

Sirens wailed across the southern half of Cyprus today, in memory of the day known as “black anniversary” among the Greek Cypriots. Cypriot leaders, on both sides of the divide, must take forward steps to wash away the darkness of this day and replace it with peace and tolerance.●

REMEMBERING GENERAL WAYNE A. DOWNING

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, today, with a heavy heart, I recognize an American patriot and public servant who passed away on July 17, 2007: GEN Wayne A. Downing, U.S. Army, Retired.

Born on May 10, 1940, in Peoria, IL, General Downing graduated from the Spalding Institute in 1958 and was then appointed to the U.S. Military Academy. Following his graduation from West Point in 1962, General Downing served two combat tours in Vietnam as a junior infantry officer.

General Downing served his country for 34 years in a variety of command assignments in infantry, armored, special operations, and joint units, culminating in his appointment as the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command. As a general officer, he commanded the special operations of all services during the 1989 invasion of Panama and commanded a joint special operations task force operating deep behind the Iraqi lines during Operation Desert Storm.

General Downing’s reputation was that of a smart, decisive, forceful, and caring leader, known in particular for his unwavering determination to accomplish any mission assigned and provide his soldiers the best possible support. His personal courage and leadership by example inspired fierce loyalty from all the soldiers who worked for him.

Following his retirement from the U.S. Army in 1996, General Downing had repeatedly answered the call of public service. After the terrorist attack on the U.S. base at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, he was appointed by President Clinton to assess the attack and to make recommendations on how to protect Americans and U.S. facilities worldwide from future attacks.

From 1999–2000, General Downing was a member of the congressionally mandated National Commission on Terrorism charged with examining the terrorist threat to the U.S., evaluating America’s laws, policies, and practices for preventing and punishing terrorism directed at U.S. citizens, and recommending corrective actions.

In the wake of 9/11, General Downing served for almost a year in the White House as national director and deputy national security advisor for combating terrorism. As the President’s principal advisor on matters related to combating terrorism, he was responsible for coordinating the military, diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, information, and financial operations

of our war on terror, and for developing and executing a strategy that integrated all elements of national power.

Following his assignment at the White House, General Downing returned to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point when he assumed the position of “Distinguished Chair” of the Combating Terrorism Center, CTC. Under his leadership, the center sought to better understand foreign and domestic terrorism threats, to educate future leaders, and to provide political analysis and advice to counter future terrorist activities.

In addition to his duties at the CTC, General Downing was a visiting faculty member at the University of Michigan Business School conducting seminars on leadership and transformation management and was military and terrorism analyst for NBC News.

General Downing’s career has epitomized the phrase “lifetime of service to the Nation” and exemplified ideals inherent in duty, honor, and country. He was a true warrior who always spoke the truth, insisted on complete honesty from all he worked with, and was the epitome of honorable behavior. As a combat leader, educator, global strategist, and national security expert, General Downing’s contributions to our national defense and security are immeasurable.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Kathryn, his daughters Laura and Elizabeth, and the entire Downing family in this time of sorrow. He will be missed dearly by his many friends, colleagues, and an extremely grateful Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO JULIE SITTASON

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Julie Sittason, who has dedicated over 20 years of her life to caring for others. On August 16, 2007, when Julie steps down as the executive director of Hospice of West Alabama, she will leave behind a legacy of service to others.

Julie and I have been friends for many years. She graduated from my alma mater, the University of Alabama, with an undergraduate degree in sociology and a master’s degree in counseling and guidance from the University of Alabama. Soon after, Julie decided to pursue a rewarding career of serving and caring for others.

For 7 years, Julie worked as a counselor at the Alabama State Department of Industrial Relations, providing guidance to the blind, the hearing impaired and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Later, Julie returned to the University of Alabama to work as the program administrator for the West Alabama Comprehensive Services program.

In 1986, Julie was named executive director of Hospice of West Alabama. When she was hired, the Agency only employed three full-time staffers, operating on an annual budget of \$86,000. Today, the budget has grown to \$5 mil-

lion a year and Hospice of West Alabama has 70 employees, serving 600 patients a year in Tuscaloosa, Greene, Hale, Bibb and Pickens Counties.

Over the past two decades, Julie has overseen many changes at Hospice of West Alabama. It was under her direction in 1997 when the Agency became the first community-based hospice in the State of Alabama to be officially recognized by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. In 2004, it was Julie’s vision that led to the construction of the \$5 million facility that includes the State’s first community-based inpatient hospice facility.

While many people think that the service Julie contributes each day through her work at Hospice of West Alabama is enough, she thinks otherwise. As an avid volunteer, Julie continues to serve with organizations such as the March of Dimes, the MS Walkathon and Soup Bowl. She has served as an adviser for Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority, is on the administrative board for First United Methodist Church, and the board of directors for United Cerebral Palsy, Castle Hill Clinic and the Maude Whatley Clinic. Julie has also held several leadership positions in the Alabama Hospice Organization.

Julie is married to Chuck Sittason. She has two daughters, Katherine Cramer, who served with distinction as my first Senate page in 1995, and Meredith Cramer.

As Julie embarks on another phase in her life, she will remain an inspiration to many and will be remembered for her dedication and many contributions to Hospice of West Alabama. I wish her much luck in her future endeavors, and I ask this entire Senate to join me in recognizing and honoring the life and career of my good friend Julie Sittason.●

RECOGNIZING THE 114TH FIGHTER WING

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the 114th Fighter Wing of the South Dakota Air National Guard for being awarded the 2007 Outstanding Air National Guard Flying Unit Award.

Since 1956, the 114th Fighter Wing has been an outstanding unit and has played an important role in the South Dakota National Guard. The unit has a proud history of accomplishment and this award is in keeping with that tradition. Over the years, the 114th has received numerous unit citations such as the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamer for combat duty as a part of Operation Just Cause in Panama. The 114th Fighter Wing has trained with the Navy, Marines, and the Air Force during Operation Provide Comfort II in Turkey, Commando Sling in Singapore, Operation Southern Watch in Al Jaber, Kuwait, and numerous others. Today, the unit is continuing to uphold its

standard of excellence by providing significant contributions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the War on Terror. Their courageous efforts in protecting America should make both South Dakota and the Nation proud.

It gives me great pleasure to represent the men and women who make up the 114th Fighter Wing and congratulate them on their award.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:53 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Brandon, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 31. An act to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District Wildomar Service Area Recycled Water Distribution Facilities and Alberhill Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility Projects.

H.R. 673. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take lands in Yuma County, Arizona, into trust as part of the reservation of the Cocopah Tribe of Arizona, and for other purposes.

H.R. 735. An act to designate the Federal building under construction at 799 First Avenue in New York, New York, as the "Ronald H. Brown United States Mission to the United Nations Building".

H.R. 1315. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the benefits provided to veterans under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1384. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 118 Minner Street in Bakersfield, California, as the "Buck Owens Post Office".

H.R. 1696. An act to amend the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Alabama and Coshatta Indian Tribes of Texas Restoration Act to allow the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo tribe to determine blood quantum requirement for membership in that Tribe.

H.R. 2107. An act to create the Office of Chief Financial Officer of the Government of the Virgin Islands, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2120. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to proclaim as reservation for the benefit of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians a parcel of land now held in trust by the United States for that Indian tribe.

H.R. 2309. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located

at 3916 Milgen Road in Columbus, Georgia, as the "Frank G. Lumpkin, Jr. Post Office Building".

H.R. 2623. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the collection of co-payments for all hospice care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2688. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 103 South Getty Street in Uvalde, Texas, as the "Dolph S. Briscoe, Jr. Post Office Building".

H.R. 2707. An act to reauthorize the Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program.

H.R. 2750. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

H.R. 2765. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 44 North Main Street in Hughesville, Pennsylvania, as the "Master Sergeant Sean Michael Thomas Post Office".

H.R. 2863. An act to authorize the Coquille Indian Tribe of the State of Oregon to convey land and interests in land owned by the Tribe.

H.R. 2874. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the provision of health care to veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2952. An act to authorize the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Indians of the State of Michigan to convey land and interests in land owned by the Tribe.

H.R. 2963. An act to transfer certain land in Riverside County, California, and San Diego County, California, from the Bureau of Land Management to the United States to be held in trust for the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3006. An act to improve the use of a grant of a parcel of land to the State of Idaho for use as an agricultural college, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3034. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 127 South Elm Street in Gardner, Kansas, as the "Private First Class Shane R. Austin Post Office".

H.R. 3067. An act to amend the United States Housing Act of 1937 to exempt small public housing agencies from the requirement of preparing an annual public housing agency plan.

H.R. 3123. An act to extend the designation of Liberia under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act so that Liberians can continue to be eligible for temporary protected status under that section.

H.R. 3184. An act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a competitive grant program for the Puget Sound area to provide comprehensive conservation planning to address water quality.

H.R. 3206. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through December 15, 2007, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 49. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and commending recipients of the Purple Heart for their courage and sacrifice on behalf of the United States.

H. Con. Res. 136. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding high level visits to the United States by democratically-elected officials of Taiwan.

H. Con. Res. 143. Concurrent resolution honoring National Historic Landmarks.

H. Con. Res. 188. Concurrent resolution condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House passed the following acts, without amendment:

S. 375. An act to waive application of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to a specific parcel of real property transferred by the United States to 2 Indian tribes in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes.

S. 975. An act granting the consent and approval of Congress to an interstate forest fire protection compact.

S. 1099. An act to amend chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, to make individuals employed by the Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission eligible to obtain Federal health insurance.

S. 1716. An act to amend the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007, to strike a requirement relating to forage producers.

The message also announced that the House passed the act (S. 1) to provide greater transparency in the legislative process; with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 27) supporting the goals and ideals of 'National Purple Heart Recognition Day'; with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

The message also announced that the House disagrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2272) to invest in innovation through research and development, and to improve the competitiveness of the United States; it agrees to the conference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints the following as managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on Science and Technology, for consideration of the House bill and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. GORDON, LIPINSKI, BAIRD, WU, LAMPSON, UDALL of Colorado, Ms. GIFORDS, Messrs. MCNERNEY, HALL of Texas, SENSENBRENNER, EHLERS, Mrs. BIGGERT, Messrs. FEENEY, and GINGREY.

From the Committee on Education and Labor, for consideration of Division C of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. GEORGE MILLER of California, HOLT, and MCKEON.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, July 31, 2007, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1868. An act to temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.