

past three years, I've found myself happily woven into her fabric."

Centre is also the 24th best college in America overall, according to Forbes and the Center for College Affordability and Productivity's ranking of America's Best Colleges, which was published in August. The list ranks U.S. undergraduate institutions by the quality of the education they provide, the experiences of their students, the amount of debt students graduate with and how much they achieve. To determine the best schools in the South, we narrowed that list according to the regional divisions used by the U.S. Census Bureau; that means schools in the South are located in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

REMEMBERING MRS. JAN CRASE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Jan Crase, who passed away on September 28, 2010, in Lexington, KY. As a resident of Somerset, KY, Jan was a prime example of a woman who gave back to her community. She valued education, faith and family, and was one of the hardest workers I have ever had the privilege of knowing. She attended Berea College for 3 years, and then transferred to the University of Louisville where she graduated with a degree in home economics. Even after leaving Berea College, she stayed connected to the college community throughout the years, serving on the Berea College Board of Trustees and the College President's Club. Jan was a caring friend who wanted college students to have the same positive experience she did in higher education. She helped raise millions of dollars for student scholarships, study-abroad programs, and computer funding at Berea College. As a member of Somerset's First Presbyterian Church, she saw a need to educate children not yet old enough to attend grade school, so she helped start the first preschool in Pulaski County in 1970. Since then, many families have benefited not only from the preschool but also from the youth groups and 4-H programs that Jan helped establish.

Starting youth programs and bringing the community together to raise money for a great cause were not the only things Jan excelled in; she was a determined entrepreneur and businesswoman. She had her hand in a variety of different careers, as a real-estate broker, an insurance agency owner, a home agent for Kentucky 4-H programs, as well as a dietician at Baptist Hospital in Louisville. Jan inspired everyone she came into contact with because of her positive outlook and determination in everything that she did. She was truly an upstanding woman, who spent much of her life giving her time and talents to better her community and our Commonwealth. There is no doubt the Commonwealth is poorer for her loss. My thoughts go out to her husband, James; her son, Karl; her two

daughters Kim and Katherine; and her four grandchildren. The Commonwealth Journal recently published an article about Jan and the legacy she left behind. 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:

SOMERSET.—Jan Crase, 72, of Somerset, Ky., passed away Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2010 in Lexington, Ky.

She was born in Summer Shade, Ky., on July 11, 1938, daughter of the late Seymour and Ruby Smith Hunley. She was a member of Somerset First Presbyterian Church. She attended Berea College and graduated from University of Louisville with a degree in Home Economics with emphasis in Dietetics.

Jan was the first female in Kentucky to pass Series I examination for the Member of Appraisal Institute designation. She became a licensed Real Estate Broker in Kentucky where she did appraisals and feasibility studies in 15 Kentucky counties. She owned and operated a Somerset insurance agency successfully for ten years.

She was a home agent with the University of Kentucky Extension Service where she worked in Louisville and Jefferson County with both 4-H and homemaker programs. She developed the first 4-H clubs in inner city schools in the nation. She was a chief therapeutic dietitian at Baptist Hospital in Louisville and instructor of dietetics and nutrition at Louisville Baptist School of Nursing.

She was previously a member with Berea College Board of Trustees, Berea College President's Club, Founder's Club, Kentucky Medical Association Education Committee as a non-physician member, former president of Kentucky Medical Association Alliance Board of Directors, chairman of Kentucky Music Hall of Fame and Museum Advisory Board member, where she helped establish the museum, 5th District Steering Committee and also a member of local UNITE organization, lifetime member and former president of Lake Cumberland Performing Arts Advisory Board, former president of Pulaski County Medical Alliance, first president of Pulaski County Lincoln Club and member of Pulaski Republican Women's club.

Her prior civic activities include chairman of Berea College President's Council, Berea College Alumni Co-chairman for Alumni fundraising, Kentucky Medical Association Legislative Committee as a non-physician member, Kentucky GED Foundation chairman, Kentucky Foundation for Adult Education chairman, Southern Medical Association Auxiliary Medical Heritage Councilor for Kentucky, Master Musician Festival Board of Directors member, Pulaski County Extension Service Advisory Council member, Somerset/Pulaski County Economic Development Board member, Somerset/Pulaski County Convention and Visitor's Bureau Board chairman, Somerset Community College Development Board member, started the first preschool in Pulaski County at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in 1970, Somerset Co-operative Preschool Board of Directors member for many years, Sunday School teacher at Somerset First Presbyterian Church for 12 years, Co-director of Somerset first Presbyterian Church youth group for many years, Somerset First Presbyterian Church Elder, United Way Board of Directors and Appropriations Committee chairman and PTA board member.

Special award Jan received were Kentucky Medical Association 2010 Layperson of the Year, 2005 Special Appreciation Award from

Kentucky Medical Association, Kentucky Commission of Women, an award for endeavors to promote, educate and advise women of the Commonwealth and Somerset Business and Profession Women's Club, "Woman of Achievement in Business."

She is survived by her husband, James D. Crase, M.D. of Somerset; one son, Karl (and Melissa) Crase of Richmond, Ky.; two daughters, Kim (and Joe) Claytor of Berea, Ky., and Katherine Crase of Tampa, Fla.; one brother, Jerry Hunley of Louisville, Ky.; and four grandchildren, Laura and Neil Claytor and Jonathon and Amelia Crase.

Visitation will be after 8 a.m. today at Somerset First Presbyterian Church.

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. today, Oct. 1, at Somerset First Presbyterian Church with Rev. Allen Brimer officiating.

Burial will be in Lakeside Memorial Gardens.

Expressions of sympathy may be made to the Somerset First Presbyterian Church Capital Fund or Berea College.

Pulaski Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST DALE J. KRIDLO

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life and heroic service of Specialist Dale J. Kridlo. Specialist Kridlo, assigned to the 27th Engineer Battalion, based in Fort Bragg, NC, died on November 7, 2010, of injuries sustained when his dismounted patrol encountered small arms fire. Specialist Kridlo was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Kunar Province, Afghanistan. He was 33 years old.

A native of Pittston, PA, Specialist Kridlo graduated from Pittston Area High School. After managing his own painting business for several years, Specialist Kridlo enlisted in the Army and served a tour of duty in Afghanistan with decoration. He followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, both of whom served in the Armed Forces.

During almost 2 years of service, Specialist Kridlo distinguished himself through his courage, dedication to duty, and the high standards to which he held his fellow soldiers. Family members recall his overwhelming pride when he used to describe the accomplishments of his combat unit in Afghanistan. Commanders recognized Specialist Kridlo's extraordinary bravery and talent, promoting him one week before his passing.

Specialist Kridlo worked on the front lines of battle, serving in the most dangerous areas of Afghanistan. He is remembered by those who knew him as a consummate professional with an unending commitment to excellence. His family remembers him as a dedicated son, husband, and loving father to two young daughters. In his free time, Specialist Kridlo enjoyed fishing. He was also an avid Philadelphia sports fan.

Mark Twain once said, "The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time." Specialist Kridlo's service was in keeping with this sentiment—by selflessly putting country

first, he lived life to the fullest. He lived with a sense of the highest honorable purpose.

At substantial personal risk, he braved the chaos of combat zones throughout Afghanistan. And though his fate on the battlefield was uncertain, he pushed forward, protecting America's citizens, her safety, and the freedoms we hold dear. For his service and the lives he touched, Specialist Kridlo will forever be remembered as one of our country's bravest.

To Specialist Kridlo's entire family—I cannot imagine the sorrow you must be feeling. I hope that, in time, the pain of your loss will be eased by your pride in Dale's service and by your knowledge that his country will never forget him. We are humbled by his service and his sacrifice.

SECOND LIEUTENANT ROBERT M. KELLY

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I recognize Second Lieutenant Robert M. Kelly of Tallahassee, FL, who was killed November 9, 2010, from an improvised explosive device while on a foot patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Lieutenant Kelly is survived by his wife Heather, his sister Kathleen, and his brother John Kelly, who is also a marine. LT Robert Kelly was the son of Lieutenant General Kelly and Mrs. John Kelly. Lieutenant General Kelly is the commander of the Marine Forces Reserve in New Orleans.

Lieutenant Kelly was engaged in his third combat deployment and was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division out of Camp Pendleton, CA. Following in his father's footsteps, Lieutenant Robert Kelly rose through the ranks during his service. He was commissioned as an officer in the Marine Corps on December 12, 2008, where he continued to honorably serve with distinction.

A decorated marine, LT Robert Kelly's bravery is a testament to true American heroism. Having received multiple awards that include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, and Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Lt. Kelly deserves to be recognized. He also received the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

There is no doubt that this tragic loss will not only be felt within the Kelly family but also the Marine Corps and this Nation. Our thoughts and prayers will continue to be with his family and friends. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and remembering 2LT Robert M. Kelly, who made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in the aftermath of the November election re-

turns, there was talk on all sides about working together. We can do so right now, without further delay, and in the interests of the American people. As of today there are more than 100 vacancies on the Federal courts around the country, 50 of them for vacancies deemed judicial emergencies by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. The Senate has ready for consideration and confirmation 23 judicial nominees of the President, all of whom have had hearings before the Judiciary Committee and have been reported favorably to the Senate by a majority of that committee. Sixteen of these judicial nominees were reported unanimously. The Senate can confirm those 16 nominees today, and we can then schedule such debate as needed on the remaining seven. Our working together to do so would send the right message to the American people. Let's work together and approve these nominations without additional delay. Let's end the gridlock. Let's move forward.

As the Senate recessed for the elections, we were not allowed to consider and confirm any of the 23 judicial nominations pending on the Senate Executive Calendar—this despite the judicial vacancies crisis in our Federal courts. As of today there are 108 current judicial vacancies. We already know of 20 future vacancies. In addition, the Senate has not acted on the request by the Judicial Conference of the United States to authorize 56 additional judges, which will allow the Federal judiciary to do its work. Accordingly, the Federal judiciary is currently more than 180 judges short of those needed.

At the end of September, the President of the United States sent a letter to Senate leaders expressing his justifiable concern with the pace of judicial confirmations. The President wrote that the American people and the Federal judiciary suffer from this inaction and that a minority of Senators has, in his words “systematically and irresponsibly used procedural maneuvers to block or delay confirmation votes on judicial nominees—including nominees that have strong bipartisan support and the most distinguished records.”

All of these nominees have the backing of their home State Senators. Indeed, President Obama has worked hard with home State Senators regardless of party affiliation, and by so doing has done his part to restore comity to the process.

Sixteen judicial nominees have been delayed despite the fact that they were reported without a single vote in opposition from the Senate Judiciary Committee. Regrettably, despite the President's efforts and his selection of outstanding nominees the Senate has not reciprocated by promptly considering his consensus nominees. To the contrary, as the President has pointed out, nominees are being stalled who, if allowed to be considered, would receive unanimous or near unanimous support, be confirmed, and be serving in the ad-

ministration of justice throughout the country. This is counterproductive.

Like the President, I welcome debate and a vote on those few nominees that some Republican Senators would oppose. Nominees like Benita Pearson of Ohio, William Martinez of Colorado, Louis Butler of Wisconsin, Edward Chen of California, John McConnell of Rhode Island, Goodwin Liu of California and Robert Chatigny of Connecticut. I have reviewed their records and considered their character, background and qualifications. I have heard the criticisms of the Republican Senators on the Judiciary Committee as they have voted against this handful of nominees. I disagree, and believe the Senate would vote, as I have, to confirm them. That they will not be conservative activist judges should not disqualify them from serving.

But that is not what is happening. We are not debating the merits of those nominations, as Democratic Senators did when we opposed the most extreme handful of nominees of President Bush. What is happening is that judicial confirmations are being stalled virtually across the board. What is new and particularly damaging is that 16 judicial nominees who were all reported unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee, without Republican opposition, are still being delayed. These nominees include Albert Diaz and Catherine Eagles of North Carolina. They are both supported by Senator HAGAN and Senator BURR. Sadly, Senator BURR's support has not freed them from the across the board Republican hold on all judicial nominees. Judge Diaz was reported unanimously in January, almost 11 months ago, and still waits for agreement from the minority in order for the Senate to consider his nomination so that he may be confirmed.

Also being delayed for no good reason from joining the bench of the most overloaded Federal district in the country in the Eastern District of California is Kimberly Mueller, whose nomination was reported last May, more than 6 months ago, without any opposition. Her nomination is one of four circuit and district nominations to positions in the Ninth Circuit currently on the Executive Calendar that Republicans are blocking from Senate consideration. In addition to the Liu and Chen nominations, the nomination of Mary Murguia from Arizona to the Ninth Circuit has been stalled since August despite the strong support of Senator KYL, the assistant Republican leader.

I want to put into the RECORD a letter we received this week from Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Alex Kozinski, a President Reagan appointee, and the other members of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit writing “to emphasize our desperate need for judges” in the Nation's largest Federal circuit. They write that “[c]ourts cannot do their work if authorized judicial positions remain vacant” and urge “that the Senate act on judicial nominees