

course, the Jack Lew nomination that was a problem that we were able to get cleared. We had to get that cleared because statutorily the President has a budget he has to submit to us. Without a leader at the Office of Management and Budget, it could not be done. So we got that done. We were able to arrive at an agreement on the food safety bill so we would not have to have multiple votes over the weekend. So I think we accomplished a lot this week.

For me personally, I had three caucuses, which were all extremely important for me and the caucus. We spent about 10 or 11 hours over the last few days discussing the lameduck and what we have next Congress.

The floor is now open.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VISIT TO THE CAPITOL

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise this morning to talk about a wonderful opportunity we had on October 20 in the Senate to host heroes, five young West Point graduates, who are currently recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. They came for a tour of the Capitol and for a lesson in history, and I want to thank the Senate Historian who came to the floor.

They had the opportunity to be in the Chamber and to see where the laws are created, which they, through their service and sacrifice, give us the chance to improve and defend and preserve the Constitution and make the laws of this country.

We were able, more importantly, to thank them, to thank them for their service to the Nation, and I am particularly pleased and proud because they carry on a tradition of selfless service to the Nation exemplified in the best moments of the graduates of the U.S. Military Academy. Each one was wounded while leading his troops out front, exposed to the dangers and hardships of warfare.

We had previously hosted a group of soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Divi-

sion—again, I have a very proud association as a former company commander in that division. We hope periodically to host other wounded warriors from Walter Reed.

But among our guests was CPT Dan Berschinski. Dan is a graduate from the class of 2007 from the Military Academy. He hails from Peachtree City, GA. He served with the 5/2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team. He was injured in Afghanistan. They were operating around the Arghandab River Valley near Kandahar. He was on patrol, dismounted, when he was hit by an IED and suffered the loss of both of his legs but not the diminution of his spirit or his commitment of service to the Nation.

We were also joined by 1LT Chris Nichols, from the class of 2008. Chris is from Myersville, MD. He served with the 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team of the 3rd Infantry Division. He was injured in Iraq, northeast of Baghdad, by an explosively formed penetrator IED, a very sophisticated weapons system. It injured both of his legs. He was joined by his friend, Stacey Aleksejus. We were pleased that Chris and Stacey were here. Chris is, hopefully, going to return to Active Duty.

We were also joined by 1LT Rahul Harpalani from the class of 2008. Rahul is from Carbondale, IL. He served with the 4th Brigade Combat Team of the 4th Infantry Division. He was wounded in Konar Province in Afghanistan. An IED exploded against the vehicle he was driving. Both legs were injured. We hope, again, that he will be recuperating well.

We were also joined by 1LT Josh Linvill, USMA class of 2008 from Wayne, PA. He served with the 3/2 Stryker Cavalry Regiment. He was wounded in Kandahar, Afghanistan. He stepped on a land mine, injuring his right leg.

We were joined also by 1LT Zach Osborne, class of 2008, from Roanoke, VA. He served with the 5/2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team, once again in the Arghandab River Valley of Afghanistan. An IED hit the vehicle he was riding in. Both of his legs were injured. We were pleased he was joined by his non-medical attendant, Daniel Key.

These young men have served, but their families have served also, and we wish to thank them as well. They, too, have sacrificed. In fact, all of us have been up to Walter Reed and as we have gone through the corridors, we have seen mothers and fathers in the rooms with their sons, as well as wives and husbands and children and grandparents and uncles and aunts, because the sacrifice of these young men and women has been borne by their families as well as themselves.

I also wish to thank COL Jim Wartski. Jim is from the class of 1982. He serves as a mobilized reservist at Walter Reed; he, as well as Mr. Fred Larson, the director of Care and Service Transformation. These two gentlemen escorted the wounded warriors.

They also represent some of the improvements not just to the physical infrastructure of Walter Reed but to the management of Walter Reed, from the patient-centered care to the continued engagement and involvement of these young men and women, not only while they are in acute care, but also as they recuperate and rehabilitate, and that is an improvement that has been made and is so necessary.

These young men—in this case, all young combat officers—men, but young men and women who are serving and sacrificing and sustaining the wounds and, in some cases, giving their lives to this Nation are the fabric of our defense. They are what has sustained us through not just this moment but throughout our history. They continue to inspire us with their service, and they continue to represent to the world the continued promise that wherever we are challenged, we will meet that challenge.

We cannot repay them enough. We cannot thank them enough. But last month this Senate had the opportunity to say to five of these warriors: Thank you very much. Come here, see the Senate of the United States where great debates have taken place, where the rights and the responsibilities have been fashioned over more than 200 years. This is what you defend. But, more importantly, you give us the opportunity and the obligation to ensure that your sacrifice is not in vain; that we work here, as you do, as committed Americans to improve the lives of our fellow Americans, to defend their security, but also to provide opportunity, to do what is difficult and sometimes unpopular but what is necessary for the success of freedom and the success of the families of this country.

At moments in this body, we have, a sense of frustration, a sense of—let me stop at frustration. At those moments when we are divided by political issues, by policy debates, I ask us all to think for a moment of these young men and women. I think that will help immensely in our response to the challenges we face as a Senate and as a nation.

I also wish to say something else because this week in Rhode Island, we had to bury a warrior, SGT Michael Paranzino of the 10th Mountain Division. Michael left his wife and two small children, his parents, his family, his friends, and the whole community of Rhode Island. He was an extraordinary young man.

The cost of this great experiment in democracy is high indeed. We have to recognize that cost, not just in speeches on the floor of the Senate but going forward: how we conduct ourselves as Senators; what we do to make this country stronger and better; what we do to make it more a place of opportunity for all of our citizens. Particularly, it is about what we will do not in the next 2 months or the next 10 months but in the next 20 years to ensure that the veterans we honor on this

floor today will still be honored 20 years hence. We need to ensure that, not just with an annual parade and flag waving, but with the care, the support, the assistance to the VA and the Department of Defense as well as in their communities, not just these individuals but their families.

I hope years from now, and I will pray, that others will stand up and say they paid the price and we have kept our promise to them.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor and I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Colorado, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Colorado, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:49 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 4:22 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BINGAMAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW B. WILLISON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of Andrew B. "Drew" Willison who has served with great distinction since 2007 as U.S. Senate Deputy Sergeant at Arms. Mr. Willison, who is leaving his position to pursue new adventures in the private sector, has led a distinguished career in the U.S. Senate that elevated him to the highest levels of decisionmaking. His work greatly enhanced the safety and security of the U.S. Senate, staff, and visitors.

Mr. Willison was born in Mount Vernon, OH, and was raised in Ohio, Missouri, Alabama, Connecticut, and Virginia. He earned a B.A. with Honors in government from the College of William and Mary in 1988. He also holds a masters' degree in public administration from the Ohio State University, 1990, and a law degree from the George Washington University, 2001.

Mr. Willison started his government career as a presidential management intern at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, and later worked for the Environmental Protection Agency's acid rain division.

In 1997 he joined my staff to work on the Environment and Public Works Committee, including the \$200 billion 1998 highway bill. In 1999, I selected Mr. Willison to become his Appropriations

Committee staff director for the Energy and Water Subcommittee. In this capacity, Drew represented the minority leader and the other Senate Democratic member interests on the \$35 billion per year bill that funds the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and other smaller agencies.

In 2007, Mr. Willison was appointed Deputy Senate Sergeant at Arms where he served as the chief operating officer of the Senate's largest organization, with over 850 employees and an annual budget exceeding \$200 million. Mr. Willison directly supervised senior managers responsible for all operations, including the chief information officer, the chief financial officer, security and emergency preparedness, police operations, general counsel, human resources, the media and public galleries, the Employee Assistance Program, the Protocol Office, the Doorkeepers, the Page Program, printing, the photo studio, the Senate Post Office, parking, and education and training.

Around the Office of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Willison was best known not just for his accomplished and distinguished work in the Senate but for his love of animals, music, the latest technology and his extensive Amazon on-line gift list.

Congratulations! We wish Mr. Willison all the best in his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DR. MEREDITH EVANS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the work of my friend, Dr. Meredith Evans. A native of Little Clear Creek in Bell County, Ky., Meredith knew what career path he wanted to follow at a very young age. Influenced by his family members who were in the medical field, he decided by age six that he wanted to be a doctor.

Through diligence and perseverance he graduated high school early and went on to earn degrees from the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville Medical School. After 6 years in surgical residency, he became a certified general surgeon, and throughout his career he has heavily valued the doctor-patient relationship.

Not only was my good friend a great doctor, but he also gave back to his community and our Commonwealth through his involvement in the Chamber of Commerce and in ROHO, a charitable organization aimed to further the success of young people, which he founded. His compassion worked toward building new schools, immunizing citizens against polio, and raising money to give Christmas presents to underprivileged children. His community and our Commonwealth have benefited greatly because of his work. The Middlesboro Daily News recently pub-

lished a story about Dr. Evans and his involvement in the community. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

LOCAL FOLKS: DR. MEREDITH EVANS

MIDDLESBORO.—"I decided I was going to be a doctor when I was six years old," recalled longtime Middlesboro doctor Meredith Evans.

One of his brothers, 18 years his senior, went to medical school, inspiring Meredith to do the same. His first cousin also owned Evans Hospital in Middlesboro and his uncle was a physician in Pineville and Straight Creek.

Evans was born and raised in the Bell County community of Little Clear Creek with his parents, Rose-Ota Fuson Evans and father Marion F. Evans, a hillside farmer, and his three sisters and two brothers.

The family lived off of the land, growing and hunting all their own food. Evans remembers hunting and eating game like squirrels and rabbits.

All six children went to college; the three girls became school teachers and the boys went into the medical field.

Walking was the primary means of transportation in Little Clear Creek at the time, and was supplemented by horses and mules.

"My dad never owned a car," he said.

Meredith walked to elementary school, where he was taught mostly by his school-teaching sister, and later, by his brother who was putting himself through dental school.

He walked four and a half miles to a bus stop to go to Bell County High School, from which he graduated at the age of 16.

"I doubled-up on a couple of subjects when I was under my sister," he explained.

Meredith went to the University of Kentucky to get his Bachelor's degree and the University of Louisville Medical School. Going from Little Clear Creek to the city required some adjustment.

"It was quite a change. But I adapted rather quickly," Evans said. "I was spending most of my time going to school, going to classes."

Evans was in college during World War II, and was set to head overseas when the war ended.

"I had already had my physical examination, and was ready to go in the war. And they dropped the atomic bomb and that ended the war," Meredith remembered.

Evans was told by his college roommate, Wendell Demarcus, that the war was nearly over. Demarcus, it turned out, had some inside information. The physics major had been working on the development of the atomic bomb.

"He kept telling me, he said 'Something will happen that's going to end the war,' but he never would tell me what and I didn't push him for it. But when they dropped the bomb, he said 'That's what I've been telling you about.'"

When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Evans joined the service, to avoid being drafted. He spent eight months in Fort Campbell learning about reconstructive plastic surgery.

"We did a lot of reconstructive surgeries on soldiers that were returning home. I learned a lot about plastic surgery there," Evans said.

After training at Fort Campbell, Evans and his three friends shipped out. Evans ended up in Europe, thanks to the luck of the draw.

"They put our names in a hat and they said the first one drawn out of the hat would go to Europe and the other two to Korea. So