

I learned that he was a caring and selfless individual by his actions. His life impacted those he came in contact with, extending beyond his friends and family. His service to others made a lasting impression not only on Suffield, Connecticut residents, but it extended to the citizens of Iraq and fellow service members within the armed forces. Stephen's loss has deeply impacted those that knew him and his family."—Friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"We knew him as a wonderful friend, student, track teammate, and overall outstanding citizen. Please help facilitate this honor to his memory."—Friends of the Bixler Family.

"A unique way of remembering our own and the tremendous price families pay for something others may take so lightly."

"Steve was an exceptional young man that my wife and I knew well. He attended our church and was an altar boy. His dream was always to be a Marine and he gave his life in the service of his country doing what he wanted to do. We have shared many moments with his mom and dad, Linda and Richard, grieving over the loss of someone so young."—Friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"In my opinion, there would be no better way to honor both Stephen and his family than by renaming the Post Office. Stephen is a hero, and I believe this is the very least he deserves for the sacrifice that he has made for his country. It is now our turn to repay our respect and honor by renaming the Suffield Post Office in Cpl. Bixler's name."—Friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"My senior year I attained a car for the first time and I would drive Steve to practice and home at the end of the day. We got along great, we could always make each other laugh at the littlest things and others on the tram would laugh with us. We used to hang out so much the athletic director didn't realize I was two years older than Steve. I had a great time with him and I will truly miss him. Steve was a great student and enjoyed by everyone, he was a talented young man."—Friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"Stephen Bixler was one of my older brother's closest friends. They ran cross-country and track together in high school and I remember always going to the meets and watching them compete. Steve was quite possibly one of the nicest guys on the team, if not the entire high school. Stephen entering the Marines and defending his country was something he felt passionately about. I support your idea to rename the Post Office in memory and honor of Stephen Bixler. What he did for our country may not be known to many people throughout the country, but it is widely known throughout our town and I believe that this renaming would be an honor in his family's eyes."—Friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"Stephen graduated from Suffield High School in 2003, 2 years after our son and one year before our daughter. He and our son Jon were good friends, having competed together in Cross Country and Track & Field at Suffield High. During the years that Jon had his license, and Steve was still too young, Steve was the one exclusive passenger who was picked up each morning on the way to school and returned home each evening after a meet or practice. The two of them, and the old truck they rode in back and forth to school, were men on a mission who could only be deterred by the chance to do 'donuts' in an empty high school parking lot with a fresh covering of snow!

"During the summer, they were part of a small group on the Cross Country team who attended running camp in Vermont. They always enjoyed entertaining us with the stories they brought home about the camp antics and the occasional practical jokes."

"Steve was a model student, with a warm personality and a great sense of humor. He was also quiet and serious with a great respect for his family and country. All during high school, Steve's friends knew his first dream was to be a U.S. Marine. When many of his friends left for the 'footloose' life of being new college students, Steve left for the most difficult job—Marine training. As a marine, Steve's assignments throughout the world had one cause and that was to assist people in need. Steve was a young man that any parent would be honored to have as a son."—Parents of one of Bixler's close friends.

"The Iraq war is not a subject that comes and goes—it is always on the air. Its everlasting presence reminds me of Stephen Bixler—in my studies, watching the news, even conducting research at work.

"Naming the post office after Steve would not just be an honor to Steve but also a gift to the people of Suffield. Though we can never bring Steve back, and no building can compensate for his death, feeling like we have paid tribute to Steve is a necessary part of the community's healing."

"I graduated High School with Stephen Bixler and considered him a friend. I remember going to Stephen's house to play when I was very young and I remember riding the bus with him for as long as I can remember. For all of my years as a student in Suffield, I can remember Stephen's house was always extensively decorated by his mother. When these decorations went from hoping for his return, to mourning his loss, the effect was well felt throughout the community in the deepest, most heartfelt way. Stephen was well liked and greatly respected, and will forever be appreciated. As long as Stephen's family supports the honor then I believe nothing should stand in the way of this."—Classmate and friend of Cpl. Bixler.

"Stephen was my cousin. He lost his life fighting for us in Iraq. Stephen loved what he did, being a Marine. He lost his life doing what he loved. Growing up, Stephen emulated the "All American Kid". An athlete, a scholar and Eagle Scout. He defined what all Marines should strive to be. Aside from all these things, Stephen was a son, a brother, and a friend to many. He has made our family proud, and anyone who knew him. Anyone who didn't know him missed out on a wonderful person."—Cousin of Cpl. Bixler.

"As a former classmate and teammate of Corporal Stephen R. Bixler, I can attest to his deserving the honor of the Suffield Post Office name. Steve was a valued member of every team, class, and organization that he participated in. He was always there to encourage creativity, determination, and strength in the people around him. Steve lived his dream by joining the Marines. He seemed to have found a home in his service. As a Marine, he was able to stand out from the crowd, just as he did as an athlete and intellectual. Steve deserves this honor because he gave his life for his country. Steve deserves this honor because he was one of America's finest soldiers. However, Steve mostly deserves this honor because of who he was as a person. He was kind and sought out the best in those around him. He was an inspiration to everyone and that is why the Suffield Post Office should be named the Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office."—Classmate of Cpl. Bixler.

CONGRATULATING MRS. JANE EVENS

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 4, 2007

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor one of my constituents, Mrs. Jane Bridges Ferrenbach Evens. Jane has been selected as the 2007–2008 Freedoms Foundation—Missouri (St. Louis) Chapter "Spirit of '76—Patriot." The Freedoms Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching young people the principles upon which our Nation was founded. They work to convey the close link between the rights and the responsibilities of citizens in society.

Jane has been an active member of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge since 1972, organizing and promoting the chapter with enthusiasm. She served as the National Chair of Development for the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution for the last 6 years and is currently acting Senior Advisor to the Development Department. Jane has also volunteered her time and energy to numerous other organizations, including the St. Louis Repertory Theatre, Youth Emergency Service, Hosea House, Girls Club of St. Louis, Kirkwood Rotary Club, to name just a few.

A native of Webster Groves, Missouri, Jane is married to Robert D. Evens. She has two successful daughters, both working in the medical field, and two grandchildren.

As one who has a deep and abiding love for American history and the Patriots, who have gone before us, I want to thank Jane for her commitment to preserving our history and congratulate her for being selected 2007–2008 "Spirit of '76—Patriot."

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN HENKES

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 4, 2007

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, Racine, Wisconsin, native and author Kevin Henkes is to be commended for his numerous literary achievements. Recognized as an outstanding children's author, Henkes has contributed to the national landscape of children's literature and delighted children with his thoughtful mixture of words and art. Born in Racine, Henkes attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He currently lives in Madison with his wife, Laura, and their children. Several of Henkes' books have garnered awards, including the prestigious Caldecott for *Kitten's First Full Moon* in 2005. He also received the Elizabeth Burr/Worzalla Award for a Wisconsin author/illustrator for *Kitten's First Full Moon* (2005), *Sun and Spoon* (1997), *Protecting Marie* (1995), and *Words of Stone* (1993). On October 14, 2007, the Racine Public Library will honor Henkes when one of his works, *Julius, the Baby of the World*, is performed as a musical for over 4,600 first- and second-grade students and the general public. The Downtown Rotary Club, Friends of the Library, Hughes House, Johnson Foundation,