

I offer my congratulations to petty officer Scott Higgins and to all those whom the Coast Guard recognizes today. His achievements have brought honor both to him and to his home state of Rhode Island.

ARTICLE BY RABBI MICHAEL COHEN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to bring to the attention of the Senate an article by Rabbi Michael Cohen who is director of special projects at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. Rabbi Cohen recently submitted the article entitled "The Genesis of Diversity" to the New York Times. In this article, Rabbi Cohen eloquently reminds us that environmental and biological diversity is not simply a thought or something we simply sit back and observe. Rather we are constant participants in the act of diversity and as such it is our responsibility as human beings to protect our environment. This article serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving environmental and biological diversity during this holiday season.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Rabbi Michael M. Cohen's article entitled "The Genesis of Diversity" be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

THE GENESIS OF DIVERSITY

(By Rabbi Michael Cohen)

In 1968 Hanukkah and Ramadan ended on the same date. The next day was Christmas Eve. That evening, one quarter of the world's population saw, for the first time, images taken by the Apollo 8 astronauts of the earth from a lunar orbit. The earth, a beautifully colored marble ball floating across the black backdrop of the universe, also looked lonely and vulnerable. Those pictures captured the imagination of the world, triggering something in the consciousness of humanity that gave birth to the environmental movement and, two years later, the first Earth Day.

To frame that moment, a shared historic moment that would transcend all the divisions of the world, the Apollo 8 crew read from the beginning of the Bible, the first ten lines from the Book of Genesis. The opening chapters of Genesis not only include the account of the creation of the earth but over and over tell us of the importance of diversity.

All of creation is called "good," reminding us of the value of the multiplicity of the world that we live in. The text also teaches us, by describing everything that is created before humans as "good," that all things have intrinsic value in and of themselves beyond any value that we may place on them. Once humans are created, "very good" is the adjective applied by the text. An anthropocentric reading of the text would say this is because the world was created for our needs, and once we are in place we can do what we want with the world. A biocentric reading of the text says that "very good" only means that creation as described in the text was complete, and that we humans were the last piece of the biological puzzle.

This reading is supported by the reality that if humans were to disappear from the face of the earth all that had been created

before us would go on quite well, actually better, without our presence. However, if a strata of the diversity of life that had been created before humans were to disappear, we, and all that had been created after it, would no longer exist. In a bit of Heavenly humor on Darwin's survival of the fittest, it is actually the smallest and least physically strong species, like the butterflies, bees, and amoebas, that hold the survival of the world in place. Unlike the other species of the planet, we have the power to commit biocide if we do not protect and preserve those smaller forms of life.

The importance of diversity is emphasized a few chapters later, in the story of Noah, where Noah is told to bring pairs of each species onto the ark so that after the flood they can replenish the earth. After the flood, God places a rainbow in the sky as a reminder to never again destroy the world. It is both a symbol and a metaphor: a single ray of light refracted through water, the basic source of all life, produces a prism of colors. As with the Creation story, we are again reminded that the foundation of diversity is that we all come from one source. On its most profound level, this understanding should give us all the awareness that we have a relationship with and are connected to the rest of humanity and creation.

Immediately following the story of Noah we read about the Tower of Babel. The whole account takes up only nine verses. The conventional reading is that its message is one against diversity; the babel of languages at the end of the story is understood as a punishment. The Israeli philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz presents a different reading of the text. For Leibowitz, Babel represents a fascist totalitarian state where the aims of the state are valued more than the individual. In such a society, diverse thought and expression is frowned upon. The text tells us that everyone "had the same language, and the same words."

We read in the genealogies that link the Noah and Babel stories that the "nations were divided by their lands, each one with its own language, according to their clans, by their nations." Leibowitz sees the babel of languages not as a punishment but a corrective return to how things had been and were supposed to be.

That is still our challenge today. Diversity is not a liberal value; it is the way of the world. We know that the environment outside of our human lives is healthier with greater diversity, coral reefs and rain forests being prime examples. It is also true for humanity. We are better off because of the different religions, nations, cultures, and languages that comprise the human family. The Irish Potato Famine was caused because only one variety of potato was planted. Without diverse crops, the disease spread easily on a large and deadly scale.

In one of his State of the Union addresses, former President Bill Clinton said, "This fall, at the White House, one of America's leading scientists said something we should all remember. He said all human beings, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same. So modern science affirms what ancient faith has always taught: the most important fact of life is our common humanity. Therefore, we must do more than tolerate diversity—we must honor and celebrate it."

The opening of the Bible understands diversity not as a noun but as a verb; diversity is the basic action for life as we know it on this planet. Its importance is underscored by the fact that three accounts in its opening chapters highlight diversity as a foundation of the world we live in. Such an orientation is essential for our survival as a species.

DONNA ANTHONY: IN MEMORIAM

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, we have a saying in my Senate office: Once a member of the Harkin family, always a member of the Harkin family. On Monday, with the passing of Donna Anthony, a longtime staffer in my Des Moines office, we lost a very valuable and dear member of our family.

It seems like just yesterday that I was presenting Donna with a pin recognizing her 20 years of service to the people of Iowa as a Senate employee. In Donna's case, that wasn't "service to the people of Iowa" in the abstract; it was service to thousands of individual Iowans whose lives she touched in very real, concrete ways.

Donna was one of those people who give bleeding-heart liberals a good name. She was always on a personal mission to save the world, or at least as many people as she could.

She was constantly taking up the cause of people who are down on their luck, whether it was a senior citizen getting stiffed by Medicare, an immigrant family who desperately needed a visa, a victim of domestic violence, you name it. Her title may have been "caseworker supervisor," but these were not just cases to her, they were people—and she took each one to heart. She put the passion in compassion.

I remember in Catholic school being taught that Saint Jude was the patron saint of lost causes. Well, I was blessed to know Saint Donna, the patron saint of people in dire need. Saint Jude intercedes with God. Saint Donna interceded with the Federal Government—which may be more challenging. She was constantly working her little miracles.

Donna certainly came through for me—again and again. I long ago lost track of the number of people thanking me for the work that Donna did. And her personal loyalty was just extraordinary. She was always looking out for my best interest and for ways to make me look good.

I remember when I was in Iowa Falls this past August, meeting with the economic development group. They had heard about the great work Donna had done for Marshalltown, and they wanted her to do the same for Iowa Falls.

In fact, what she did in Marshalltown was typical of Donna Anthony going the extra mile, going the extra 10 miles. She worked closely with the Marshalltown Chamber of Commerce when they started making their trips to Washington to lobby for assistance. She drove back and forth to Marshalltown for countless meetings and served as an all-round counselor and advocate for their projects. The Marshall County sheriff, Ted Kamanches—a prominent Republican—became a big supporter of mine because of the great work Donna did for his police force, including having a Federal drug task force placed in Marshalltown.

Twenty years ago, Donna started out in my Des Moines office as receptionist

and front-desk person. She kept getting calls from people on the north side of Des Moines who wanted me to do something to stop prostitution in the area. Donna went to bat for them, and that is how she got her start in community casework and making connections with local law enforcement. She had a knack for bringing people and agencies together and helping them to get things done. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship not only with neighborhood groups in Des Moines but with law enforcement officials all across Iowa.

Mr. President, there is an old expression that we make a living by what we make, but we make a life by what we give. For 20 years in my office, Donna gave her all for the people of Iowa. She touched countless lives. And she made a life to be proud of.

I can offer no higher praise for Donna—or anyone else, for that matter—than that she was a good, decent, and caring human being. I valued her friendship, her counsel, and her incredibly hard work. I think I speak for all of us in the Harkin Senate family in saying that we love Donna very much, and we are deeply grateful that she was a part of our lives.

#### TRIBUTE TO PATRICK G. HECK

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I want to honor Mr. Patrick G. Heck, who is retiring this month following 23 years of dedicated Federal service. Pat has served the Finance Committee and all Americans extremely well during his eight years as tax counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, and as chief tax counsel for the past 4 years.

As a college freshman, Pat began his congressional career as a file clerk for his Congressman. Throughout his distinguished public service career, Pat's tireless dedication has earned the respect of his peers, family, and community. Pat commands the respect of both Democratic and Republican staff throughout the Senate. Pat is a graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center, with an LL.M. in taxation. He received his J.D. from the University of Toledo College of Law, and is a graduate of American University, with degrees in political science and economics.

Prior to joining the Finance Committee staff, Pat served as assistant counsel on the Select Revenue Subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means. While there, Pat was responsible for leading hearings on intercompany transfer pricing, Internal Revenue Service collection and enforcement. Before that, he was an attorney with the Internal Revenue Service's Office of Chief Counsel.

I know the members of the Senate Finance Committee join me in gratitude for Pat's sage advice on tax policy matters. His efforts have helped to shape the legislative agenda for tax administration and tax reform. He cares deeply about these issues and the effect

they have on hard-working Americans. With his ever-meticulous style, Pat has helped me to delve into the important issue of the "tax gap," energy tax incentives, tax cuts for individuals and small businesses, and taxpayer rights.

Pat also helped me develop the idea of extending the time period during which Americans could make tax-exempt contributions to help victims of the tsunami disaster in 2005. This change helped facilitate a floodgate of tax-exempt contributions for these victims.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Pat Heck for his many years of outstanding service and in wishing him well for the future.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER FOOTBALL TEAM

• Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, they often say that the third time is the charm, and now the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater knows why. After UW-Whitewater's football team came so close to winning the NCAA Division III National Football Championship 2 years in a row, this year they triumphed, winning the big game and becoming Division III's reigning champions. Their fantastic season marked the first Division III football championship in UW-Whitewater's history.

The hard work of the Warhawk football team culminated in a 31-21 victory over two-time defending champion Mount Union College in the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl on December 15, 2007, in Salem, VA. The Warhawks bolted to an early 17-0 lead and beat back the comeback attempt of Mount Union, which had come into the game having won 37 contests in a row.

I commend Coach Lance Liepold for his dedication and hard work throughout his rookie season as head coach. I also congratulate Justin Beaver on being named the championship game's Most Outstanding Player, and the winner of the Gagliardi Trophy as the best player in Division III.

The continuing success of University of Wisconsin-Whitewater football has made the people of Wisconsin, and alumni throughout the country, very proud. •

#### IN HONOR OF G. RAYMOND "RAY" EMPSON

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, it is with great respect that I recognize G. Raymond "Ray" Empson, who for the past 11 years has served as president of the national nonprofit organization, Keep America Beautiful, Inc., and has announced his well-deserved retirement effective December 31 of this year.

Keep America Beautiful, the organization that many remember as the originator of the famous "Crying Indian" public service advertisement in

1971, has been an important part of the fabric of American communities since 1953. Rooted in a nonpartisan and "hands-on" approach to improving communities and the environment, KAB forms public-private partnerships that engage everyone in improving not just the physical beauty of their hometowns, but their economic vitality and civic engagement, as well. I am proud that the state of Connecticut is home to the organization's national headquarters in Stamford.

During Ray Empson's tenure, Keep America Beautiful has grown to over 570 local affiliate organizations in communities from coast to coast. Through his leadership, and expansion of the signature event, The Great American Cleanup, KAB and its affiliates have removed millions of tons of litter from the American landscape; planted millions of trees that improve our communities; conserved our natural resources by recycling tons of raw material; improved hiking, biking and nature trails; and most importantly, educated millions of Americans of all ages in sustainable behaviors that prevent litter and reduce waste.

Given all these accomplishments, I can't help but think of Ray Empson's retirement in bittersweet terms. While I am certainly happy for him and wish him all the best, I can't help but think what a loss it will be for the country when he steps down. I am certain, however, that his commitment to the environment and his dedication to improving the quality of life in America's communities will serve as a strong example to all those who know him and have worked with him and will guide the future leadership of KAB.

Thank you G. Raymond Empson. America is a better place because of you. •

#### TRIBUTE TO REEDSPORT'S FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, during this holiday season, my thoughts are with the countless nonprofit organizations in my State of Oregon that provide assistance to those in need. Ever since the days of the pioneers, when folks from miles around would gather for community "barn raisings," the spirit of neighbor helping neighbor has been an important part of the Oregon story.

I rise today to pay tribute to the Family Resource Center in the south coast community of Reedsport, which, over the past decade, has gained a reputation as one of Oregon's most innovative and successful community organizations. Jointly supported by Lower Umpqua Hospital and the Reedsport School District, the Family Resource Center resulted from a community brainstorming meeting to identify ways to help Reedsport area families better access services. A decade after that session, the Family Resource Center averages 550 contacts a month and serves as a model of how entities can