

band's Myrtle Beach base when Denton put the single on the air.

"Randy said he just pulled the car over and started hugging his wife and crying because that was the first time he had ever heard his song on the radio," Denton recalled.

Kenny Rogers' first appearance as a country performer was at one of the station's concerts in 1975.

"He was scared to death," remembered Denton. "He didn't know how the crowd would respond to him."

East Tennessee natives Con Hunley and current superstar Kenny Chesney were also championed early on the station.

Ed Brantley, now WIVK's vice-president and general manager, started at the station in 1973 as a part-time announcer and hosted the station's first call-in talk show, "Sound Off."

"That was when country definitely wasn't the cool format," said Brantley, "but the people who did like it were a solid base."

The "solid base" became even more solid as the decade went on with the station drawing an almost unheard of 20-plus market share. Much of that had to do with the station establishing a solid news department and broadcasting regular weather reports and school closings. In 1978 the station began broadcasting UT football games, which further solidified its audience base.

Some of the WIVK's success was due to its programmers knowing the tastes of the audience. Brantley said the station took chances with several artists who dipped their toes into country. When the Pointer Sisters released the song "Fairytale," WIVK was one of the first to add it to the regular rotation. The station was also an early supporter of Olivia Newton-John's music.

"We played a lot of crossover," said Brantley, "and then with 'Urban Cowboy' it just broke loose."

At that time the station was receiving ratings for its AM and FM stations as one number, sometimes giving it better than a 30-point market share. Typical successful stations in other similar-sized markets were happy when they hit a 10 share.

Through the years a few local stations have challenged WIVK by going with a country format, but none have succeeded.

"Our research showed that it would take a direct competitor five years and \$5 million dollars in advertising and promotions to even compete with us," Denton said.

The only time that WIVK-FM seemed vulnerable was when Claude Tomlinson became ill in 1990. During his illness, the station would let Tomlinson broadcast from his home and sometimes his hospital bed.

Tomlinson died in 1991 and was replaced by the team Darren Wilhite and Tim Wall. The duo remained with the station for six years until they were replaced by Andy (Jerry Christopher Ritchie) and Alison (West) in 1997.

Ritchie said that his and West's goal in coming to such a hugely successful station was to "just not screw it up." They were surprised by the career longevity they encountered.

"It's pleasantly unusual to find anybody who's been at the same station for five years, much less 35," said Ritchie. "It's exciting to find some stability."

In fact, the station's personalities have nearly all been with WIVK for more than five years and have become part of the culture as their predecessors did. Andy and Alison, Gunner, Colleen Addair, Hoss and Jack Ryan are all part of the fabric of East Tennessee.

After the FM station became the dominant vehicle for WIVK, the AM station in 1987 moved to 990-AM, the former frequency of WNOX. In 1992 it shifted to all-talk and news format and became the region's most popular station in that format.

Jim Dick is no longer involved with either station. Dick Broadcasting sold WIVK and 11 other stations to Las Vegas-based Citadel Communications for \$300 million in 2000. However, Dick does visit the station and has warm feelings for the people still involved with the project he began 50 years ago.

"I'm very proud of them," says Dick. "Very proud."

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO U.S. ARMY SPECIALIST LUCAS V. TRIPP

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 18, 2003*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I stand before you today to honor a young man tragically taken from this earth while in the service of his country. U.S. Army Specialist Lucas V. Tripp of Aurora, Colorado was one of ten soldiers killed in the unfortunate Black Hawk helicopter accident near Fort Drum, New York last Tuesday. Those who seek the true meaning of duty, honor, and sacrifice will find it in dedicated servants like Luke Tripp and his fellow soldiers. I am truly humbled to honor them before this body of Congress and this nation.

Luke joined the Army four years ago and, like so many young men and women before him, he saw it as an opportunity to serve our great nation. After enlisting, Luke graduated from boot camp at the top of his class and quickly rose through the ranks, eventually becoming a Black Hawk crew chief and certified flight instructor. Luke could rappel out of a hovering helicopter into a hostile area and repair damaged aircraft, an action that requires stunning bravery. The accident last week occurred as the 13 crew members returned from a training exercise in upstate New York, where they had been preparing for a possible deployment in the case of war. Luke's best friend was the first to reach the crash site and reported that he found Luke heroically shielding one of the two survivors.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot fully express my deep sense of gratitude for the sacrifice of these young soldiers and their families. Throughout our history, men and women in uniform have fought our battles with distinction and courage. At the dawn of this new century, the United States military has once again been called to defend our freedom and ideals against a new and emerging threat. Soldiers like Luke and his crew embody America's determination to lead the world in confronting that threat and I know that their awesome sacrifice will not be in vain. They have done all Americans proud and I know they have the respect and admiration of all of my colleagues here today.

#### IRAQ

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 18, 2003*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise before the House today to question the merits of the mission this Administration will soon ask the brave men and women of our armed forces to undertake. I am sure that our servicemen and

women will perform admirably and we all hope they will achieve their objectives quickly and with minimal loss of life, but my reservations about this approaching war remain as strong today as they have ever been.

Although I agree with the President that we must eliminate the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction, I still believe it is at the least premature, and more likely contrary to our national interest, to launch a military attack against Iraq now. I firmly believe that we could better achieve our objectives in Iraq by building a strong international coalition capable of not only winning the war, but also capable of winning the peace.

When thinking about whether or not we should go to war against Iraq, I find myself returning repeatedly to one basic question. Will American-led military action against Iraq improve the security of the American people against the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction? I believe the answer is no.

I remain concerned that an immediate attack on Iraq would significantly rise the chance of terrorism here at home, while overseas I fear that a cornered Saddam Hussein would release his arsenal of chemical, biological, and possible nuclear weapons on American soldiers or on his neighbors in the region, including Israel. He could also pass them on to terrorists and speed their arrival to American shores. But it is not fear of danger to America that gives us pause. Americans are brave enough to face danger if necessary. However, there is no evidence I have seen either in classified or public briefings that convinces me that this war is necessary now.

Furthermore, even if we prosecute a successful war, which I have no doubt our brave men and women in uniform would, I have questions about our ability to win the post-war peace. A war and subsequent American occupation of Iraq would likely send a destabilizing shockwave throughout the Middle East and ignite violent anti-Americanism, giving rise to future threats to our national security. While I have no doubt that we would successfully depose Saddam Hussein, I am concerned that the act of extinguishing Saddam would inflame, rather than diminish, the terrorist threat to the United States. The ensuing anti-American sentiment could reinvigorate the terrorists' pursuit of the loose nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union—a greater threat than Iraq, I might add, one that America has largely neglected.

We can and should take the lead in eliminating the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, but this Administration has not made a convincing case to the world that war is necessary. Instead, it has used aggressive rhetoric to wage a diplomatic war on our allies that is straining our international relationships and alienating America from the world. While I do not believe that we need the permission of our allies to take action, I do believe that we need their partnership to be successful in the long run.

In order to be successful, we must lead the world community. But leadership is not simply about acting boldly—it means bringing along others to act boldly with you. We need to disarm and dismantle Saddam's arsenal, but we should do so with the support of the world. This Administration, however, has failed to earn the support of our allies. And so, in place of leadership, we have questions and ultimately instability.

This Administration has yet to explain how military action make Americans more safe, not less. It has also failed to explain to the American public what our responsibilities would be in a post-Saddam Iraq. How will we guarantee the security of our soldiers and the Iraqi people? How will we guarantee the success of a democratic transition? How many hundreds of billions of dollars would it cost to rebuild Iraq?

If the President has determined that military action against Iraq is necessary, I request that

he explain first to a joint session of Congress exactly how a war could affect our other international interests, what our plan is for achieving a long-term stabilization of post-conflict Iraq, and approximately how much military action and post-war reconstruction would likely cost. The American people deserve to know the answers to these questions.

Americans are willing to pay any price and bear any burden to advance the American ideals of liberty, equality and peace. However,

if a war is not deemed necessary, if it is not indeed a last resort, then the price in dollars and blood is too great.

Since it now appears that arguments against the war are too late, we must turn our attention to working with other countries diplomatically and to prosecuting the war as humanely as possible so that we will be able to pick up the pieces when the fighting is over.