

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW HIV/AIDS POLICY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for a decision taken over the last several days in South Africa.

On Wednesday, South Africa's cabinet approved a plan for government-sponsored HIV/AIDS treatment programs. Though late in coming, the decision had to be received as good news by South Africa's five million people infected with HIV. In a country where 600 people a day die of complications from AIDS, this is a life-saving announcement.

Many of us feared we might not ever see this day. In August 2002, I sat with President Mbeki in Pretoria. His response to the AIDS crisis in his country was disheartening, even disconcerting. But he and his government have come a long way.

We must be sure that we do our part now, Mr. President. I gather that the Foreign Operations and Labor-HHS conferences have agreed to provide \$2.4 billion in global AIDS funding for FY 04. That is welcome and positive news. But it is still less than we promised the world, and given that 16,000 people a day contract this deadly virus we cannot afford to break that promise again next year.

We will also have to take a look at the assumptions that are underlying our current AIDS policy. The President laid out an ambitious emergency AIDS program for the 14 countries hit hardest by this virus. With a robust prevention and treatment program coupled with aggressive recruitment, training and retention of qualified medical personnel, we will make a difference in those countries.

But this pandemic is moving. While we act aggressively in these 14 countries, we cannot afford to maintain just the status quo in the countries who are threatened with the next wave of this crisis. Recent studies in India suggest that the epidemic in that one country could match if not overwhelm the suffering we have already seen in Africa. In China, government mismanagement and poverty are contributing to an acceleration of the pandemic, and eastern Europe and Russia are seeing alarming rates of infection that threaten to overwhelm the weak health care infrastructures in those tenuous democracies.

This is a huge challenge. We have begun to take some important steps to address it, but we are a long way from done.

#### TRIBUTE TO UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR TOM JURICH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, November 5, 2003, brought many reasons for celebration in Kentucky. First, my friend, Ernie Fletcher was celebrating his victory in the gubernatorial election, making him the first Republican to hold that office in 32 years. The same day, the University of Louisville, my alma mater, was celebrating its acceptance into the Big East Conference. On that day, my local paper, The Courier-Journal, highlighted both of these achievements on the front page—a great day to be a Republican and a Cardinal.

The man who orchestrated U of L's rise to the Big East is my friend, Tom Jurich, the university's athletic director. Since his arrival in 1997, Tom has worked diligently to improve Louisville's athletic department. In recent years, he has hired two outstanding coaches, football coach Bobby Petrino and basketball coach Rick Pitino. He also has secured U of L's place as one of the top athletic programs in the country. Tom's hard work and dedication should be commended.

I close by quoting Tom from the November 5, 2003 edition of The Courier-Journal. He said:

It's a wonderful day to be a U of L fan. And it's a wonderful day to be a Cardinal student-athlete. But it's a hell of a great day to be the athletic director at the University of Louisville. This has been a six-year work in progress. This puts us on a level playing field.

This U of L alum is one happy fan, and I thank my friend for all he has done for the University of Louisville Athletic Department. I ask unanimous consent that the following article from The Courier-Journal be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to document this historic day: "Under Tom Jurich, Louisville's star has risen in the East."

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

[From the Courier-Journal, Nov. 5, 2003]

UNDER TOM JURICH, LOUISVILLE'S STAR HAS RISEN IN THE EAST

(By Pat Forde)

At 10 o'clock yesterday morning, a wrinkled Big East Conference banner was stretched across a table in Kenny Klein's office at the University of Louisville.

The worst-kept secret in college athletics was literally—and finally—on the table. Welcome to a banner day on Planet Red.

Klein, the associate athletic director for media relations, is in his 21st year at U of L. He has been a loyal soldier through the glory and the gory—from an NCAA championship to NCAA probation, from the Fiesta Bowl to 1-10. He ranks yesterday among his very proudest days on the job.

"For the whole, encompassing factor of the athletic department and university, it's as big as anything we've done," Klein said.

"We're poised to make an absolute leap, I think.

"It's really neat because you work so hard to build something, a total department, and to see it come to fruition is just a great feeling. Until now you've had that little stigma, even though we knew we can compete. The stigma's gone."

After six years of unwavering effort by athletic director Tom Jurich, the stigma is gone. After some of the most skillful, steely and inspired personnel moves in recent college sports history reinvigorated football and men's basketball, the stigma is gone. After a committed campaign to improve U of L's shady NCAA-compliance image, low-budget facilities and neglected non-revenue sports, the stigma is gone.

The news that U of L will leave Conference USA in 2005 (at the latest) for the Big East did not pack the focused emotional wallop of beating UCLA in Indianapolis in 1980, Kentucky in Knoxville in '83, Duke in Dallas in '86 or Alabama in Tempe in '91. But those were ephemeral moments, followed (eventually) by hard times. This victory could have a permanent effect on exposure, recruiting, finances and winning—if the Bowl Championship Series situation works itself out.

That's a significant "if," but Jurich expressed confidence that the new Big East won't lose its place at the big table. And if there is one thing Cards fans have learned to do, it's to trust Jurich's vision.

"He really had to change the culture for six years to make this happen," said senior associate athletic director Julie Hermann. "This is a benchmark, a defining moment."

The defining moments keep piling up for Jurich. The man who hired John L. Smith, Rick Pitino and Bobby Petrino now has brought the entire athletic department up to a level it has strived to reach forever.

Jurich took over on Oct. 21, 1997. Yesterday he jokingly said his first call to Big East headquarters came the following day. In reality he took a few months getting a grip on the U of L program, then put in a call to see where the Cardinals stood.

"It fell on deaf ears," he said.

There is a cure for deafness: persistence, a plan and the power of Pitino.

"We just kept at it and kept at it," Jurich said. "And when we got Rick, I think the possibilities became a lot clearer."

The possibilities could become crystal-clear probabilities by 2005. Pitino is pointing for a Final Four-level season in 2004-05 and could move the Cards immediately to the top of a 16-team Big East megaheap. Football coach Bobby Petrino will be in his third year, with a number of today's young talents in starring roles. If the non-revenue sports step up—most notably women's basketball—U of L could enter the Big East on a serious roll.

The trajectory of Louisville's climb grew steeper in recent years, but the gradual ascent began decades before. This is a school that once was a member of the Ohio Valley Conference, just another regional athletic program in a state owned by Big Blue. This is a school that once gave away football tickets with a tank of gas at convenience stores, a school that once had non-revenue facilities that would embarrass some high schools.

"It's been a slow progression, but this is a great day for the athletic department," U of L trustee and 1970s basketball hero Junior Bridgeman said. "It's not a culmination, just the next step. But it's a great time, and everyone should share in the joy."

Said Charlie Tyra, a basketball star from the 1950s: "This is another step in the direction they want to get. Hopefully, this is the big step."

It's big enough to say that Louisville is now officially Big. Big enough for the Big

East. Big enough for the big boys of college athletics. Big enough to have something Big Brother in Lexington lacks: membership in what will be the best basketball conference going.

This is a league big enough to find on every map. Trips to Hattiesburg, Birmingham and Greenville are out. Philadelphia, Washington and the Big Apple are in.

It's big enough to find every March. As recently as 1994, Louisville was playing in the Metro Conference Tournament in the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi. Now it has signed on to play its league tourney on the most famous hardwood in the world at Madison Square Garden.

It's big enough to keep a football coach happy. U of L lost the two best it ever had—Howard Schnellenberger and John L. Smith—because of conference affiliation. Today Petrino, a star-in-the-making, believes he has everything he needs to chase what had been unattainable: a national championship.

Schnellenberger, Denny Crum and Bill Olsen vaulted Louisville athletics forward dramatically in the 1980s and early '90s. That shouldn't be forgotten today when measuring how far the Cards have come. But by the time Jurich arrived, the school's isolationist athletic stance had outlived its usefulness.

As the conference landscape had begun to change, U of L hadn't changed with it. Hogging TV and postseason revenue and pipedreaming of football independent status wasn't helping make the Cards an attractive modern program. In fact, it nearly cost them membership in C-USA at a time when, as Jurich pointed out, "Louisville needed Conference USA much more than Conference USA needed Louisville."

Today Louisville is easily the most vibrant, viable and attractive school in the league. And in 2005 it will commence aiming even higher.

You want billboard material? You've got it. Louisville might not be the Best College Sports Town in America, but it's a better one today than it ever has been.

Before the official announcement yesterday, Klein stood at a podium in the U of L football complex, preparing to make introductions. Someone flipped a switch, and behind him a projection screen rolled up.

Behind the screen was the Big East banner that had been sitting on the table in his office earlier in the day. The symbolic wrinkles had been ironed out. And as the screen rolled up, Klein couldn't help but smile.

#### TRIBUTE TO MONA VANNATTER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Mona Vannatter. On December 31, 2003, Mona will be retiring after 20 years of service at the Kentucky Rural Development State Office.

Raised in Anderson, IN, Mona graduated from Ball State University with an associate's degree. However, in 1978, she moved to the Bluegrass State with her husband, Steve, and their two daughters, Kristi and Sheri. Though a Hoosier by birth, Mona is a Wildcat at heart.

In 1983, Mona became the secretary to the State director of the Kentucky Rural Development State Office. Since that time, she has proven to be a dedicated and talented employee. Her colleagues praise her as a wonderful representative of the office who genuinely

cares about the Kentuckians with whom she interacts. In 2003, Mona was recognized for exemplary performance as secretary to the State director. For the past several years, she has also donated her time and energy to coordinating the United Way Combined Federal Campaign for the agency and successfully reaching the Rural Department goals.

Mona brings the same enthusiasm and energy to her life outside of work. An active member of Broadway Christian Church, Mona served as secretary for her Sunday school class and co-coordinator for God's Pantry. She taught a self-improvement class at the Women's Federal Prison Camp, bringing a positive influence and an optimistic outlook to those who need it most.

For two decades, she has been a dedicated employee of the Kentucky Rural Development State Office. Mona continually proves to be a positive influence in both her workplace and her community. I ask each of my colleagues to join me in thanking Mona Vannatter for all that she has done for her community, the commonwealth of Kentucky, and this great Nation.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of a fellow Iowan and a great American, CWO4 Bruce A. Smith, who recently gave his life in service to his country as a pilot in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Chief Warrant Officer Smith was killed on November 2, 2003, after his helicopter was attacked by a surface-to-air missile 40 miles west of Baghdad in central Iraq. He is survived by his wife Oliva, his 15-year-old daughter Savannah, his 12-year-old son Nathan, his sisters Carol and Brenda, and his brother Brian, as well as numerous other family members, friends, and loved ones. Our deepest sympathies go out to the members of Chief Warrant Officer Smith's family and to all those who have been touched by his untimely passing.

Our Nation's strength resides in the hearts of the men and the women who serve in its defense. The liberties we prize and the freedoms we cherish would not exist if it were not for those who courageously risk their lives while serving in our Nation's Armed Forces. Although our history books are filled with the names of those great patriots whose actions defined our Nation's founding, and although we stand in awe of our fathers and our grandfathers for the heroism they displayed during the great wars of the 20th century, from time to time we are reminded that men and women of such stature can still be found defending our Nation and our way of life.

Today, we pay tribute to one such man, CWO4 Bruce A. Smith. Chief Warrant Officer Smith enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard as a senior in high school, serving his Nation with distinction for more than 23 years, first

as a medic and then as a pilot, before losing his life in Iraq. Chief Warrant Officer Smith's exemplary career in the National Guard, his commitment to his family, and his sense of duty attest to his character as an outstanding American.

As I stand before you today to honor a fallen patriot, I would also like to use this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathies to Chief Warrant Officer Smith's loved ones. While we share their grief, we cannot possibly fully understand their sense of loss. We owe them a debt that can never be repaid and I know they will be in the thoughts and prayers of many Americans.

CWO4 Bruce A. Smith has entered the ranks of our Nation's great patriots, and his courage, his dedication to duty, and his sacrifice are all testaments to his status as a true American hero. Let us always remember Chief Warrant Officer Smith's service to our Nation.

I also speak today in honor of a fellow Iowan and a great American, SGT Paul F. "Ringo" Fisher, who recently gave his life in service to his country as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On November 2, 2003, the helicopter in which Sergeant Fisher was riding was forced to make a crash landing about 40 miles west of Baghdad after being struck by a shoulder-fired missile. Sergeant Fisher sustained multiple injuries in the crash, which ultimately led to his death 4 days later on November 6, 2003, at the Homburg University Klinikum in Homburg, Germany. Sergeant Fisher is survived by his wife Karen, his stepson Jason, his mother Mary, his sister Brenda, and his brother David, as well as numerous other family members, friends, and loved ones.

I ask my colleagues in the Senate and my fellow citizens across our great Nation to join me today in paying tribute to Sergeant Fisher for his bravery, for his dedication to the cause of freedom, and for his sacrifice in defense of the liberties we all so dearly prize. The selflessness of a soldier is unmatched in the history of human endeavors, and mankind knows no greater act of courage than that displayed by the individual upon sacrificing his life for his countrymen, their liberty, and their way of life.

Although we honor Sergeant Fisher as a fallen patriot, we must also pay special tribute to his loved ones whose grief we share, but whose sense of loss we cannot possibly fully understand. My deepest sympathy goes out to the members of Sergeant Fisher's family, to his friends, and to all those who have been touched by his untimely passing. Although there is nothing I can offer that will ever compensate for their loss, I hope they will find some comfort in the thoughts and prayers of a grateful Nation who will be forever in their debt.

Our national history is filled with ordinary men and women who sacrificed their lives in service to our country.