

the year just ended, it is estimated that WVHCS-Hospital provided uncompensated care valued at over \$6,000,000. In addition, there were almost 18,000 patient encounters within our family practice residency program, the majority of which were to Medical Assistance or other uninsured/underinsured patients who otherwise would have ended up in emergency rooms.

Under the current rules, Medicare applies the wage index to about 71% of the average hospital's non-capital cost pool. Based upon our calculations, the portion of our costs to which that index should be applied is estimated to be far less, approximately 58%. The result is that areas like ours, where the wage index is less than 1.00, are paid less than cost for a portion of their supply expenses.

For the 2002 fiscal year, we have experienced registered nurse (RN) staffing turnover approximating 15% of our total RN pool. This is driven by the fact that the average wage rate which we can afford to offer for a registered nurse is \$20.28, well below other contiguous metropolitan statistical areas. In addition, the current vacancy rate for certified registered nurse anesthetists is 25%. Despite the fact we operate one of the largest and most successful schools of nurse anesthetists in the nation, surrounding areas are paying \$5 to \$6/per hour more than our region.

Registered nurses are not the only area of need with which we are faced. For example, radiology/imaging technologists are earning (an average hourly rate of \$14.88, again, well below other nearby metropolitan statistical areas). The result is that for the first half of 2002, we have experienced almost 20% turnover in imaging technicians, particularly in the areas of nuclear medicine, CT scanning, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and general radiology services.

Without additional relief, we are losing staff to surrounding communities!

In addition to these labor related pressures, we are faced with other issues affecting costs including the malpractice insurance crisis, bioterrorism preparedness, as well as, added regulatory requirements under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). While it is not our intention to redirect wage-related reimbursements to those areas, the fact remains that the amount of funds which we will have available to address our staffing needs will be even further limited.

Once again, we would like to thank you, Representative Sherwood, Representative Kanjorski, Senator Santorum and each of your respective staffs for all of the efforts which you have put into this important cause. In particular, we would like to thank you and Representative Sherwood for spending time with representatives from area hospitals on Monday, July 1, 2002.

We look forward to hearing from you as to when the conference committee hearings will be scheduled as we would like to be present to represent our community and this critical issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM R. HOST,
President and Chief
Executive Officer.
MICHAEL D. SCHERNECK,
Senior Vice President
and Chief Financial
Officer.

THE BLOOMSBURG HOSPITAL,
Bloomsburg, PA, July 3, 2002.

Memo to: Andrew M. Wallace, Executive Director, Northeast Region.

From: Robert J. Spinelli, CEO, The Bloomsburg Hospital, Bloomsburg, PA.

The Medicare Reimbursement issue currently debated is extremely important for

The Bloomsburg Hospital. As a community hospital located in Northeast Pennsylvania, the current wage index rates have contributed to three years of deficit income, which has resulted in the inability to recruit qualified staff. In addition, our hospital has had to furlough individuals and not fill positions as vacancies become available.

Your help in this wage index change is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

I will be available to attend the Conference Committee meeting. Please contact me.

WAYNE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL,
Honesdale, PA, July 3, 2002.

Senator ARLEN SPECTER,
Scranton, PA.

DEAR SENATOR SPECTER: Thank you for holding the briefing on the Medicare reimbursement issues and the Wage Index issue in particular. We truly appreciate all your efforts on our behalf to assure that Medicare Reimbursements to providers of services are adequate.

I am summarizing a few of the issues facing us in our fiscal 2003, which began on Monday, July 1, 2002, the same day as your briefing.

We are anticipating an increase in our Medicare payment rate of approximately 3% effective with the beginning of the next federal fiscal year on 10-1-02. The increase is based on a Market Basket increase less .55%, as I recall has been the reduction factor over the last several years. Medicare is saying that, inflation is running 3.55% and we'll give you a 3.00% increase in rates. This makes it extremely difficult to keep net revenues above expenses when by definition, expenses are increasing faster than revenue or rates. Capital costs are included in this same methodology. Wayne Memorial is currently in a planning process that may well identify the need to spend capital dollars. Medicare reimbursement will not change as a result of this capital project and the proposed increase for fiscal 2003 will make it difficult to cover additional debt service on any new debt that may be required.

We have also recently absorbed an 80% increase in our annual General and Professional liability (malpractice) insurance premium that must be paid from this 3% increase from Medicare. We are facing serious physician recruitment issues related to the malpractice crisis here in Pennsylvania, as well. The increase in our malpractice premium will total over \$725,000 on an annual basis. The increase in Medicare payments that would result from this change in MSA to Newburg, New York would mean approximately \$450,000 of additional Medicare reimbursement for Wayne Memorial.

I want to thank you again for your hard work on these serious issues facing healthcare providers in Pennsylvania and hope that all of our efforts, together, can move us toward a Medicare payment system that is more adequate.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL J. CLIFFORD,
Director of Finance.

Mr. SPECTER. In the absence of any other Senator seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are not.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period for morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period not to exceed 5 minutes each.

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

FOURTH OF JULY DEDICATION OF THE LOVELL VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, all of us are just returning from the Fourth of July recess. It is a grand time, I am sure, across the United States. It was particularly a grand time in Wyoming. I get to go to a lot of parades and fairs and rodeos. It is really our only time outdoors to get a little bit of suntan that, unfortunately, goes from the wrist to the tip of the fingers, and the neck up. But it is a grand time. I want to share with my colleagues one of the adventures of this Fourth of July recess.

I got to be in a place called Lovell, WY. It is in the northern part of Wyoming. They had a dedication of a veterans memorial center that features a huge mural that includes pictures from all of the wars in which we have participated. The mural goes down into a rocky beach that contains rocks from different wars that we have been in as well. They had a dedication of this veterans memorial center.

The dedication was also attended by Commander Lovell, whose town is now his namesake. That is the Lovell of Apollo 13 fame and ingenuity.

Of course, it reminded me of that time in 1957 when the United States realized that we were behind in all of the scientific races. It challenged many of us to improve education in the United States. I think that continues today. The United States met that challenge. I remember when Sputnik went up I was appalled and I immediately became one of those rocket boys, one who was anxious to learn as much about science and space as possible.

I am pleased to say the Explorer Post that I was in launched a rocket with electronic ignition the second time we did it. We also learned on the first one that you have to clear that with the FAA so you don't shoot down airplanes. There have been a lot changes in that.

I got to go to this parade and dedication of the mural. It was very patriotic. At the beginning, as they unfurled this new flag on a huge new pole, we did say the Pledge of Allegiance. There was a reaction to the previous Wednesday's Ninth Circuit announcement because when the words, "under God" were said, they were louder than the whole rest of the pledge, just as an affirmation that the people of Wyoming were upset with the decision that had

been made. But it was that kind of event that makes your heart swell and brings tears to your eyes.

There was a song about heroes sung by elementary students. It reminded me that community, and communities across this country, are made up of heroes. Heroes are just ordinary people who do extraordinary things. Fortunately, in America we have a lot of those.

We are in a rapidly changing world. In April, I had an opportunity to go over to Russia with three interpreters. We worked on an international agreement of cooperation on controlling weapons of mass destruction, on export controls. That meeting was a tremendous shock for me. All the time I was growing up, Russia was our enemy—the Soviet Union where the people were out to get us. I was sitting across the table from their equivalent of the Senate and House talking about cooperation.

I also had an opportunity to meet with some small businessmen while I was over there. I think it was an even bigger shock for them to be talking to a capitalist about free enterprise. I think we will learn a lot from each other as the world changes.

I have to tell you that the people in Russia today have a tremendous amount of respect for us. Part of it comes from the action the United States took in Afghanistan. We did in 1 month what Russia wasn't able to do in 7 years. That did get us some respect.

The rest of the world anticipates that the reason we are able to do things such as that is the tremendous technology we have, the inventions and weapons we have developed. Some people think it is because of this capitalism, of businesses—and businesses deserve tremendous applause for the role they have played.

Since there was a parade that day and a lot of Tootsie Rolls were thrown out to the kids along the streets, it reminded me that Tootsie Rolls had been a part of every war since World War II. That company has donated Tootsie Rolls. It is one of those chocolates that don't melt in the heat. For Afghanistan, they donated eight semis loaded with Tootsie Rolls. But I also heard about a little event that happened in Korea. They used to be able to call in the plane, and the plane would dump Tootsie Rolls on little parachutes. But one day, they got a little confused on the code word, and when a bombing run was called in on North Korea, they used Tootsie Rolls for the code word for it, and the North Koreans had Tootsie Rolls dropped on them.

We have businesses that participate in all kinds of ways in making sure our country is a better country. But what they usually miss in all of the discussions about why America is great doesn't have to do with technology. It doesn't have to do with capitalism. It has to do with the people. As a people, we have developed over the years of our existence the promotion to the rest of

the world of the kind of government that works, and that has worked better and longer than any other government. But it isn't the Government either. It is the people. We have people who have values, enthusiasm, ideas, and community.

That came out on September 11. On September 11, there were a lot of people around the world who were pretty sure there was a major tragedy which hit this country and that we would fall apart. Instead, what they saw was America coming together. We came together with a sense of community which they didn't expect, with patriotism that has been unequalled, I think, in our history, with voluntarism, and, most of all, faith. Those are the things that make us different from the other countries. Those are the things that have made us great.

It is exciting to have an opportunity to participate in ceremonies, such as the Lovell Veterans Memorial Center dedication.

I ask unanimous consent that the speech of MG Ed Boenisch, Adjutant General of the Wyoming Military Department, given at that dedication be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEDICATION—LOVELL VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER, JUNE 29, 2002

SPEECH BY MAJ GEN ED BOENISCH, ADJUTANT GENERAL, WYOMING MILITARY DEPARTMENT

I'm honored to be here sharing the podium with an astronaut. I'm proud to be here with proud civic leaders, citizens and veterans who make dreams a reality.

Today renews my hope and faith in the spirit of America and in our great flag and the freedoms it represents. This spectacular memorial is a fitting honor to the men and women who sacrificed so we can be here today, free and safe.

Today is 29 June 2002. It's been 291 days since terrorists attacked our country. Remember all the innocent civilians who were killed that terrible day. It's been 265 days since we began our Global War on Terrorism. Remember the 51 U.S. military men and women who have died in that war. Remember all those who are deployed today, fighting our War on Terrorism so our country and our world can be safe for our children and our grandchildren.

I am so encouraged when I see the spirit of Americans manifested in displays of patriotism, respect and remembrance, especially with a beautiful and permanent display such as this Lovell Veterans Memorial Center.

Thank you for having such a grand and beautiful dream! Thank you for your financial contributions and hard work to make this a reality. Thank you for remembering!

May God bless you!

May God bless America!

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the speech which Commander Lovell gave at that ceremony be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEDICATION OF VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER, JULY 29, 2002, LOVELL, WYOMING

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: My son JAY and I want to thank the people of Lovell for the

wonderful hospitality we received during our visit—and it is an honor for me to say a few words in the dedication of Veterans Memorial Center honoring the men and women who served in our Armed Forces.

In 1944, Journalist Ernie Pyle wrote these words to describe the beginning of the Normandy invasion.

"Darkness enveloped the whole American armada. Not a pinpoint of light showed from those hundreds of ships as they surged on through the night toward their destiny, carrying across the ageless and indifferent sea tens of thousands of young men, fighting for . . . for, well, at least each other. For Americans, these words paint a picture of the fear and confusion surrounding soldiers on the eve of battle. Yet, they also impart the sense of determination those young men must have felt. Through his words, Ernie Pyle puts us in touch with our understanding of who we are and how we came to be a nation.

Even more, these words impel us to remember the cost of bringing America this far and also forces us to admit the price is not yet paid in full. This is what the dedication of the Veteran's Memorial symbolizes—when the people of Lovell can take a clear look at both your past and your future. And acknowledge the debt we owe to those men and women who—because they so cherished peace—chose to live as warriors.

Could anything be more contradictory than the lives of our servicemen? They love America, so they spend long years in foreign lands or at sea far from her shores. They revere freedom, so they sacrifice their own that we may be free. They defend our right to live as individuals, yet yield their individuality in that cause. Perhaps most paradoxically of all, they value life, and so bravely ready themselves to die in the service of our country.

For more than 220 years our military has provided a bastion against our enemies. In that time, our world has changed and our armed forces have changed with it, but the valor, dignity, and courage of the men and women in uniform remain the same. From Valley Forge to Enduring Freedom, from San Juan Hill to Pearl Harbor, the fighting spirit of the American Serviceman permeates the history of our nation.

The founders of the United States understood that the military would be the rampart from which America would guard its freedom. George Washington once stated, "By keeping up in Peace a well regulated and disciplined militia, we shall take the fairest and best method to preserve for a long time to come the happiness, dignity and Independence of our country." The prophecy of those words has been fulfilled time and again.

The cost of that vision has been tremendous, for the periods of peace our country has enjoyed are few. The longest time of complete tranquility for our armed forces was the 23 years between World Wars One and Two. Since the Revolutionary War, more than 42 million men and women have served in America's military. More than 600,000 of those dauntless, selfless warriors died in combat.

But why are we so seemingly willing to fight and, if need be, to die? The answer to that question is as simple—and yet as complex—as the soul of America itself. We fight because we believe. Not that war is good, but that sometimes it is necessary. Our soldiers fight and die not for the glory of war, but for the prize of freedom. And, the heart of America is freedom, for ourselves and all nations willing to fight for it. Yes, the price is high, but freedom is a wealth no debt can encumber.

But, what of the soldiers whose death has brought the liberty of our nation? Soldiers

who did not even enjoy the status of veteran? They were all different; yet share a sameness that is deeper than the uniform they wore. They were black, white, man, woman, Hispanic, Indian, Asian, Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Buddhist, Muslim, and a hundred other variations and combinations. What is most important—regardless of race, creed, color, or gender—they were American.

These courageous men and women, each so different in heritage and background, shared the common bonds of the armed forces—duty and sacrifice. All of them reached a moment in their lives when race and religion, creed and color made no difference. What remained was the essence of America—the fighting spirit of a proud people. They are servicemen who paid the price for freedom.

As we dedicate this memorial to the brave veterans of the past, we must also look to the future. In today's world, of terrorism freedom comes cloaked in uncertainty. America still relies on her sons and daughters to defend her liberty. The cost of independence remains high, but we are willing to pay it. We do not pay it gladly, but we pay it with deep reverence and thanks to those who have sacrificed their lives for America. We know that in the years to come, more brave souls will sacrifice their lives for America. We should include them in our thoughts when we view this symbol of freedom.

Let me conclude my remarks by reading a few excerpts from a letter that exemplifies why we honor our people in uniform. It was written by Sullivan Ballou, a Major in the 2nd Rhode Island volunteers, to his wife Sarah a week before the battle of Bull Run.

Dear Sarah: The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days—perhaps tomorrow. Lest I should not be able to write again, I feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall under your eye when I am no more. Our movements may be of a few days' duration and full of pleasure—and it may be one of some conflict and death to me. If it is necessary that I should fall on the battlefield for my Country, I am ready.

I have no misgivings about, or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. I know how American Civilization now leans on the triumph of the Government, and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and sufferings of the Revolution. And I am willing—perfectly willing—to lay down all my joys in this life, to help maintain this Government, and to pay that debt.

Sarah my love for you is deathless, and yet my love of Country comes over me like a strong wind and burns me irresistibly on to the battlefield.

The memories of the blissful moments I have enjoyed with you come crowding over me, and I feel most gratified to God and to you that I have enjoyed them so long. And it is hard for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes of future years, when God willing, we might still have lived and loved together, and seen our sons grown up to honorable manhood. If I do not return my dear Sarah, never forget how much I love you, and when my last breath escapes me on the battle field, it will whisper your name. Forgive my many faults, and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless and foolish I have often been.

But, O Sarah! If the dead can come back to this earth and flit unseen around those they loved, I shall always be near you; in the brightest days and in the darkest nights, always, and if a soft breeze falls upon your cheek, it shall be my breath, as the cool air fans your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by. Sarah do not mourn me dead; think I am gone and wait for me, for we shall meet again.

Sullivan Ballou was killed a week later at the First Battle of Bull Run.

That is why I am proud to be in Lovell, today to participate in the dedication of the Veteran's Memorial honoring the men and women who served our country.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I know it was a great day across America when we celebrated the Fourth of July. I look forward to the future Fourth of July and the daily events when patriotism and community and faith are shown in our country.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN (SELECT)
BENNY G. GREEN, U.S. NAVY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding Naval Officer, Captain Benny Green, upon his change of command from Special Boat Unit Twenty-Two. Throughout his career, Captain Green has served with distinction. It is my privilege to recognize his many accomplishments and to commend him for the superb service he has provided the Navy, the great State of Mississippi, and our Nation.

Captain Green enlisted in the Navy in September 1972. After an initial tour at the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department at Barbers Point, Hawaii, he attended Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL Training in Coronado, California, and graduated with class 83, for further assignment to SEAL Team One. Captain Green received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Louisville in 1980, and was commissioned an Ensign in 1981. He attended flight school at Pensacola Naval Air Station and upon graduation was assigned to Fighter Squadron Eleven at Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA as a Radar Intercept Officer. He flew numerous combat missions over Lebanon in response to the 1983 terrorist bombing attack of the Marine Barracks in Beirut. In February 1985, Captain Green returned to the Special Forces and was assigned to SEAL Team Four, in Little Creek, VA, as the Platoon Commander of the newly formed Sixth Platoon. In his next assignment, Captain Green was a plank owner of SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team One Detachment Hawaii, on Ford Island, Oahu, HI, where he served as Dry Deck Shelter Platoon Commander. Other operational tours in Naval Special Warfare include: Dry Deck Shelter Department Head, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team Two; Operations Officer, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team Two; Maritime Special Purpose Force Commander for Central Command Amphibious Ready Group 3-91; Executive Officer, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team Two; Naval Special Warfare Task Unit Commander for the Theodore Roosevelt Battle group 1-96; Operations Officer, Naval Special Warfare Group Two; Chief Staff Officer, Naval Special Warfare Group Two; and Requirements Officer for Naval Special Warfare Development Group. Captain Green also

completed a joint tour as the Counter-narcotics and Maritime Officer, Special Operations Command, Pacific.

As Commanding Officer, SBU-22, Captain Green's leadership firmly established his unit as the premier facility to train special operations forces in the riverine environment. His determination and oversight hastened the construction of new state-of-the-art facilities that provide for the training in the maintenance and repair of combatant craft, an armory, a supply building, a swim training tank, and a detachment building/administrative headquarters, with plans under development for a land-water range, a 30-unit housing facility, and a mini Navy Exchange/gas station. His rapport with senior military leadership was essential to theater commander exposure to SBU-22 capabilities in support of Special Operations Forces, SOF, throughout the world. During his tenure, SBU-22 hosted two major Joint Combined Exchange for Training, JCET, exercises, executed 13 counter-drug missions in South America, and trained over 450 foreign military personnel in all facets of riverine operations. His realignment of the Combatant Craft Training Curriculum fully addresses the requirements of the Naval Special Warfare Force-21 initiative and is typical of the exceptional foresight Captain Green demonstrated throughout his tour as Commanding Officer of SBU-22. His vast Special Operations experience proved to be a major resource in the identification, testing and implementation of the new Special Operations Craft-Riverine, SOC-R, that promises to revolutionize riverine tactics and capabilities.

Throughout his distinguished career, Captain Green has served the United States Navy and the Nation with pride and excellence. He has been an integral member of, and contributed greatly to, the best-trained, best-equipped, and best-prepared naval and special operations forces in the history of the world. Captain Green's superb leadership, integrity, and limitless energy have had a profound impact on SBU-22 and will continue to positively impact the United States Navy, our Special Operations Forces, and our Nation. Captain Green relinquishes his command on July 12, 2002 and reports as Director, Concept Development Directorate at Special Operations Command Joint Forces Command, in Norfolk, VA where he will continue his successful career. On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I wish Captain Green "Fair Winds and Following Seas."

COLONEL DOUGLAS JOHN WREATH
OF THE UNITED STATES AIR
FORCE RESERVE.

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, on March 29, 2002, Douglas John Wreath was promoted to the grade of Colonel in the United States Air Force Reserve. Major General Mike Hamel, USAF, administered the military oath of office