

8 months whenever I have met with Colombian President Uribe or other Colombian officials, I have urged them to make every effort to gain their release. President Uribe indicated to me that the Colombian military continues every day to search for them and that these efforts will not cease until they are found.

In addition, during a hearing last fall of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I urged the now-serving United States Ambassador to Colombia, William Wood, to make their rescue his highest priority. He pledged to do so and has kept me informed of developments in this matter. I have also continually urged the Bush administration to provide all means of assistance, including technological assistance, to bring about the safe rescue of Marc, Keith, and Tom. It is my understanding that the administration continues to work with Colombian authorities to locate them.

Certainly, their rescue will not be easy. However, I have to believe that more can be done. This must be the highest of priorities. The airing last year of the videotape showing them in captivity only further highlights the importance of this effort.

The families of Marc, Keith, and Tom will find no rest until their sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers return home safely. I will be meeting with Jo Rosano tomorrow, when she, along with other family members of the hostages, come to Washington, DC on the anniversary of this tragic incident to urge United States policymakers not to forget their family members in captivity.

And I will tell her what I have said here today: that we must make every effort and we must leave no stone unturned in our search. As Americans, Marc, Keith, and Tom are also our sons—they are members of our extended American family. For my part, I pledge to continue to do everything possible to ensure their speedy release and safe return. I urge the Bush administration and Colombian Government to do the same. We must not rest until they are all home safely.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

One such crime occurred in Honolulu, HI, in August 1998. A heterosexual man was found dead in a public shower. He had been brutally killed by a group of teenagers because they thought he was gay.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can

become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CELEBRATING THE "SEUSSENTENNIAL"

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, each year on March 2 thousands of schools and millions of children take part in Read Across America, the National Education Association's annual celebration of reading and literacy. The date is no accident: March 2 is the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss.

As much as anyone in the past century, Dr. Seuss helped children learn to love reading by making it fun and exciting. In my frequent visits to classrooms and afterschool programs, I often read to young children, and I have found that Dr. Seuss is their favorite author.

His books are read and treasured everywhere—particularly in California, where he spent most of his adult life. In 1948, he bought an old observation tower in La Jolla, CA. For the rest of his life, The Tower was his residence and workshop. Every morning, Ted Geisel would walk into his studio, lock the door, and become Dr. Seuss. Drawing on his extensive collection of hats—inspired by "The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins"—Dr. Seuss would put on a "thinking cap" and get to work.

The books that came out of The Tower—including "The Cat in the Hat," "Green Eggs and Ham," "If I Ran the Zoo," "Horton Hears a Who," "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," and "Oh, the Places You'll Go!"—are among the best-known and best-loved classics of children's literature.

Dr. Seuss inspired Read Across America because he opened the door to literacy for generations of children by engaging them with gentle humor and fantasy.

The 2004 Read Across America is extra-special because it is the "Seussentennial"—Dr. Seuss's 100th birthday. The celebration has already begun in schools and community centers across America, where kids are making giant birthday cards, collecting hats, and, of course, reading lots of good books.

As we approach the "Seussentennial," I invite children and grownups everywhere to celebrate the joy of reading by honoring a great American author and educator, Theodor Seuss Geisel.●

HONORING R. LEWIS SHAW

• Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the accomplishments of one of my constituents, R. Lewis Shaw and to commend him for his tenure as deputy commissioner for environmental quality con-

trol at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control as he leaves after 33 years of service.

Lewis began his career with the department as the district director for the Wateree district office, and later served as chief of the Bureau of Water Supply. Lewis was promoted to deputy commissioner of environmental quality control in 1984 and has provided exemplary leadership since that time. Under Lewis's leadership, the environmental quality control programs have grown to keep pace with national and State initiatives and are considered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to be among the best State environmental programs in the Nation.

Lewis has also been active in shaping national environmental policy over the past two decades by serving on numerous national committees, often as chairman, which advise both the Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Congress. He has on several occasions presented testimony to both House and Senate committees regarding the impact of proposed Federal environmental legislation on individual States. Lewis has earned the respect of his counterparts in other States and has served as president of their national association known as the Environmental Council of the States. Lewis is currently the longest serving State environmental program director in the Nation.

A graduate of the University of South Carolina with a degree in chemical engineering, Lewis also earned a graduate degree in environmental engineering from Clemson University, and is a registered professional engineer in South Carolina. Lewis is married to the former Judy Brown and has two children, Jason Shaw and April Shaw McCaskill.

I invite you to join me in thanking R. Lewis Shaw for his service and dedication to the natural resources and the citizens of the State of South Carolina.●

A LIVING LEGACY

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of Oregon's unsung heroes, Jim Willis. For many years, Mr. Willis has dedicated his life to assisting and enriching the lives of countless Oregonians. His story should serve as an inspiration to us all as we try to make our country a better place.

He was raised in California and attended the University of California at Santa Cruz. Upon graduation he was accepted for graduate school of the prestigious University of California at Berkeley, yet he never had the opportunity to complete his degree when his father became ill. Willis returned to be with his father in Bishop, CA, where he worked as the Education Department director for the Owens Valley Paiute Tribes. The experience set the tone for

a long career in tribal and educational organizations.

Willis arrived to Roseburg, OR, in the early 1980s, continuing his work at Umpqua Community College in the Student Services department, and later at Rogue Community College as a financial aid officer, helping hundreds of young adults explore their career opportunities. After leaving his mark on the education arena, he decided to serve local American Indian tribes in their quest of cultural restoration and economic self-sufficiency.

In 1982, Willis began working with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, ultimately becoming general manager of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. His long and distinguished career in Oregon tribal government was illustrious and renowned throughout the State. He is well respected in tribal and State government circles. Willis was appointed to the Oregon State Board of Higher Education in 1993, where he served an important role until he stepped down in 2001. He was pivotal in the rise in prominence of our State Universities.

Currently, Willis is winning a hard-fought battle with cancer. I join with countless others in honoring his courage as he fights to overcome this devastating disease. We all look forward to the day that Jim Willis returns to help improve our great State of Oregon.●

IN MEMORY OF SCOTT HOFFMAN

● Mr. BEN NELSON. Mr. President, today I would like to share with my colleagues and the nation a tribute to a friend of mine from Nebraska.

On Sunday, February 8, 2004, Scott Hoffman of McCook, NE, passed away. His family lost a loving husband and father. I lost a friend and trusted member of my staff. And the State of Nebraska lost a proud native son and someone who embodied the attributes often used to describe our State—strong, hard working, caring and deeply invested in his community.

We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of our coworker and friend. Our thoughts and prayers are with Scott's wife Darcey, their sons Christian and Stephen, his daughter Danae, and the entire Hoffman family.

Scott was a devoted family man, a dedicated public servant and a true friend. Scott seemed to always have his finger on the pulse of Southwest Nebraska. There isn't a community or a cause that isn't familiar with Scott's work advocating for the entire region.

Back when I was considering running in the 2000 Senate elections, I visited the local paper, the McCook Gazette, for an editorial board meeting. Scott was a member of the newspaper staff at the time. After the meeting he walked me out to the car and asked if he could join my campaign staff. We hired him and that was one of the best decisions I made.

Scott had a knack for working with people. He could as easily commu-

nicate with members of the press or a chamber of commerce as with elementary school students. He would walk into a room and be able to get disparate people to work together—a talent few have and fewer still can master. This ability made him an asset, not just to my office—and I am grateful he was a member of my team—but to the entire State of Nebraska. Scott always knew our primary concern is the welfare of Nebraska and he spent his time working on behalf of Nebraska's interests.

Scott's work on behalf of Nebraska was well respected and only recently did I learn that community officials sought out Scott to lead the McCook Economic Development Corporation. Scott, in his typical fashion, told the leaders that he was doing what he wanted to do and wasn't seeking a change. That loyalty was a defining characteristic of Scott Hoffman and he applied it to his job, his church, his family, his friends and his community.

His legacy can be measured in the outpouring of support his family has received in recent days. The community of McCook was there for Scott in the hours after he was reported missing. Over two hundred volunteers, including members of McCook Senior High's football and track teams, joined more than thirty first responders in the search for Scott. Although that search ultimately came to a tragic end, the dedication of these rescuers underscores Scott's connection to his community.

And the community of McCook was there again for Scott's family when news spread that he had passed. The letters, phone calls and testaments to Scott have poured in from Nebraskans across the State and as far away as Africa. It is overwhelming, but comforting, because we know that although Scott is gone, he will not be forgotten. In his 33 years, he has left his mark in McCook and his friends and neighbors will ensure that his memory lives on.

Scott was a good friend to many in the McCook area and across Nebraska, including me, Diane and everyone on my staff. He will be missed and remembered fondly by all who knew him, especially those of us who had the pleasure of working with him. Personally, I am going to miss his advice, his hard work on behalf of Nebraska, and most of all, the friendship I was so fortunate to share with him. He will be deeply missed by all of us.

A friend of Scott's at the McCook Gazette wrote this week of Scott that he "spent his time well." His activities on his last day with us bear that out. He took his sons Christian and Stephen sledding. He went grocery shopping for his family. He took his beloved dogs for a walk. In some ways it seems that he was called from this life at a moment of great peace, having fulfilled his duties to protect and provide for his family. His loss leaves us with unanswered questions but also fills us with the sat-

isfaction of knowing Scott loved us, and was loved in return. And that is what makes life fulfilling.

I ask that two articles in tribute to Scott from his hometown paper the McCook Gazette be printed in their entirety in the RECORD.

The documents follow:

[From the McCook Daily Gazette, Feb. 10, 2004]

MONDAY BRINGS WORST FEARS, BEST MEMORIES

While the example of his life burns brightly in our minds, we need to find fitting ways to pay tribute to the memory of Scott Hoffman.

In some form—either through a monument, an award, a scholarship or another appropriate means—we need to come up with a lasting memorial to eulogize Scott and to create an inspiration for generations to come.

Because, in his 33 years of life, this dynamic young man showed us the importance of getting involved, staying involved and remaining faithful to your family, your church, your job and your community.

Scott Hoffman did all that . . . and much more. As you have already heard on radio and television and read on the front page of the newspaper, the search for Scott ended tragically Monday afternoon when his body was found by a diver in the Huck Finn Pond at Barnett Park.

With the discovery our worst fears were realized. While we mourn, we also give praise for the life Scott lived.

To give illustrations of how highly he was held in esteem, we offer two recent examples. First, following a recent speech which Scott gave on Sen. Ben Nelson's behalf, a member of the news media addressed Scott, "You are very well spoken and very focused on the issues. Would you consider running for office yourself?" Then, late in 2003, Scott was asked, privately, to consider entering his name in application for the director's position with the McCook Economic Development Corp.

In both cases, politely and humbly, Scott declined. "I'm where I want to be and I am doing what I want to do," is the best way to summarize his answers. He appreciated the opportunities, but remained dedicated, devoted and satisfied with the course his life was taking.

We don't find that kind of steadfast loyalty nearly enough in these times. You could see the love and respect for Scott shine through Monday evening in radio and television interviews with his good friend, Kerry Ferguson; the Gazette editor, Bruce Crosby; and Red Willow County Sheriff, Gene Mahon.

They were more than Scott's co-workers and officials with whom he worked. They were Scott's friends, as were so many others in this region, this State, and—increasingly through his work with Sen. Nelson—this Nation.

It is both important and appropriate that we remember Scott Hoffman. He served us and shared with us during his 33 years of life. In times to come, we need to cherish his memory and be uplifted by his example through a lasting memorial.

[From the McCook Daily Gazette, Feb. 10, 2004]

A GUY WHO SPENT HIS TIME WELL (By Bruce Crosby)

Scott Hoffman took his two sons, Christian, 9, and Stephen, 6, sledding Sunday afternoon.

He went to the grocery store for his wife, Darcey, and carried the food into the kitchen.