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Excerpts of Remarks delivered by

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This past week NBR, founded in April 1989, quietly marked its 20th anniversary. NBR has risen and thrived over this time as a testimony to the original vision of Senator Jackson, the support of the Jackson Foundation, the generosity and leadership of George Russell, and the enthusiasm, ability and hard work of Rich, the NBR team and—we must recognize today—Brigitte Allen. Last summer, Norm, a few weeks before the ground breaking ceremony for Russell Hall at which you and Dan and Slade spoke so eloquently, we had what I guess we called “a ground piercing ceremony”—just a few of us. I have rarely seen Brigitte so excited, so happy. She said to Anne and me: “Can you believe it is really happening? Did you ever think this day would come? NBR is going to have its own permanent home!” When we had finished digging the symbolic shovels of dirt she handed me two mementos that I put in the trunk of our car, not quite sure what I would do with them and which I retrieved today: a hard hat and a piece of macadam from the pierced parking lot.

The hard hat reminds me that Brigitte had a certain steel-like determination; she also had an attention to detail, to the concrete items that went into the success of so many events. I think of the gala in Washington for Shali and the gala at Benaroya that so overwhelmed Anne and me. She had style, too, in spades. She also had a warmth, a concern for others, and for teamwork. She took naturally to the values that Jane Russell taught and which she put into practice in mentoring so many young people at NBR

A deeply touching reminder of this fierce commitment to NBR came in the last few days of her life. Last month during spring break at the university, we were about to take an extended trip to different parts of the country where I was giving lectures and to New England to see members of our family. So, fearing that she had only a short time remaining, Anne and I drove to Tacoma to say our sad goodbyes to Brigitte. A week later, we stopped in at NBR headquarters in Washington, D.C. We came in the midst of a staff meeting. As we sat down at the conference table Anne asked, “How is Brigitte?” At precisely that moment the phone rang and Debbie answered. “It’s Brigitte, she wants to talk to Roy!” Twenty minutes later Roy returned from his office. He said it was the most amazing conversation. “Brigitte wanted to talk about fundraising for Russell Hall.” Ignoring her own sickness, to the very end she maintained that fierce

commitment to NBR's future—an institution and group of people that she loved and believed were of critical importance to her adopted country.

Some of you may have heard the story about the seriously ill man who went into his doctor's office and there he received an unhappy diagnosis. The doctor told him the bad news. And then the doctor added, sternly and unfeelingly, "Your days are numbered." And the patient started out the door, weighed down by the news—and then he straightened up, wheeled around, and said to the doctor: "Well, you know doctor, your days are numbered too!"

When someone so young and so vital as Brigitte is taken from us, we all can think of our own mortality and be inspired by her legacy. We are all on a journey and it is a shock when the life of someone still so young has her journey cut short. We will sorely miss Brigitte's presence among us.

In Anne's and my family we have a treasured psalm that we read on such occasions as this: Psalm 90, the prayer of Moses, which speaks of the brevity and evanescence of life, which like grass in the morning flourishes and in the evening fades, and the psalmist counsels, "So teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom." In other words, make us aware that life is short and that we should use our time wisely. And then it concludes powerfully, "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands." In other words, make my life count. Brigitte did. Brigitte made her life count. Steve and Ben can surely affirm this and those of us who knew her at NBR can also affirm this and remember her with the deepest gratitude.