

important laws, including the POW/MIA Memorial flag Act of 2001, P.L. 107-323; the Bring Them Home Alive Act of 2000, P.L. 106-484; the Persian Gulf War Accountability Act of 2002, P.L. 107-258; and the Vietnam Veterans Recognition Act of 1999, P.L. 106-214. I want to take this opportunity to also commend my deputy chief of staff and legislative director, Larry Vigil, for all of his good work in getting these important initiatives passed on behalf of all Americans.

As my colleagues know, the United States has fought in many wars and thousands of Americans who served in those wars were captured by the enemy or listed as missing in action. In the 20th century wars alone, more than 147,000 Americans were captured and became prisoners of war. Of that number, more than 15,000 died while in captivity. When we add to this number, those who are still missing in action, we realize that we cannot do enough to not only remember their service, but to bring them back home alive.

Our mission is far from over. Today we continue to look for Capt. Michael Speicher from the 1991 Persian Gulf war and PFC Keith "Matt" Maupin who went missing in action in Iraq on April 9, 2004. To that end, we must remain fully committed to leave no one behind and push for a full accounting for those who are still missing. We must spare no effort to bring them home.

The power of our democracy and the strength of our society comes from acknowledging our interdependence on each other. In our best moments we know full well that the commitment of so many in the military service has made our Nation and our lives fuller and more complete.

I commend Danny "Greasy" Belcher with Task Force Omega of Kentucky for his tireless efforts in bringing awareness to the POW/MIA issue and organizing national support for many of these successful legislative initiatives. I also thank Artie Muller, president of Rolling Thunder National, for his continued years of work on the POW/MIA issue and the National League of POW/MIA Families, the National Vietnam and Gulf War Veterans Coalition, VietNow and Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc., and others.

As I conclude my tenure in the United States Senate, I challenge my colleagues and those who will follow in my footsteps to continue this valuable and necessary work to support the friends and families of those who are POW/MIA.●

#### 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, in 1878 a group of pioneering women led by Mrs. Appoline A. Blair had the innovative idea to open a hospital in St. Louis where children could receive the special care they needed and deserved. In 1879, St. Louis Children's Hospital opened its doors to children and fami-

lies in downtown St. Louis, Missouri in a small, rented house with 15 beds. This year, St. Louis Children's Hospital, the first children's hospital west of the Mississippi River and the seventh oldest in the country, is proud to celebrate its 125th anniversary.

Today, St. Louis Children's Hospital's clinical and community outreach programs touch more than 250,000 patients annually. Patients from all 50 States and nearly 50 countries around the world have passed through the doors and been served by this remarkable institution.

The pioneering spirit with which this hospital was founded has continued through its long and distinguished history. St. Louis Children's Hospital, working in conjunction with Washington University School of Medicine, has consistently been at the forefront of pediatric care. From its earliest days St. Louis Children's Hospital has been home to critical pediatric advances. For example, from 1915 through the 1920s, Dr. Vilray Blair, known as the father of plastic surgery in America, perfected several important methods for correction of cleft palate and cleft lip. At about the same time, Dr. W. McKim Marriott, the hospital's pediatrician-in-chief from 1917 to 1936, revolutionized the artificial feeding of infants developing a formula using evaporated milk, corn syrup and lactic acid supplemented with vitamins and iron. In 1922, for the first time anywhere, insulin was used to successfully treat an infant with diabetes. In 1927, Dr. James Barrett Brown performed the first homograft on a child resulting in the development of modern care for burns for children. In 1929, Dr. Alexis P. Hartmann developed the first practical treatment, Lactate Ringers Solution, for infants suffering from severe diarrhea and dehydration. Dr. Hartmann served as the hospital's pediatrician-in-chief from 1936 to 1964.

St. Louis Children's Hospital pioneered developments in many other health areas, including diagnosis of congenital heart diseases. After the acquisition of a heart-lung machine in 1958, the hospital became one of the most active institutions in the country in the field of pediatric open heart surgery. David Goldring, MD, who formed the hospital's cardiology division in 1950 and remained its director until 1985, was a pioneer in pediatric open heart surgery. In another "first," doctors oversaw the first complete exchange of blood in a tiny infant weighing less than 3 pounds.

The first pediatric dialysis unit in the Midwest was set up at St. Louis Children's Hospital in 1974. Another innovation during the 1970s was the establishment of the Cleft Palate and Craniofacial Deformities Institute, the only one of its kind in the Midwest at the time. This unit works with many other areas of the hospital to reconstruct head and facial deformities in children. Dr. Thomas Spray, a cardiothoracic surgeon, performed his

first successful Norwood procedure, an advanced surgical technique used to correct the fatal congenital heart defect known as hypoplastic left heart syndrome. Doctors at St. Louis Children's Hospital also performed the region's first cochlear implant, surgically implanting a device that helps children who are deaf to speak and comprehend language.

In addition, St. Louis Children's Hospital established the first free-standing pediatric lung transplant program in the United States. Today, St. Louis Children's Hospital is home to the world's most active pediatric lung transplant program. The hospital is one of the nation's leaders in total pediatric organ transplants, offering kidney, liver, heart and bone marrow transplant programs as well.

St. Louis Children's Hospital is recognized among America's best children's hospitals by Child magazine and US News & World Report, and its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is distinguished nationally by Child magazine.

Mr. President, please join with me in celebrating 125 years of excellence in pediatric care. The pioneering vision and spirit of St. Louis Children's Hospital has improved the lives of children and families in Missouri and around the globe.●

#### CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS AND THE ROSE BOWL

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concerns about college football's Bowl Championship Series and the formula used to select teams to play in the major bowls at the end of the season.

Despite having one of their best seasons in years, the University of California at Berkeley Golden Bears were denied an opportunity to play the University of Michigan in the Rose Bowl on New Years Day, and will instead play Texas Tech in the Holiday Bowl on December 30 in San Diego.

For decades the Rose Bowl has featured the top teams from the Pac Ten Conference and the Big Ten Conference. Players and coaches dream of representing their universities in one of college football's showcase events. For their part, Cal fans and alumni have waited 46 years for another opportunity to see their Bears play in the "granddaddy of them all".

With all due respect to Texas, it just does not seem right to see the champion of the Big Ten Conference, Michigan, play a school from the Big Twelve Conference and not the Pac Ten. It would be like eliminating the traditional floats from the Tournament of Roses Parade.

I know it may surprise some that a proud Stanford alum would take to the Senate floor to speak out on behalf of the Cardinal's bitter rival, but as a Senator representing the entire State of California, I feel it is my obligation to support all of our fine college athletes and to ensure that fairness and

good sportsmanship prevails in the competitive arena.

The BCS was designed to ensure that the top two schools in the country have a chance to play each other for the national title. I am proud that another California school, the University of Southern California Trojans, will play number two ranked Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

If the top team from the Pac Ten cannot play in the Rose Bowl because it is playing for the national title, fans expect to see the next best school from the conference take its place.

And, make no mistake about it, Cal has earned a right to play in the Rose Bowl.

Led by Head Coach Jeff Tedford, quarterback Aaron Rodgers, defensive end Ryan Riddle, and running back J.J. Arrington, Cal won 10 and lost only once—on the road at USC—beating teams by an average of 23.9 points per game. They were the only team to rank in the top six both in scoring and scoring defense.

In the end, despite beating Southern Mississippi 26-16 to win their final game of the year, Cal lost points in the ESPN/USA Today coaches poll—one of the polls that accounts for 33 per cent of the BCS rankings—and thus was edged out by Texas for the opportunity to play in the Rose Bowl.

Let me be clear: The Texas Longhorns had a great season, and I have a lot of respect for the university and their coaches and players.

But, Cal led Texas in the BCS rankings for most of the season and it is common sense to me that if a team is in position to earn a trip to the Rose Bowl and they win their last four games of the season—as Cal did—they should not be denied an opportunity to play in that game.

Surely we can find a way to preserve the best traditions of college football and ensure that teams that earn an opportunity play in a major bowl, are allowed to do so.

In their last game, Cal had an opportunity to score another touchdown when the result of the game was no longer in doubt. Instead, Coach Tedford decided to let the clock run out. Perhaps another score would have impressed enough voters in the coaches poll to give Cal a chance to play in the Rose Bowl. But Coach Tedford did the right thing and college football should reward those decisions, not penalize them.

Nothing can detract from Cal's great season and I am confident that the team will bring home a win in the Holiday Bowl on December 30. I wish them the best of luck.●

#### REMEMBERING RICHARD K. SORENSON

● Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a man of remarkable courage, compassion, and patriotism and to join Nevadans and Americans in mourning the loss of

American patriot and former Marine Richard K. Sorenson.

A shining example of just how one individual can make a difference is found in the life story of Richard K. "Rick" Sorenson.

Born the 28th day of August in 1924, Sorenson tried unsuccessfully to enlist in the Navy on the day after Pearl Harbor. He was only 17 at the time, and his parents refused to give their permission. He finished his junior year in high school, but the next fall, the day after football season ended, he and some of his teammates joined the Marine Corps.

Little did Rick Sorenson know, but he would soon make history.

On February 1, 1944, at the age of 19, Private Sorenson and his five man machine gun squad found themselves part of the amphibious assault of Namur, a small island in the Kwajalein atoll which was defended by 4,000 Japanese soldiers fighting from heavy concrete fortifications.

At dawn the following morning, the Japanese counterattacked Sorenson's position in what he later called a "full-fledged banzai charge." His squad had been fighting for its life for half an hour when a Japanese soldier got close enough to throw a grenade in their midst. Sorenson's first impulse was to jump to the other side of the concrete foundation, but he instantly realized that his buddies would take the impact and that the entire squad would be overrun, so he threw himself on the grenade and took the full force of the explosion.

For his actions he was awarded the Medal of Honor. His citation was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and read, in part: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty . . . Unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, Private Sorenson hurled himself upon the deadly weapon, heroically taking the full impact of the explosion. As a result of his gallant action, he was severely wounded, but the lives of his comrades were saved. His great personal valor and exceptional spirit of self-sacrifice in the face of almost certain death were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Sorenson would undergo six operations over the next nine months. But he survived and went on to graduate from college, marry, and raise a family. He was also recalled to active duty with the Marines in 1950 during the Korean War and was commissioned a first lieutenant.

After eventually leaving the Marines for good in 1955, he returned to civilian life and pursued a career as an insurance underwriter before finally joining the Veterans' Administration. In 1978 he transferred to Reno, NV, and assumed duties as Director of Veterans Affairs for all of Nevada and nine counties in California. He retired in 1985 but remained a resident of Reno until his passing several months ago.

Those who lived through World War II are often referred to as our Greatest Generation. And that Greatest Generation is well represented in the life story of Rick Sorenson. He was not only a battle-tested Marine but he also was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. In his vocation he served other veterans, and in his free time he was active in community affairs.

Simply stated, the world is a better place because of Rick Sorenson.

To Rick's wife Milli I offer the condolences and the admiration of Nevadans and Americans. This great nation that Rick Sorenson risked his life for and lived his life for will always be grateful for his contributions.●

#### RECOGNIZING A RACING STAR

● Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and congratulate an outstanding athlete and a tremendous competitor from my home State of Nevada.

A Las Vegas native, Kurt Busch is the epitome of a team player who thrives on pressure and has the utmost respect for his competition.

His journey to the finish line of the NASCAR Nextel Cup title started in go carts and dwarf cars in Pahump and Las Vegas. Kurt and his brother, Kyle, shared their father Tom's love for racing, and once Kurt hit the track there was no stopping him.

His career highlights start with the Las Vegas Motor Speedway and the Nevada State Dwarf Car Rookie of the Year and Champion in 1994 and 1995 respectively. From there he broadened his horizons to the Southwest Series after graduating from Durango High School in Las Vegas. Durango High School is the home of the Trailblazers, and Kurt's road to champion race-car driver at the age of 26 certainly blazed a trail or two along the way.

Since those early Las Vegas days, Kurt has been an incredible presence in the American racing scene. He competed and finished above expectation time and time again. He started this season with the goal of winning the championship. There were no guarantees in this Cup season though. Kurt stayed focused, and keeping his eye on the prize paid off. But it was a nail biter. Kurt faced many hurdles that would have meant the end for a lesser competitor. There was the broken wheel, the late restart, and the intense competition. And those challenges all came in the last race at the Home-Steade-Miami Speedway.

Mechanical failures and pressures aside, racing fans attribute Kurt's success to his consistency. I say it's all about heart.

Following his victory, Kurt stated matter-of-factly: "This is what a team does to win a championship . . . I'd like to put a cap on today and move on to what we did this year as a team, which is unbelievable. This championship is for Jimmy Fennig and everyone that's put work into this car."