

Bella was not related to me by blood, but she was my sister in spirit since we were kids together in Brighton. This winsome girl was married and a mother by age 16. She worked in a cannery to help Ray attend the then-Colorado State College in Greeley. It was an experience filled with bare food cupboards, living in dingy basements. Ray became a teacher/university administrator and successful civic leader.

Then it was Bella's turn to bring dreams to fruition. "I've decided to go to college and become a teacher," she announced. Armed with a GED, she began a daily round trip from Brighton to Greeley. Family needs still came first. Only when everyone was asleep would she sit at a kitchen table to study. In three years, Bella received her diploma—with a straight A average. Later she fulfilled another aspiration and became a respected principal—one of the state's best. Probably her greatest skill was being able to defeat an enemy by making them a friend.

Then came sudden, unexpected pain and a doctor's diagnosis of ovarian cancer. Bella's war had begun. With prayer, traditional medicine, visualization, holistic health tactics—and, yes even laughter—Bella beat back her vicious enemy. Tauntingly, cancer would retreat and then return. Bella wept when she was finally forced to give up her position as principal. "It was six years of increasingly difficult anguish for us and pain for her," husband Ray says.

"Death be not proud," I said in a eulogy. "Bella's intent was never to defeat death—no one does—it was to win at life." Through study and reflection, Ray believes, Bella found a spiritually higher level—a place beyond pain's reach.

She endured beyond our comprehension to understand why she simply didn't just let go. Never did she relinquish personal power or allow physical frailties to become spirit-dominating indignities. University of Northern Colorado President Howard Skinner gladly came to her home when asked to join forces for worthwhile programs. Bella wanted to leave Earth on her terms—"thoroughly used up," as George Bernard Shaw wrote in a poem.

Every grandchild of Bella's received a personal videotaped message. So, too, were family members counseled, parents called from a hospital bed and told goodbye. When visitors came to her, she found strength to console us and offer advice. When we'd been prepared to get on with our lives without her, she left us.

It's been six months since Bella died, and sister Anna Lee still mourns for a best friend.

Bella was Cathy Gleesing's mentor and school principal. Cathy became a valued friend and was always there to offer love and support in time of trying need. Bella "led with elegance, grace and style," Cathy says. "I wish for Bella when I strive to be excellent in my work, mood and relationships."

In other words, always.

Ray lost a beloved companion, one who at day's end every day for 40 years would join her partner to talk and reinforce *familia* and values.

We have all lost, and during this holiday season we need to learn from her gift.

THANKING KIM KOIVISTO FOR A JOB WELL DONE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Today marks the final day of work in the Senate for Kim Koivisto, the associate director to the Democratic Steering and

Coordination Committee. I didn't want the day to pass without taking a moment to thank Kim for a job well done.

The Democratic Steering and Coordination Committee is the liaison office between Senate Democrats and a good portion of the rest of the country, including representatives of state, county and local governments and people from every imaginable interest group. The committee is an important part of our caucus's efforts to talk with and listen to Americans from varying perspectives.

Kim has worked as associate director of the committee for the past two years. During that time, she has consistently demonstrated the highest level of commitment, professionalism and creativity. She has worked most intensively on women's, Hispanic and labor issues.

One highlight of Kim's tenure is the creation of a new outreach program to strengthen relations between our caucus and national Hispanic organizations, Latino elected officials and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. She also used her fluency in Spanish to translate materials into Spanish, and to organize Spanish-language press conferences for Senate and House Democrats.

Kim has also worked closely with labor organizations and women's groups to advance causes that are important to American families—and to Kim personally. Issues she worked especially hard on include closing the pay gap between men and women, raising the minimum wage, and strengthening the federal commitment to breast cancer research. Kim was also active in the fight to retain the Federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program last year as part of TEA-21, the new Federal highway bill.

Kim's immediate plans include traveling through Indonesia. She will attend the Graduate School for Counseling at the University of Maryland in the fall.

On behalf of all Senate Democrats, I'd like to thank Kim for her hard work, and wish her the best of luck in her travel and studies. She will be missed.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD BAXTER WILSON

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, before the Senate adjourned for the Easter recess, my State of Mississippi suffered the loss of one of its finest citizens, Richard Baxter Wilson, who died on Monday, March 15. He was a national leader in the electric power industry. He served as a member of the board of directors of Middle South Utilities, Inc., the Edison Electric Institute, and the National Association of Electric Companies.

In addition to serving as president and chairman of the board of Mis-

issippi Power & Light Company, he was also a member of many other corporate, charitable, civic, and educational institution boards.

He was a personal friend of mine whose advice and counsel I appreciated and relied upon, to my great benefit. His two children, Richard B. Wilson, Jr. and Miriam Weems, are two of my closest and dearest friends. And I extend to them, and all the members of the family, my sincerest condolences.

I ask unanimous consent that the obituary that appeared in The Clarion-Ledger of Jackson, MS, of March 16 be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the obituary was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Clarion-Ledger, Mar. 16, 1999]

RICHARD BAXTER WILSON, EX-COMPANY
PRESIDENT

MADISON—Richard Baxter Wilson, 93, a former president of Mississippi Power & Light, died of heart failure Monday at his home.

Services are 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at First Presbyterian Church of Jackson. Visitation is 4-6 p.m. today at Wright & Ferguson Funeral Home and 9:30 a.m. Wednesday at the church.

Mr. Wilson was a Yazoo City native. He graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1927.

He began working with Mississippi Power & Light in 1926 and worked in Cleveland before moving to Jackson. He was president of the company from 1954-69 and chairman of the board until his 1976 retirement. MP&L's largest plant in Vicksburg was named after him.

Mr. Wilson also served as chairman of the Jackson Airport Authority, Jackson Planning Board, State National Alliance of Businessmen, Mississippi U.S. Savings Bonds Committee and was national vice president of the American Red Cross. He had helped develop the Jackson Municipal Airport and other projects for Mississippi's economic development office. He was an organizer of the Pearl River Development Association and was chairman of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce Committee that promoted development of the Ross Barnett Reservoir.

He was president of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs of Jackson and Cleveland, the Andrew Jackson Council of Boy Scouts of America, Southeastern Electric Exchange, Beauvoir Foundation and the University of Mississippi Alumni Association. He was a member of the Newcomer Society of North America.

Mr. Wilson chaired several fund drives including the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and Salvation Army.

He was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Jackson where he was a deacon for nearly 50 years. He was a Mason and a member of the Wahabi Temple of Shriners.

Mr. Wilson was a director and vice-president of Middle South Utilities, Inc. He was a trustee at Deposit Guaranty National Bank, Belhaven College, University of Mississippi Alumni Association, National Association of Electric Companies, Edison Electric Institute, Southeastern Electric Exchange, Mississippi Economic Council, Magna Corporation, Standard Life Insurance Co., Mississippi Agricultural & Industrial Board and Southern Research Institute.

Mr. Wilson had an endowed fellowship at UM in his honor and the First Federal Award