

October of the same year, he was transferred to the Philippines. This proved to be a fateful event. He arrived 6 weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor and America's involvement in World War II. He was ordered to Bataan on Christmas Eve of 1941. He fought bravely alongside the other men of the 31st Infantry against overwhelming odds until the surrender of Bataan on April 9, 1942.

Upon capture by the Japanese, George and the other 76,000 POWs set out on the infamous 55-mile Bataan death march to prison camps. Along the way, the prisoners endured intensely cruel and inhumane treatment. George watched as many of his friends were beaten and killed. It was during this agonizing journey that George promised himself he would survive the nightmare he was living.

After 3½ years in captivity, George was liberated on September 10, 1945. Even though he was severely malnourished, weighing only 98 pounds, and suffered from malaria, he was still alive. George was awarded the American Defense Service Medal with one Bronze Star, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars, Distinguished Unit Badge with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, Combat Infantry Badge, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one Bronze Star, WWII Victory Medal, and the POW Medal.

Following discharge from the Army on November 26, 1946, George remained in the Army Reserves until he retired at the rank of major in 1968. He worked as a civil engineer for the State of California during the post-war years, and in 1954 he married his wife, Hadassa. They raised two daughters together.

George recently celebrated his 98th birthday in Reno, making him the oldest former POW living in Nevada. He is truly an American hero, and has earned my admiration and the respect of all those who have known him. I offer him my gratitude and wish him all the best in the years to come.

NEW U.N. INITIATIVE FOR CYPRIOT REUNIFICATION

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the President of Cyprus, Tassos Papadopoulos, for promoting a new U.N.-sponsored initiative to resolve the division of the island of Cyprus. Cyprus has been divided for more than 30 years, following a 1974 invasion by Turkey. The time is ripe for resolving this longstanding split, and I applaud President Papadopoulos for taking the initiative to end the division.

On February 28, 2006, President Papadopoulos met with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and proposed that the U.N. appoint a special envoy for Cyprus to lay the groundwork for negotiations to end the division of Cyprus. President Papadopoulos also proposed a number of cross-community confidence-building measures to strength-

en the foundation for reunification. After the meeting, Secretary-General Annan and President Papadopoulos issued a joint statement agreeing on the resumption of bicomunal discussions on the technical aspects necessary to prepare the ground for full peace negotiations.

There have been significant developments in Cyprus over the past 2 years that make this the right time for reunification. Nearly 2 years ago, Cyprus joined the European Union, and in that time, the Government of Cyprus has promoted the opening up of several crossing points through the U.N.-patrolled cease-fire line. As a result, the Government of Cyprus has transformed the everyday realities on Cyprus to that unlike any other divided nation.

Unlike other divisions with which my colleagues may be familiar, such as East and West Berlin, the people of Cyprus are able to cross the dividing line to visit their ancestral lands, work, and shop. Indeed, since the opening of crossing points, there have been more than 9 million incident-free crossings. Every day, more than 10,000 Turkish Cypriots cross from the occupied territory to the government-controlled area to work. This increased economic activity and trade across the dividing line has contributed in more than doubling the per-capita income of the Turkish-Cypriots in the past 2 short years.

As confidence building measures, President Papadopoulos has proposed to take additional steps to build on the gains of the past 2 years. The Government of Cyprus has already proposed the reopening of the occupied Port of Famagusta and the return of the adjacent city of Varosha to its original inhabitants; a "ghost" city that has been abandoned since the 1974 Turkish invasion. Famagusta would operate under the joint administration of the two communities, bringing the two communities closer together, and also under the EU's regulatory auspices, enhancing trade opportunities. President Papadopoulos has also proposed to open additional crossing points to make travel and trade between the two communities easier.

Last week, the European Union announced economic aid to the Turkish Cypriots of 139 million eurodollars—approximately \$165 million. The Government of Cyprus had pushed strongly for this aid, despite unfortunate attempts by others to attach preconditions and political stipulations to its release. This aid from the EU further demonstrates the positive effect of Cyprus's EU membership on the prospects for reunification.

I applaud the steps that the Government of Cyprus and President Papadopoulos have taken to encourage a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus division. His meeting with Secretary-General Annan is a positive first step toward the resumption of reunification negotiations. On Cyprus today, the two communities are closer to-

gether than at any time since the invasion. Although prior reunification efforts have failed, the developments of the past 2 years offer the greatest prospect for a peaceful and lasting solution to the division.

IN MEMORY OF DANA REEVE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman, Dana Reeve, who died on Monday, March 6 at the age of 44. Dana's courage, grace and love in dealing with the tragic paralysis of her late husband, actor Christopher Reeve, were an inspiration to millions of Americans. Dana and Christopher's tireless advocacy on behalf of individuals and families living with spinal cord injury made them American heroes.

Dana Morosini was born in 1961 to Dr. Charles Morosini and Helen Morosini. She grew up in Scarsdale, New York, graduated cum laude from Middlebury College in Vermont and studied acting at the California Institute of the Arts.

Dana was an accomplished actress and singer. She appeared on Broadway, off Broadway and in regional theatre, on television and in HBO films, and performed as a singer on national television and in venues around New York. Reeve co-hosted "Lifetime Live," a daily women's information program on the Lifetime network.

It was while Dana performed in a late-night cabaret at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in 1987 that she met actor Christopher Reeve, who was in the audience. They married on April 11, 1992. Their son Will was born in 1992. She was also stepmother to Christopher's children Matthew and Alexandra Exton Reeve. She was a devoted and loving mother, deeply committed to her family.

In 1995, America watched in disbelief as an equestrian accident left Christopher Reeve, perhaps best known for his film role as Superman, paralyzed. America was inspired as Dana Reeve courageously and publicly supported Christopher with humor and grace. Dana and Christopher helped propel spinal cord injury into the national spotlight, working to increase funding and find a cure. They became actively involved in fighting for the rights of the disabled and helping families live with spinal cord injury. Our hearts went out to Dana and her family when Christopher Reeve passed away on October 10, 2004.

Dana was a founding board member of the Christopher Reeve Foundation, which became the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation after its merger with the American Paralysis Association. Dana took over as chair after her husband's death. Dana was deeply involved with the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Resource Center, PRC, which promotes the health and well-being of people and families living with paralysis.

Dana was also committed to the Reeve-Irvine Center for Spinal Cord

Research at the University of California, Irvine. The Reeve-Irvine Research Center is the premier research and education center working to find innovative new treatments for spinal cord injury. I was proud to work with Christopher and Dana to support therapeutic stem cell research, which holds the promise to treat a vast array of diseases, including juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, heart disease, and cancer as well as spinal cord injuries.

Dana received numerous awards in recognition of her strength, courage and positive attitude: the American Cancer Society's Mother of the Year Award in 2005; the Visiting Nurses Association's Caregiver's Courage Award; and she was named one of America's Outstanding Women of 1995 by "CBS This Morning."

In August, 2005, America was upset to learn that Dana Reeve had lung cancer. Dana and Christopher were both non-smokers. As always, Dana remained an inspiration. In a May 2005 interview, she said "Now, more than ever, I feel Chris with me as I face this challenge," she said. "As always, I look to him as the ultimate example of defying the odds with strength, courage, and hope in the face of life's adversities." She also said "There's a formula Chris and I used all the time. When you least feel like it, do something for someone else. You forget about your own situation. It gives you a purpose, as opposed being sorrowful and lonely. It makes me feel better when things are too hard for me."

Dana and Christopher showed a deep love for each other, their family and for humanity. They will always be remembered. We must renew our efforts to find cures for spinal cord injuries and cancer and to advance stem cell research on their behalf.

Dana Reeve is survived by her son Will; father, Dr. Charles Morosini; sisters Deborah Morosini and Adrienne Morosini Heilman; and two stepchildren, Matthew and Alexandra Exton Reeve.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KIRBY PUCKETT

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I rise to honor the life of Kirby Puckett, whose exuberant love of the game made him one of the best-loved players in baseball history. For many baseball fans, young and old alike, Kirby Puckett was the reason they picked up a baseball bat and kicked up their foot as the pitch approached. Kirby Puckett is Minnesota baseball.

Amazingly, Kirby was not the strongest, fastest, tallest, or most gifted baseball player ever. All you had to do was watch Kirby swing at a pitch three feet outside of the strike zone to understand that he did not succeed because of his mechanics. It was his gravity-defying leaps in center field, his hustling out an infield single, and his

ability to hit the pitch three feet outside the strike zone that made him one of the greatest baseball players to grace the game. This honor was quickly rewarded in 2001, when at the age of 37 he was inducted into the Hall of Fame and became the third youngest living inductee, behind Sandy Koufax and Lou Gehrig.

Kirby Puckett's history-making career with the Twins began May 8, 1984. In his first game he became one of nine players in the history of baseball to collect four hits in their first game. For the next twelve seasons Kirby Puckett and his now retired No. 34 carried the Minnesota Twins out from obscurity to two World Series Titles in 1987 and 1991. He made ten straight all-star appearances from 1986 until 1995, and won six gold gloves over his career. Perhaps the defining moment in Kirby Puckett's legendary career came during Game Six of the 1991 World Series. Puckett hit a walk off home run in the eleventh inning, becoming the ninth player in history to hit a walk off home run in a World Series game. As Kirby rounded second base and pumped his fist into the air, he transcended the game itself and took his seat among the greatest players to swing the bat.

Tragically, Kirby was forced to retire from baseball on July 12, 1996, due to complications with glaucoma. In his retirement Puckett continued the charitable work he began as a player, raising money for glaucoma prevention and children's charities, perhaps most famously through his sponsoring of celebrity billiards tournaments to benefit the Children's Heart Fund. He won both the Branch Rickey Award, 1993, and the Roberto Clemente Man of the Year Award, 1996, for his community service.

Kirby's accomplishments were not predestined. Kirby willed his success from sheer attitude and hard work. He was born March 14, 1961, in Chicago, IL. Kirby grew up in Chicago's notorious Cabrini Green Housing Projects, "the place where hope died." Despite the daily barrage of drugs and gangs that surrounded him, Kirby went on to become an All-American at Calumet High School. While playing in a college baseball league in Illinois, Puckett caught the eye of some pro scouts, although he surely caught the ears of the scouts as well with his colorful clubhouse humor. Soon thereafter in 1982, Kirby Puckett was a first round draft pick of the Minnesota Twins.

As I said before, Kirby Puckett was not gifted with the greatest baseball talent. He did not physically dominate the game, but he did dominate it mentally. Ever since Kirby, little league coaches have always had to tell their kids that they could only swing like Kirby if they made the major leagues. The problem is that in order to make the Majors, those same coaches had to tell the kids they had to work and play as hard as Kirby did and have fun doing it. That is his legacy to baseball; he put the fun into baseball. It is now all

of our responsibility to carry on that legacy.

If Kirby were alive he would want all of us to honor him with his trademark sign-of-the cross and promise to make the most out of life as he did. As Kirby remarked with his typical modesty after his baseball career ended prematurely:

Kirby Puckett's going to be all right. Don't worry about me. I'll show up, and I'll have a smile on my face. The only thing I won't have is this uniform on. But you guys can have the memories of what I did when I did have it on.

Kirby, we know you are all right in heaven right now, but we are not all right. We loved you as a player, but most of all we loved how you always had a smile on your face. You made us believe in ourselves. On behalf of Minnesota and baseball fans everywhere, thank you for the memories. You will not be forgotten.

RAILROAD COMPETITION ACT 2005

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for a fair and competitive rail system. Our agricultural economy cannot operate the way it should. We cannot receive the materials we need at a decent price and we cannot distribute our products at a fair price.

We need to work on Federal rail policy that encourages competition. Farmers, businesses and consumers would all benefit from this policy.

Montana's rail infrastructure is controlled by a single rail carrier controlling over 96 percent of all rail miles, over 95 percent all grain elevator and terminal sites, and moving more than 95 percent all wheat from the State.

There is more control by a single railroad in Montana than any other State. The rail carrier controls and dictates the rail rates in all movements from Montana eastbound or westbound.

As a result, agricultural shippers in some parts of the United States are paying the highest rail freight rates in exchange for sporadic and unreliable service. It's unacceptable. And it's not right that our Montana producers are expected to do business under these conditions.

Our shippers need a clearly defined means for securing reliable service at a reasonable rate. It's fair. And it's the right thing to do.

Agricultural shippers are unique because the party that bears the cost of rail transportation—the farmer—is not the party that negotiates the rate for that transportation—the grain elevator.

Further, the farmer has no ability to pass on the costs associated with transportation to the customer.

To ship a 26 car shipment of wheat from Medicine Lake, MT, to Portland is \$3.42 per mile. To ship a 26 car shipment of wheat from Commerce City, CO, to Portland is \$2.61 per mile and Atchison, KS, to Portland is \$2.34 per mile.