

Company, 1st Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kenneth L. Miller, 35, from California assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment.

Staff Sgt. Brian Pavlich, 25, from Port Jervis, NY assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Sgt. John L. Eichenlaub, Jr., 24, from South Williamsport, PA assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Sgt. Joshua M. Harapko, 23, from Peoria, Aziz., assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Spc. Lucas V. Tripp, 23, from Aurora, Colo., assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment.

Spc. Barry M. Stephens, 20, from Pinson, Alabama, assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment.

Pfc. Shawn A. Mayerscik, 22, from Oil City, PA, assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Pfc. Tommy C. Young, 20, from Knoxville, Tenn. assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Pfc. Stryder O. Stoutenburg, 18, from Missoula, Mont. assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Pfc. Andrew D. Stevens, 20, from Rockingham, NH. assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Mr. Speaker, those injured in the crash were:

Spc. Dmitri Petrov and Spc. Edwin A. Mejia, both from Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to pray for these soldiers and their families during this difficult time.

Our nation, the United States Army, and the people of Northern New York stand united with the families of the fallen and injured soldiers. While I know there are no words or deeds that can ever ease the pain and heavy burden the loved ones of these soldiers are experiencing, I want to pay tribute to those who have given their lives to the fullest measure as well as those soldiers injured in the line of duty.

The North Country community has long viewed the soldiers stationed at Fort Drum as much more than just the defenders of our nation. They are our friends and neighbors. The outpouring of care and concern from area residents has been truly extraordinary. It is because we feel this loss, too. I want the injured soldiers and surviving families to know we share their grief and sorrow.

The crash at Fort Drum was not the first introduction Americans have had with the Black Hawk helicopter. Mark Bowden's best-selling book and movie titled "Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War" was an account of the American military campaign on the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia when warlords there were wreaking havoc on their own people in 1993. As I have mentioned before, the 10th Mountain Division is the Army's most frequently deployed force, so it's not surprising that elements of the 10th played a significant

role in that mission and were featured in the book's after-action report of the difficulties they faced. The title, "Black Hawk Down" comes from the ominous words that echoed from the radio transmissions almost as soon as the operation began.

Whether we are talking about the Black Hawk that went down in Somalia nearly a decade ago, or the crash near Wheeler-Sack Airfield at Fort Drum, we know that things do not always go as planned in war or in warfighting training exercises. And now, as our Armed Forces face another military offensive overseas, the tragic accident at Fort Drum serves as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices our service men and women make on a daily basis. Whether it be in training or in battle, we do not always have the privilege of seeing their acts of heroism carried on CNN or in a motion picture.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in paying tribute to these men. Let us also acknowledge the rest of the men and women in uniform and express our gratitude for their service to our nation. As they go forward with their assignments, both at home and abroad, they need our support and our prayers.

HONORING WIDER HORIZON SCHOOL

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an outstanding school in the 5th Congressional District of Florida. Educating our Youth is one of the most important challenges that we as a nation face. The founders of Wider Horizons School have embraced this challenge with a vigor and dedication that has left a strong impression on the community which they serve.

On Friday, March 14th, Wider Horizons School will celebrate its 20th Anniversary. Founded in 1983, Wider Horizons was the brain child of two individuals who cut their teeth in the Peace Corps opening schools in the jungles of Peru. Their formula for success includes a focus on independent learning, international field trips, and instruction in Spanish beginning in preschool.

I am proud to call Mr. and Mrs. Domenick constituents. They and their staff serve as examples to us all of what it means to truly be public servants.

IN RECOGNITION OF DEVIN GOODLET

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Devin Goodlet, a very special

young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership. He has been honored with the award of distinction as winner of the Cotillion for Achievement Scholarship Program.

The Cotillion for Achievement Award was established in 1986 and is presented annually. Two winners, one male, one female, are selected from public and private school seniors attending school in Andrew and Buchanan County, Missouri. Students are evaluated on four criteria: scholastic achievement, extra-curricular activities, community involvement and an essay written by the student. This prestigious award has been extended to Devin.

Devin has established himself as a well-rounded student. He is involved in numerous activities, including varsity tennis, student government, UMKC leadership seminar, Forum Club, Spanish Club, JCCC Mathcount, Math Olympiad, National Forensics League, Heartland Health Systems, Food Can Drive, Habitat for Humanity, Harvest Food Bank, Multiple Sclerosis Walk for the Cure, United Way penny drive, Missouri State Senate youth forum, 2000 election campaign, doctors day, royal family kids camp, and the Diwali Celebration. Additionally, he has been honored for his achievements with such awards and distinctions as the National Honor Society Award, the National Merit Commendation Award, the Academic Excellence Award, Bright Flight Scholar, the Missouri Math League Award, the ASME Math Competition Award, Duke University Tip Scholar while qualifying for the State tennis competition.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Devin Goodlet for his many achievements and in wishing him the best of luck in his future.

TRIBUTE TO MIDDLESBORO, KENTUCKY SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the staff of the Middlesboro Social Security Office for their strong, effective, and compassionate service to the people of Kentucky.

Social Security plays an important role in the lives of more Americans than any other federal program. Whether providing a Social Security number for a newborn baby, mailing a check to a retired worker, or helping a disabled individual receive benefits, the Social Security Administration touches the lives of just about everyone.

The field office in Middlesboro, Kentucky, is a shining example for this massive agency. Under the leadership of Steve Schneider, the staff in Middlesboro consistently goes beyond

the call of duty to provide valuable benefits to the people of Kentucky. Because of their unwavering commitment to helping others, the Social Security Administration recognized the Middlesboro Office as the Best Level II Field Office in the Atlanta Region for fiscal year 2002.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, I want to thank the staff at the Middlesboro Social Security Office for their hard work and dedication to serving the people of Kentucky. These fine Americans are an inspiration to us all, and I salute them for their commitment to helping others.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE QUALIFIES FOR THE SCHOOL'S FIRST NCAA TOURNAMENT

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. KLECZKA. MR. Speaker, On Tuesday, March 11, 2003, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Men's Basketball team qualified for the NCAA tournament by defeating the Butler University Bulldogs. The Panthers (24-7) are making their first-ever appearance in the NCAA Tournament, and gained an automatic berth into the field with a 69-52 win over Butler in the championship game of the Horizon League Tournament. UWM will be seeded number 12 in the West Region of the NCAA Tournament.

This outstanding achievement is a proud moment for the university, alumni, students, and the community. I would like to join with the UWM family in recognizing this enormous accomplishment, and it's with great pride that I offer my congratulations and applaud their efforts.

Tournament MVP Clay Tucker scored a game-high 23 points in leading the No. 2 seed University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee over No. 1 seed Butler University in the championship game. He also had team-high eight rebounds to go with game-bests in assists (4), steals (4), and blocks (2).

UWM's Head Basketball Coach Bruce Pearl coaching talents have been recognized nationally. In the May 1999 issue of Sport Magazine, Coach Pearl was listed as one of the "Five Head Coaches on the Rise," placing him in a group with Paul Hewitt (Georgia Tech), Mike Brey (Notre Dame), and Buzz Peterson (Tennessee).

Before coming to coach the UWM Panthers, Coach Pearl ended 14 years as an assistant at the University of Iowa. Prior to coaching at Iowa, he was an assistant coach at Stanford, and, at the age of 23, was promoted to Associate Head Coach at Stanford. Bruce Pearl helped lay the groundwork for the resurgence in men's basketball at Stanford.

So, I am pleased to join with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to recognize the Men's Basketball Team for their notable play and excitement for the community at large and the State of Wisconsin.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL GARY D. JERAULD

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Gary D. Jerauld upon his retirement after more than 26 years of outstanding service to our country in the United States Army. After his effective retirement date of June 30, 2003, Col. Jerauld will reside in my Congressional district.

Colonel Gary D. Jerauld has distinguished himself throughout his military service in challenging and diverse assignments. Throughout his remarkable career, he has received many medals and awards for his ability to lead by example, encourage excellence from his peers and subordinates, effectively manage the Army's resources, and consistently produce outstanding results. I commend Col. Jerauld for his ability to energize a diverse staff toward a common purpose, setting high standards and inspiring his staff to achieve them.

Colonel Jerauld has been assigned to several key military positions throughout his career, which culminated as the Project Manager for the Tactical Operations Centers (TOCs) and Air and Missile Defense Command and Control Systems (AMDCCS), a position he has held since 1999. It is in this role that Col. Jerauld will leave an enduring mark on the future of our Army.

One example of his unique leadership abilities occurred in March 2000, when he was given the mission: "Restructure A2C2S into an executable program, place the system in the hands of the user now, and field to the First Digitized Division in Fiscal Year 2003." In just over one year, Colonel Jerauld and his team stood up the A2C2S Product Manager position and office, restructured the program, deployed an A2C2S demonstrator system to the 4th Infantry Division, and awarded a competitive contract for system integration. Colonel Jerauld has built a reputation as a Project Manager for delivering quality products to the field in much less time normally required for design, fabrication, and delivery.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of North Alabama, I congratulate Colonel Jerauld for his 26 years of service to our country and I welcome him to our North Alabama community.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1309, "VETERANS PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS ACT OF 2003"

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 1309, "The Veterans Prescription Drug Benefits Act of 2003", legislation which will provide a revolutionary change in veterans' medical care.

"The Veterans Prescription Drug Benefits Act of 2003" would allow veterans to be the first among America's seniors and disabled people to have a real, meaningful Medicare outpatient drug benefit. If our nation is serious

about implementing a drug benefit for seniors, the legislation I am introducing today would speed the availability of a prescription drug benefit and could even result in savings for the Medicare trust fund by allowing VA to employ its considerable prescription drug purchasing and benefit management skills in administering the benefit for veterans who are Medicare eligible. Additionally, this legislation would realign VA health care, allowing VA to concentrate its health care assets on the many veterans who rely upon it for the majority of their care needs.

"The Veterans Prescription Drug Benefits Act of 2003" would, for the first time, allow veterans to bring prescriptions ordered by physicians who are not affiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs to the VA to be filled. It would also require the Medicare trust fund to pay the cost of this new benefit for veterans who choose it and who are also eligible for Medicare Part A and enrolled in Medicare Part B.

Recently the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has decided to restrict enrollment of higher income veterans to those who were enrolled prior to January 17, 2002. Consequently, this legislation would allow veterans who no longer have the option of receiving a full continuum of health care services to receive subsidized prescription drug coverage from VA.

Providing, this new drug benefit to Medicare eligible veterans could also have the effect of eliminating the enormous queues that have developed as higher income veterans have flooded the system to seek inexpensive prescription drugs. As of the end of January, about 202,000 veterans had waited longer than six months for a first primary care visit or for necessary follow up care. Many of these veterans are likely to be Priority 7 or 8 veterans who constituted more than 75 percent of VA's new users in 2002. Offering these veterans an opportunity for new drug coverage without first obtaining an appointment with a VA provider could have the effect of significantly reducing or entirely eliminating these waiting times. In fiscal year 2002, VA estimates almost 900,000 veterans used the VA health care primarily or exclusively to fill drug prescriptions who would also be likely to take advantage of a new prescription drug benefit.

At the end of 2000, VA's Office of Inspector General (IG) advised "VHA can reduce the cost impact of providing prescriptions to priority group 7 veterans, make additional resources available for veterans healthcare, and enhance the delivery of prescription services to veterans." (Audit of Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Pharmacy Co-Payment Levels and Restrictions on Filling Privately Written Prescriptions for Priority Group 7 Veterans, Report No. 99-00057-4, December 20, 2000) This report suggested that VA could have saved more than \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 2001 by eliminating the need for VA to re-examine veterans who have already received examinations and tests to receive prescriptions from private physicians. These savings were projected only for Priority 7 veterans, who were, at that time the group with the lowest priority for care. For all veterans, the IG might project even higher savings.

While cognizant of his IG's finding, Secretary Anthony J. Principi testified before the Committee on Veterans Affairs that he believed that the IG did not factor in the additional costs of new demand for the prescription drug benefit. His response when asked