

Also many years ago we had glass bottles and people employed in glass factories making them. We could save a lot of petrol by getting away from so much plastic. Glass is far easier to recycle than plastic and it is reusable.

It is time [Congress got past partisanship and figured out how to solve these problems]. They should be paying us by now not the other way around. Let us put an end to the financial handout to them and start using those funds to build our own country.

LUCIAN.

Thank you for your recent communication regarding your vote on the climate change bill. I must say that I disagree with your decision, despite being spared an increase in gasoline costs. With 5 kilowatt-h/sq meter of solar income, in addition to our hydroelectric power and category 4-5 wind, Idaho should be a net green energy exporter. Just because the oil companies, in times of record profits, decide to squeeze the consumer, does not mean we can make the short-sighted choice to think only with our wallets. We need an energy policy that provides true security—a diversified portfolio of energy sources—not continued investment in a delivery system that is outmoded, wasteful, and polluting. I am stretched in this economy, but I would gladly put out the extra money for the long term solution of improved air quality (have you seen the brown air over the Treasure Valley recently), cutting off money supply to unstable Mideast regimes, and a chance for my son to have a functional environment in which to live. Please stop making short-term political decisions when you have the opportunity to show true leadership and thoughtfully consider how to achieve a sustainable future for our country. It is not too hard for us, for heaven's sake, we are Americans!

LISA, Boise.

The cost for fuel oil has gone from \$.60 per gal. to over \$4 per gallon, raising my monthly heating costs in the winter from \$85 to \$353 per month. I also drive around 40,000 miles per year for my job and while costs have skyrocketed, the business deduction has not, which is, in fact, a tax increase to go with the punishing costs. To add to these problems, my wife's mother, who lives in Dillon, Montana, has cancer, and lives at her trailer home for now. She is on Medicaid, has limited options for care and depends on us for many things. It is a six-hour drive. We get reasonable good mileage but that country, with the unpredictable weather, has a negative impact on our 26 miles per gallon. The cost of the trip has gone from \$100 to \$400 in just the last year and ½. My wife stayed home and raised our children while I provided for them so she has no Social Security. I am self-employed, so there is no retirement waiting except for what I can provide and I have used that to pay my taxes till it ran out. My wife was injured very badly 2½ years ago without insurance and I must pay the county back over the next 15 years. I realize that these things are adversity and I can, with hard work and the blessings of God, overcome them and still succeed. The biggest obstacle in my way is the very government that has sworn to uphold and defend the constitution that was inspired to protect me. Those who are bent on a socialistic society are destroying my hope for a future and the hope of my children.

RICHARD, Caldwell.

TRIBUTE TO ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish to draw the attention of the Senate to a

group of selfless volunteers at St. Michael's College in Colchester, VT, who sacrificed time with their families and friends this past holiday season to ensure that Vermonters in need of emergency services had someone to call upon even on the Christmas holiday.

St. Michael's Fire and Rescue was founded in 1969 and has been staffed and operated by student volunteers ever since. Donald Sutton, affectionately known as "Pappy" around the firehouse, helped start the organization as dean and director of campus security following the untimely death of a student athlete on campus. Nearly 40 years later, the organization serves as the primarily ambulance and fire service for a large portion of the State's most populous region, Chittenden County.

The student volunteers who make this organization run find time outside of their rigorous course work to not only be on call but also to complete hundreds of hours of Emergency Medical Technician training and Firefighter training. While their classmates may be battling another school on the ice, on the field, or on the court—St. Michael's Fire and Rescue members are risking their lives in real-life emergency situations, aiding the sick, and putting out fires. Even during the holidays, when schools shut down and students usually go home to visit with family, these students stand watch for their community.

While I was at my family farm in Middlesex this holiday season, I came across a Christmas Day Burlington Free Press article highlighting the sacrifice of these students. I ask unanimous consent that the text of that article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Dec. 25, 2008]

NO BREAK FOR STUDENTS ON RESCUE SQUAD (by Joel Banner Baird)

COLCHESTER.—Their classmates might delight in holiday downtime: late nights, late mornings, heavy meals and torpor.

On the night before Christmas, a student-staffed rescue squad at St. Michael's College remains on-call and alert—by choice. Time off will come to squad Capt. Kristen Dalton, 21, later this week, after a 90-hour week at the College Parkway station.

Her fellow St. Mike's seniors, Mark Petersen and Peter Cronin, both 21, opted for holiday duty, too.

This is more than a club. The squad's 20 members are first-responders who you see tending to car-wreck victims and heart-attack patients. They respond to more than 2,700 calls every year from Chittenden County residents, most of them in Colchester, Winooski and Hinesburg. Dalton looked cheerful on a slow Wednesday morning.

The biology major and pre-med student said she typically logs 40 to 50 hours per week at St. Michael's Fire and Rescue.

Each volunteer, certified as an Emergency Medical Technician, puts in at least 24 hours per week, including a 12-hour overnight shift at the station.

"We hold ourselves to a 3-minute response time," Dalton said. "I throw a jumpsuit over

my pajamas, I'm in my boots, and I'm out the door."

Like his captain, Petersen joined the squad as a freshman. He said the commitment taught him how to juggle academic commitments.

"It really, really forces you into time management," he said.

Another learning curve brought him up to speed as a member of a larger, adult community.

"What we do here is a lot of consequence-based decision-making," he said. "You see the results of your actions right away. It makes you step back and say, 'Hey—I'm not a kid anymore.'"

Interrupting him, a call came through dispatch: An infant in Plattsburgh, N.Y., needed to be transported to Fletcher Allen.

Petersen and Cronin did a final inspection of the neo-natal intensive care truck—one of the station's three ambulances—and headed out to pick up a specialist at the hospital en route to New York.

Christmas Eve's activities would be anybody's guess. Wrapped packages lay beneath a decorated tree in the ready room. Cronin's parents said they'd cook breakfast for the volunteers on Christmas morning.

Dalton said the squad would lose almost half of its members after graduation. She's already planning a spring recruitment drive.

"This attracts a lot of different people—people who want to do something good with their time," she said.

As if on cue, Kate Soons of Colchester, a self-described "lingering alum," entered with an overnight bag. She'd heard about the Plattsburgh call and wanted to provide backup.

Soons served with the squad in the 1980s, and now is a nurse at Fletcher Allen. She also coordinates regional emergency care training, and keeps tabs on St. Mike's graduates who have chosen to stay active in the field.

Begun in 1969, the rescue squad is the busiest volunteer ambulance unit in the state, she said.

"It's a big family," she said.

Soons' husband, Pete Soons, also served with rescue volunteers as an undergraduate. He directs the college's department of public safety, overseeing campus security, rescue and fire squads.

Unlike the rescue volunteers, St. Michael's 25 firefighters have an off-campus affiliation; they're a battalion in the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company.

Standing between a hose truck and an engine, company firefighter Gary Zeno discussed hydrant fittings with freshman Andrea Dillner, 19. Still in training, Dillner will accompany squads as a rookie until she qualifies for hands-on work.

Nonetheless, she volunteered.

After a briefing with Zeno, she headed upstairs, past a wall-sized calendar of shift schedules and birthdays, to take a nap.

Dalton, coffee in hand, looked as wide-awake as ever on the night before Christmas.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RETIREMENT OF CHARLENE DAVIS

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I acknowledge and pay tribute to Charlene Davis's dedication and service to the people of Missouri as she retires from the Jackson County Election Board of Election Commissioners after 34 years.

During her tenure with the board, Charlene has helped modernize our election technology, improving the reliability and integrity of elections.

Charlene had the opportunity to design the program to implement punch card voting; to design, implement, and monitor the computerized database for voter registration; and to implement the National Voting Rights Act, making modifications to the database to conform. Charlene has been instrumental to making the voting process in the State of Missouri a secure one.

Charlene was also implemental in securing the new electronic voting system required by Help America Vote Act. As a sponsor of the Help America Vote Act, I express my gratitude to Charlene in executing this program.

She has been an active member of The International Association of Clerks, Records, Election Officials & Treasurers since 1981, serving as State director from Missouri for 10 years, treasurer of IACREOT and special assistant to the president in 2004.

Charlene received her formal education from the University of Missouri, in Columbia, MO, where she majored in math and physics.

She and her husband Wade are the parents of three married children, and they have eight grandchildren.

Charlene, congratulations on your well-deserved retirement and best wishes for your future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO DICK HOXWORTH

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment today to recognize the career of journalist Dick Hoxworth who, after serving the residents of central Pennsylvania for 40 years, retired from his post as anchor on WGAL-TV on Christmas Eve.

The longest serving anchor in the Harrisburg media market, Dick covered some of the most newsworthy events in the region's history. Most notably, he covered the Agnes flood in 1972 and was one of the first reporters on the scene at the Three Mile Island nuclear accident. During the Vietnam war he reported on the return of the first American prisoners of war, as well as the arrival of the first Vietnamese refugees to the United States. In the political arena, Dick Hoxworth covered stories at both the Pennsylvania State Capitol and the White House.

Dick was a highly decorated newsmen. Over the course of his distinguished career, he received awards from the Associated Press, the Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters, and was nominated for 29 regional Emmy Awards, winning 3 times.

But simply listing Dick Hoxworth's accomplishments and accolades within the field of journalism doesn't tell his full story. Dick was an old-fashioned "news man," getting his start before blogs, the Internet, 24-hour cable news, and live satellite feeds. However, as time went on, he did one of the most difficult things to do in a profession he transcended the changes that were taking place in his field. Dick continued broadcasting, writing, and reporting even as the faces and technology

around him changed with the times. Rather than be deterred by these changes, he embraced them and continued to thrive.

Edward R. Murrow once said, "the newest computer can merely compound, at speed, the oldest problem in the relations between human beings, and in the end the communicator will be confronted with the old problem, of what to say and how to say it."

For 40 years, Dick Hoxworth knew what to say and how to say it. And, in doing so, he has made Pennsylvania proud. Today I would like to recognize and pay tribute to that service and his long and successful career. ●

TRIBUTE TO JAMES A. TEGNELIA

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the accomplishments and leadership of Dr. James Tegnalia for his service to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency—DTRA—and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. DTRA is a 2,000-member combat support agency which is charged by the Department of Defense to safeguard the United States and its allies from weapons of mass destruction.

I have had the pleasure of working closely with Jim and DTRA in their role as the primary implementers of the Nunn-Lugar program. I am thankful to have had such a strong ally in the fight against nuclear proliferation. The agency is an integral actor in the fight to reduce WMD proliferation worldwide and has proven to be an extraordinary source of leadership in reducing the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction.

Dr. James Tegnalia, of Albuquerque, NM, has served as the Director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency since February 2005, and will leave that post in February 2009, after 4 years of dedicated service. Dr. Tegnalia's accomplishments are as wide in scope as they are large in number, and for this we honor him today on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Dr. Tegnalia was instrumental in institutionalizing and integrating the mission of combating weapons proliferation across the Department of Defense and in guiding agency support to the global war on terrorism. The integration of Department of Defense missions in both fighting terror and WMD proliferation has allowed both agencies to share valuable resources and seek common purpose in our efforts on both important fronts.

Jim has been a tireless champion of international efforts to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and his understanding of the threat of weapons of mass destruction to our nation and U.S. interests abroad is unparalleled. This expertise and dedication manifested itself in a leadership role for the agency in the establishment of regional and global nonproliferation partnerships. Working closely with the Department of State, Dr. Tegnalia has

been a vocal advocate of the President's Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, a program designed to prevent terrorists and dangerous regimes from threatening the United States and its allies with the world's most deadly weapons.

I have had the opportunity to travel extensively with Dr. Tegnalia and the experts at DTRA to Nunn-Lugar dismantlement sites all over the world. I remember fondly a trip we took just 2 years ago. He joined Sam Nunn and I in celebrating the 15th anniversary of the program on a trip to Russia, Ukraine, and Albania. We enjoyed good conversation on the program's significant contributions to international security and Nunn-Lugar's future prospects in countries outside the former Soviet Union. Jim has been an immensely successful leader and colleague in the fight to keep the United States safe and secure against the threats of weapons of mass destruction. We are indebted for his service and honor his commitment to this country.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him good luck in his future endeavors and thanks for a job well done. ●

HONORING MAINE ENERGY SYSTEMS

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, while many hold an idyllic notion of Maine in the winter as a haven for skiers and snow enthusiasts, Mainers know that the cold winter months bring with them many dangers, particularly when it comes to heating homes. That is why I wish to recognize Maine Energy Systems of Bethel, a small business that is using technology and innovative thinking to help solve our Nation's energy crisis and keep Mainers warm during the State's lengthy winter.

Maine Energy Systems is the product of three men: Les Otten, Dr. Harry "Dutch" Dressler, and William Strauss. They came together in 2007 to brainstorm a way to reduce energy costs for Mainers and for the Nation. When the trio formed Maine Energy Systems they agreed that any solution had to: Reduce dependency on foreign oil; be environmentally sensitive; be renewable; and be affordable. With these goals in mind, they spent 14 months researching every aspect of energy delivery and production. These efforts eventually bore fruit when they partnered with German manufacturer Bosch to create a wood pellet fueled boiler system suitable for sale in America.

Bosch created a boiler fueled by high-grade wood pellets that are pumped through an automatic feeder into the boiler itself. The wood pellets are made directly from trees or from the byproducts of other wood manufacturing processes before undergoing a unique and exciting process. The wood is first dried, pulverized and forced under high pressure through the holes in a die, a specialized manufacturing tool. The