

REMARKS BY

BRIGADIER GENERAL REUBEN D. JONES

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL/  
COMMANDER, U.S. ARMY PHYSICAL DISABILITY AGENCY/  
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SERVICE AGENCY

“MAIL GOES TO WAR”

2008 WINTON M. BLOUNT POSTAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE PRESENTATION

FRIDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2008

THANK YOU ALLEN.

MR. ALLEN KANE  
MRS. DIANNE NIEDNER,  
MRS. LYNN HEIDELBAUGH  
MR. ROBERT HARRIS  
MR. PAUL VOGEL, MY PARTNER AT USPS, GREAT TO SEE  
YOU AND PAM HERE TONIGHT.

OTHER DISTINGUISHED GUESTS...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—GOOD EVENING.

BEFORE I START...LET ME ASK THAT YOU JOIN ME IN  
GIVING THE ORGANIZERS OF THIS GREAT EVENT A ROUND  
OF APPLAUSE

ORGANIZERS:  
MR. TOM LERA,  
MR. WILLIAM TOMPKIS,  
MRS. JANET KLUG,  
MR. JOHN NOLAN,  
MR. BOB MCLEAN,  
MRS. SUSAN ALVARADO

IT IS CERTAINLY A PLEASURE AND A PRIVILEGE TO BE  
HERE WITH YOU TONIGHT ACCEPTING THIS WONDERFUL  
HONOR AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MILITARY  
POSTAL SERVICE AGENCY (MPSA), BUT JUST AS  
IMPORTANT, AS A SOLDIER, WHO UNDERSTANDS THE

MEANING OF WHAT THE WORD “MAIL” SIGNIFIES TO THE SOLDIER AND HIS OR HER FAMILY.

THIS WORD “**MAIL**” CONJURES UP MANY EMOTIONS AND MEMORIES FOR ALL OF US WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED IT, AND MOST WOULD PROBABLY AGREE THAT THE MAJORITY OF THOSE MEMORIES ARE FAVORABLE AND BROUGHT A SMILE TO YOUR FACE. BUT THERE ARE ALSO MEMORIES THAT BROUGHT TEARS. AFTER BEING SEPARATED FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME, IT IS EASY TO THINK THAT YOU ARE ALL ALONE, BUT THEN “THE MAIL” COMES AND IT LETS YOU KNOW YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

“WHEN MAIL GOES TO WAR”

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND IMAGINE YOU ARE THE PARENTS OF A CLOSE-KNIT FAMILY, WITH A YOUNG MAN THAT HAS NEVER BEEN TOO FAR FROM HOME BEFORE, AND THAT CHILD ENLISTS IN ONE OF THE SERVICES AND IS SENT OFF TO WAR.

A TELEPHONE IS NOT AVAILABLE. THEY DO NOT HAVE EMAIL, AND THEY CAN'T EVEN **TEXT!** ....**BUT** THEY GET A

CHANCE TO WRITE A LETTER HOME. WHEN THAT PIECE OF MAIL COMES, IT MOVES THOSE LOVED ONES IN A REALLY POWERFUL WAY...OPEN YOUR EYES PLEASE. THAT YOUNG MAN WAS MY SON, AND I KNOW WHAT THAT FEELS LIKE, AND LET ME TELL YOU, SO DOES HIS MOTHER!

“WHEN MAIL GOES TO WAR”

### FAMILY MEMBERS

MAIL IS **IMPORTANT TO FAMILY MEMBERS** BECAUSE IT ALLOWS THEM TO PUT THEIR GRIEF ASIDE, WHICH IS CAUSED BY LONG SEPARATIONS FILLED WITH CONSTANT WORRY AND UNCERTAINTY, EVEN IF IT IS JUST FOR A FEW BRIEF MOMENTS. IT HELPS LOVED ONES TO RECONNECT, EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE MILES OF SEPARATION.

### MORALE AND WELL BEING

“WHEN MAIL GOES TO WAR” IS NOT ONLY VALUABLE TO A SOLDIER’S FAMILY BUT TO HIS MORALE AND WELL

BEING. BRIGADIER GENERAL SEAN J. BYRNE, MY BOSS, AS COMMANDER OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> PERSCOM, ONCE SAID,

“FEW THINGS IMPACT A UNIT’S MORALE MORE THAN MAIL. LETTERS ARE NOT LEFT BEHIND ON A NIGHTSTAND OR ON A COT WHEN SOLDIERS **GO INTO BATTLE. THEY ARE TAKEN ALONG AND READ OVER AND OVER.** THAT SMALL PIECE OF CORRESPONDENCE FROM HOME MEANS THE WORLD TO THESE BRAVE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WHO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.”

### LOVE

“WHEN MAIL GOES TO WAR”, IT ALLOWS OUR SERVICE MEMBERS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR LOVED ONES, WHICH KEEPS THEM IN TOUCH WITH REALITY, DESPITE THE HARDSHIPS ENDURED IN COMBAT, AND IT CONSTANTLY REMINDS THEM OF WHAT THEY FIGHT TO PROTECT.

## THANKS TO USPS

I WANT TO THANK THOSE WHO MAKE ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE. THE PARTNERSHIP THE MILITARY ENJOYS WITH PAUL VOGEL AND HIS USPS TEAMMATES IS SIGNIFICANT. ...AND WITHOUT THEM, GETTING THIS AWARD WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

## THANKS TO THE SMITHSONIAN

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE FOR PUTTING THIS DISPLAY TOGETHER IN ORDER TO TELL OUR STORY. OFTEN MAIL IS NOT VIEWED AS IMPORTANT AS BEANS, BULLETS, AND AMMO, BUT THIS DISPLAY WILL HELP TO DRIVE HOME THE IMPORTANCE OF MILITARY MAIL TO OUR SERVICEMEMBERS AND THEIR LOVED ONES AND THAT IT MUST BE CONSIDERED AS IMPORTANT AND A CORE FUNCTION.

## WINTON M. "RED" BLOUNT

LASTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ONE SPECIAL PATRIOT, SOMEONE WHO NOT ONLY ACHIEVED GREAT

SUCCESS AS A BUSINESS MAN, BUT WHO HAS MADE A LASTING IMPACT ON SERVICE MEMBERS AND ON THIS GREAT NATION.

AGAIN, .....I AM HONORED TO RECEIVE THIS HONOR ON BEHALF OF THE MILITARY POSTAL SERVICE AGENCY, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE AND THE ARMY.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO THE MILITARY COMMUNITY;  
GOD BLESS THE TROOPS MANY WHO ARE IN HARM'S WAY THIS EVENING;  
AND GOD BLESS AMERICA! THANK YOU.