extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as F-16CG flight lead, 18th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron on 20 January 2002. Captain Sears distinguished himself as On Scene Commander for a downed CH-53 in a heavily defended area of Taliban control in Northern Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. During the Combat Search and Rescue he organized, directed, and controlled a total of 13 aircraft including three Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, five helicopters, one C-130, two F-16s, and two F-18s. He rapidly developed a deconfliction plan that ensured the safety of all assets and allowed them to operate within a five nautical mile radius of the downed helicopter.

After receiving the initial coordinates of the crash site he realized they were over one nautical mile off the actual location in heavily mountainous terrain. After a diligent, methodical search of the area, Captain Sears was able to get his eyes on the site, provide a perfect talk-on for his wingman, and direct the other support assets to the crash site. Using on-board sensors, Captain Sears was quickly able to pass updated coordinates to the thousandth of a degree to command and control agencies without compromising the safety of the entire rescue operation. He expertly sanitized the 60 nautical mile ingress and egress route through enemy territory.

Captain Sears then executed the demanding task of rescue escort for two helicopters. This involved maintaining visual contact and constant coverage while flying over 300 knots faster and being 15,000 feet higher than the helicopters. Captain Sears, in conjunction with command and control assets, coordinated a plan to move three separate tankers close enough to the crash site to ensure constant command for the entire time on scene. Captain Sears' flawless flight leadership allowed him to intercept and visually identify a Red Cross aircraft flying in the vicinity of the downed helicopter, not identifiable by electronic means or talking to command and control assets, ensuring the safety of the entire rescue effort. Captain Sears passed off On Scene Commander duties to two United States Navy F-18s after 4.5 hours

on scene. Captain Sears' tireless efforts and tremendous focus was unprecedented considering in his single-seat F-16 he flew more than 3500 miles, logged 11.1 hours, and ten air refuelings requiring more than 120,000 pounds of fuel to be unloaded through hostile territory. Captain Sears' courage, superior airmanship, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of personal danger were instrumental in accomplishing this hazardous mission and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force.●

TO JAN OMUNDSON AND PAM ELJ

●Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, on many occasions in the past year and a half, I have come to the floor on behalf of steelworkers and their families who live on Minnesota's Iron Range in northeastern Minnesota. Like other steel-producing regions, the Iron Range has been hard hit by unfair foreign imports, devastating the United States steel and iron ore industries. And last year, Minnesota's Iron Range economy was rocked by the bankruptcy and closure of the LTV Steel Mining Company in Hoyt Lakes.

When the LTV Steel Mining Company closed, 1,400 employees were thrown out of work. Many of these men and women had dedicated their entire working lives to LTV. They are hard-working people with families and bills to pay. In addition to the layoffs, 1,700 retirees lost portions of their pensions and all of their health insurance and life insurance.

But if you know anything about Minnesota, you understand that in hard times we pull together and we persevere. This is especially true about the hardworking people of the Iron Range.

Today, I'd like to recognize two very unselfish Minnesotans, Jan Omundson and Pam Elj, who have gone above and beyond the call of normal duty to help the people hurt by the LTV closing.

For the past 3 months, Jan and Pam traveled more than 160 round-trip miles each day, from the Cities of Duluth and Virginia respectively, to help hundreds of displaced LTV employees and retirees understand their health care options. When an economic tragedy like this strikes a community, it's often a very painful, stressful, and confusing time for the families affected. Thanks to Jan and Pam, people affected now have a much better understanding of their benefits and their rights.

In her role as coordinator of the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging's State Health Insurance Assistance Program, Jan Omundson led this team effort by organizing dozens of informational meetings to educate displaced LTV workers and retirees regarding their options. She was assisted by Pam Elj, who is a counselor with the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency's Senior Insurance Advocacy Program. Together, they met with hundreds of retirees, displaced workers, and their families and outlined detailed and valuable information about options for health care coverage.

Jan and Pam were key to the success of this effort and it would not have been possible without the support and resources of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, the Hoyt Lakes Community Credit Union, the City of Biwabik, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota.

I thank them all for their dedication and assistance during this very difficult time.●

COMMUNITY HERO

●Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, today I salute a community leader in my home State of Oregon. I want to recognize the efforts of Susan Abravanel, Education Coordinator at SOLV, a nonprofit organization in Oregon, in advocating for service-learning, one of the most exciting educational initiatives taking hold in our Nation today.

Service-learning gives students the opportunity to learn through community service, but it is important to note that it is much more than just community service. It is a method of classroom instruction that engages a student's intellect through hands-on work outside the classroom that benefits the community at large. Research shows that students participating in service-learning make gains on achievement tests, complete their homework more often, and increase their grade point averages.

In addition to producing academic gains, service-learning is also associated with both increased attendance and reduced dropout rates. It is clear to educators across the country that service-learning helps students feel more connected to their own education while strengthening their connection to their community as well. It is for all of these reasons that Susan Abravanel is working so hard to advocate for service-learning in classrooms in Oregon and across the nation.

Ms. Abravanel is working closely with my office and with education leaders in Oregon to ensure that my home state remains a national leader in service-learning. Just 2 months ago, I introduced a bill with my colleague, Senator EDWARDS, to strengthen our Nation's commitment to service-learning. I feel confident that this bill will soon become law and that with Ms. Abravanel's continued efforts both here in Washington, DC and at home in Oregon, students will continue to benefit from an education tied to civic engagement.

Ms. Abravanel exemplifies the type of engaged citizen our schools must endeavor to produce, and her persistence will ensure that future generations of Americans will give back to their communities just as she has. I would also like to note that Susan isn't just concerned about education, her interests and efforts in Portland's Jewish community are well known and highly appreciated, she is the new President of