

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR AND IN MEMORY OF
SPECIALIST PAUL J. BUECHE OF
DAPHNE, AL

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, this past Monday the First Congressional District of Alabama and indeed, our entire State and Nation, said goodbye to another casualty of the war in Iraq.

Army Specialist Paul Joseph Bueche, a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and longtime resident of Daphne, Alabama, joined the Army National Guard in 2001 and was assigned to Company E of the 131st Aviation Regiment based in Birmingham.

Earlier this year, Paul's unit was activated and deployed to the Kingdom of Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In August of this year, his unit was transferred to its new duty station in Balad, Iraq. It was in Balad that, on October 21, 2003, a tire he was changing on an Army MH-60 Blackhawk helicopter exploded, killing Paul and seriously wounding one of his fellow soldiers.

During his 2-year career in the National Guard, Paul set a standard of excellence and displayed the qualities of discipline, devotion and dedication to country that are the hallmarks of men and women throughout the long and distinguished history of the American military. As a result of his hard work in the Middle Eastern Theater, Paul was recently advanced to the rank of Specialist, and he was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star medal and accompanying citation.

Mr. Speaker, as you can imagine, south Alabama is truly mourning the loss of this fine young man. In conversations with his friends and family, the one characteristic that was mentioned time and again when describing Paul was his love for life. As the Rev. Timothy Deasy noted during Paul's funeral mass, "he lived more in 19 years than many of us live in a lifetime. Paul gave his life for all of us."

A devoted brother, son, and grandson, Paul Bueche never waned in his appreciation for the many wonderful gifts of love and friendship that came his way during his brief 19 years. To a person, his fellow students and teachers from McGill-Toolen High School, his minister and fellow parishioners at Christ the King Catholic Church, and his many other family and friends spoke affectionately of Paul's boundless energy and enthusiasm and the genuinely warm feelings he displayed for his fellow man.

A telling story of his generosity came just days before he died. Recently, Paul had won a lottery held within his unit in Iraq which would have allowed him a 2-week furlough back in the United States in December. However, Paul chose to give that pass to a fellow guardsman from the unit, feeling it was more important that he—a husband and father—be at home with a wife and children who needed him more during the holidays.

Mr. Speaker, it is only right for us to pause and give thanks to God that there are still young men like Paul Joseph Bueche. On his handsome, young face, the world can see the very best America has to offer.

I urge my colleagues to take a moment and pay tribute to Specialist Paul Bueche and his selfless devotion to not only our country and the freedom we enjoy, but to a people who are but now in the infant stages of a new life—a new freedom—in their own land.

We should also remember his parents, Emory Paul and Maria Bueche, his sisters Jessica and Melissa, and his grandparents, Sydney and Doris Bueche and Jose and Ilena Alonso. Our prayer is that God will give them all the strength and courage that only He can provide to sustain them during the difficult days ahead.

It was Joseph Campbell who said, "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself." Make no mistake, young Paul Bueche was not only a dedicated soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice serving in the uniform of his country, but he was also a true American hero.

In addition to my statement, I ask that an accompanying article from the October 25th Mobile Register, written by Robert Buchanan, be included in this tribute to Paul. May he rest in peace.

A TIME TOO SOON TO COMPREHEND

There is a time for everything,
And a season for every activity under heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to uproot,
A time to kill and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to mourn and a time to dance,
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,

A time to embrace and a time to refrain,
A time to search and a time to give up,
A time to keep and a time to throw away,
A time to tear and a time to mend,
A time to be silent and a time to speak,
A time to love and a time to hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.
—Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

When you cradle your infant in your arms, rocking back and forth while reading to his young ears, more than likely it will be from a book of fairy tales with glorious, happy endings. Surely, though, it's not the time to tell him that the 16 lines from Ecclesiastes sum up the life that he will face. Of course, he couldn't comprehend it, nor would you want him to; life as a baby has its own time for being, for growing and for learning.

A time to be born and a time to die.
It's left to the parents to do the worrying, often quietly, without evidence that there is harm in that infant's way. As he grows to be a toddler, it's the parents who fret about the stumbling boy crashing into furniture, hitting walls, slapping the sofa. The rite of passage into official boyhood comes with its share of nicks and scratches. But a boy he is, and a boy he will be.

The years evaporate, and your baby boy is a man. Your concerns, however, have grown

with him. You watched him waddle in a sand box, not thinking that one day his life could end in the sands of an Iraqi village so small that it would be difficult to spot on a map.

It's too soon for a 19-year-old to die.

We humans comprehend this, lacking the understanding of why someone so young should leave this Earth now. It's even more heartbreaking for parents to have a son die before them.

It's not supposed to be this way.

A time to weep and a time to laugh.

The order of life has turned upside down for Emory and Maria Bueche. They have already told stories—terrific stories—about their son, Paul. They have shared them with family, friends and the media. It's a normal therapeutic exercise to keep their minds clear while preparing for funeral services.

Others will share their stories, bringing more laughter and tears. They'll be proud of the people Paul touched in his short life. They'll be proud he died serving his country. The Bueches won't be able to feel it, yet all the parents of our American babies will share in their pain.

Meanwhile, three more American soldiers die in Iraq. Three more sets of parents are experiencing the trauma of children passing too soon. All of us will be suffering along with them.

There is a time for everything.

Paul was a member of the 2002 graduating class of McGill-Toolen Catholic High School. Local television stations grabbed yearbooks from his days at McGill, showing Paul's smiling portrait in a row of students' photos.

A telephone call went to the cherubic looking youngster in the picture to the left of Paul. He's now a young college man, sans the rounded face.

"Paul Bueche died in Iraq," he's told.

"What?" he answers. "I didn't know he was over there. Oh, my God. What happened?"

He is told about the unfortunate circumstances, but the explanation falls flat. A classmate had died; the first member of the 2002 class was gone. It's too incredible for the student to absorb.

"Man, he was cool. We were in the Model U.N. together. I mean . . . I can't believe it. What happened?"

"Of all the people over there, that accident, it happened to one of us."

The McGill-Toolen senior class of 2002 was close, unusually close. The Bueches recalled how their house was always full of kids, that it wasn't unusual to wake up and find Paul's friends asleep on the den floor.

That was the class of 2002.

From house to house, class members found parents with open doors. Now these same parents are sharing the Bueches' ache, along with their young-adult children who are experiencing a type of grief they were not prepared to handle. It's just too soon.

Eventually, though, they will realize that Paul's death was not in vain, for there are few earthly callings higher than sacrificing for one's country, for one's friends back home.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

In the meantime, they can pray and take solace that there will be a time for peace.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BREAST
CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Breast Cancer Awareness Month on behalf of the Hampshire County Cancer Coalition. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a disease that will kill an estimated thirty-nine thousand, eight hundred women along with four hundred men in the year 2003 alone. It is through the extensive work of medical experts, as well as awareness groups like the Hampshire County Cancer Coalition, that there is hope to extinguish this horrible disease.

I am proud to recognize two Hampshire County residents, Clara Belle Lee and Nellie Lew, who are the two oldest living breast cancer survivors in our state of West Virginia. Ms. Lee has been a survivor for fifty-two years, and Ms. Lew has been a survivor for fifty-seven years. I was honored to have met these women, along with the rest of the Coalition, at the fourth Annual Breast Cancer Survivors Luncheon and wreath hanging ceremony. Their passion and their enthusiasm for life are characteristics of these two incredible women, who have beaten the odds of this fatal disease.

I would like to take some time to recognize the Hampshire County Cancer Coalition and their work. This organization has been instrumental in the state of West Virginia with educating the general public about cancer, as well as striving to initiate the early detection of cancers among women.

The Hampshire County Cancer Coalition was formed in 1993 under the direction of the Appalachia Leadership Initiative on Cancer, a cooperative agreement between the National Cancer Institute and Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, to address cancer control issues in our county. The Coalition has sought to increase public awareness and promote early detection of breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer throughout Hampshire County.

The Coalition has collaborated with various community entities in its cancer awareness efforts. Shortly after its formation, the Coalition sponsored two "Friend to Friend Summits," with one held in Romney and one in Capon Bridge. These summits brought together community members, cancer survivors, doctors and nurses for a sharing of the latest information regarding breast cancer awareness, prevention and treatment.

The Coalition has sponsored the Tower of Hope, which is a photo display of county breast cancer survivors dedicated to a charter member of the Coalition who is now deceased. The Tower is displayed in churches, libraries and the courthouse as a testimony to a courageous fight against a powerful disease.

Another focus area has been community education. Placemats with the warning signs of cancer were used in about twenty restaurants around the county. Business owners as well as patrons reported positive feedback.

In addition, the Coalition recently joined forces with the Tobacco Control Coalition to increase opportunities for promoting awareness.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration and pride that I honor this wonderful organization as well as these incredible women and their strides to beat this disease. This disease is the leading cancer sited in women, yet with proper awareness and prevention, this disease does not have to be the leading cause of cancer deaths among women between the ages of forty and fifty-nine years of age. With organizations like the Hampshire County Cancer Coalition, and amazing women survivors, there are rays of hope for people diagnosed with breast cancer.

OCTOBER AS NATIONAL BREAST
CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I am proud that October can be dedicated to raising awareness of the need for regular mammograms and doctor's visits. A member of my staff has come face to face with this disease, and I am proud to share her story. Hannah's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1990 at the age of 38. Hannah was only 11 years old, with one older brother and two younger sisters, but she remembers being frightened when her parents told her about her mother's cancer. The doctor had found the lump, which was too small for her to feel. If she had not gone to the doctor, it would have spread fast and deadly.

Fortunately, because of awareness, Hannah's mother's cancer was found early, surgery was performed, and she has done great ever since. Fortunately, because of awareness, Hannah only remembers being frightened, but she doesn't have to remember losing her mother to breast cancer because that did not happen. This story is only one of many which emphasize the need for breast cancer awareness. We all need to insist that our mothers, sisters, aunts, grandmothers, wives, and daughters need to get regular mammograms and talk to their doctors about this disease. It is absolutely essential that the information gets out to these women, and that the cancer is caught early. Hannah is grateful that her mother paid attention and has since fostered this awareness in Hannah and her two sisters.

I support reauthorization for the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. Breast cancer remains the second highest cause of death for women today. This is a reality that can stop only through awareness.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS
MONTH

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor victims, survivors, volunteers, and pro-

fessionals, who combat breast cancer each day.

The facts are grim, every 2½ minutes someone is diagnosed with breast cancer. An estimated 211,300 women and 1,300 men, in the United States will be diagnosed this year with breast cancer. An estimated 40,200 deaths are anticipated this year from breast cancer. In my home state of Louisiana, 3,800 new female breast cancer cases will be diagnosed this year, and 700 hundred women will lose their battle against the disease.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month provides a special opportunity to recognize these valiant fighters and to educate the public about the importance of monthly breast self-examinations and annual mammograms. Early detection greatly increases victims' chances of survival.

There is hope. When breast cancer is found early, the five-year survival rate is 96 percent. Monthly breast self-examinations and mammograms are the key components of early detection. I join my House colleagues in saluting the breast cancer survivors alive today in the United States.

I salute the volunteers across the country, including the Louisiana Breast Cancer Task Force, for their work to help educate people about the important life-saving measures of early detection. Thank you for taking time today to honor all the victims, survivors, volunteers, and professionals, who combat breast cancer each day.

REGARDING BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, every 12 minutes a woman in America dies of breast cancer. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but I am not sure that awareness is the right word. Unfortunately, many of us are painfully aware. Many, if not all of us have known someone who has fought against this devastating disease. I would like to express my deep appreciation to the many soldiers in the battle against breast cancer. There are too many to name right now, but their dedication and tireless efforts are critical and so deeply appreciated by us all.

A recent study found that the presence of mutated BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 genes made cancer risk soar. This information proves that passage of legislation such as the Genetic Non-Discrimination in Health Insurance and Employment Act is imperative. Mr. Speaker, I am a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation, which has 230 cosponsors. By not acting on this legislation, we are placing women's health in jeopardy on a daily basis. Women are not being tested because they fear they will be discriminated against by their insurer should they test positive. This is unconscionable.

This body has begun the job of funding the National Institutes of Health and cancer research over the past five years. However, our work is not done. It is imperative that we are able to fund new research and continue existing research. In order to ensure that progress is not lost and valuable information left uncovered, we must continue to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health.