

important life skills. To build on their efforts to develop the next generation of responsible and active citizens, they offer many services that equip parents with information about community resources, such as food, housing, and GED classes. They also do an exemplary job of addressing the many interests and needs of young people, whether it's a t-shirt design contest, tech training or tutoring during their homework hour. The Boys and Girls Club of Las Vegas helps Nevada children excel as young people in countless ways, and the lessons last a lifetime.

In 2007 alone, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Las Vegas served more than 15,000 youth across the valley. From Mount Charleston to Boulder City and many points in between, the clubs continue to reach youth in a positive way.

I am proud to stand with the Boys and Girls Club of Las Vegas to congratulate the organization for 50 years of helping Las Vegas families and young people.

HAITI REFORESTATION ACT OF 2011

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have had the opportunity to visit Haiti on a number of occasions and have always been moved by the kindness and generosity of the Haitian people who live under such hard conditions.

I have traveled for hours into rural Haiti to visit impressive programs such as Partners In Health's health clinic, which provides HIV/AIDS treatment and clean water for nursing mothers.

Unfortunately, despite such programs and the efforts of U.N. peacekeeping forces to bring some measure of security to Haiti, the living conditions for average Haitians remains deeply troubling.

An already weak political system and weak government were then confronted last year with a devastating earthquake that struck Haiti's densely populated capitol of Port au Prince and several surrounding towns.

A staggering number of houses and buildings simply collapsed, virtually destroying Haiti's fragile infrastructure.

More than 200,000 people were killed and an estimated 1.5 million more were displaced.

Americans and people from all over the world donated money, organized shipments of medicine, food and water, and traveled to Haiti as emergency relief workers to help rescue and treat earthquake victims.

Prior to the earthquake, Haiti was already the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

Today, Haiti suffers from widespread unemployment, with 80 percent of the population living under the poverty line.

Historically, Haiti has also been devastated by tropical storms. In 2004, Hurricane Jeanne struck Haiti, killing approximately 3,000 of its residents, and displacing over 200,000 more.

Just last year, Haiti narrowly missed being struck by Hurricane Thomas, while hundreds of thousands of Haitians were living in temporary tents camps suffering from the spread of cholera.

While we cannot undo the terrible damage of the January 2010 earthquake, we can show the best of American compassion, generosity, and ingenuity in helping the Haitian people rebuild their nation by addressing one of the underlying causes of the country's problems—the deforestation of Haiti's once plentiful tropical forests.

When you look at the lush green of the Dominican Republic and compare it to the stark desolation on Haiti's side of the border, it is easy to see why Haiti is so much more vulnerable to soil erosion, landslides, and flooding than its neighbor.

It was not always that way. In 1923, Haiti's tropical forest covered 60 percent of the country.

Today, less than 2 percent of those forests remain. In the past 5 years, the deforestation rate has accelerated by more than 20 percent.

Since 1990, Haiti has lost 22 percent of its remaining forest and woodland habitat.

This deforestation has had terrible, unintended consequences. The soil erosion that has resulted from cutting down all of these trees has made the island more vulnerable to floods and mudslides—substantially reducing Haiti's already scarce agricultural land and rendering what remains less productive.

Haiti's tropical forests, if protected and regrown, would fight the destructive effects of soil erosion.

Saving old and growing new tropical forests would help protect Haiti's freshwater sources from contaminants, would safeguard Haiti's remaining irrigable land, and would save lives during hurricane season.

Helping Haiti deal with its deforestation problems is not only the right thing to do for our nearby neighbors, it is the smart thing to do with our limited assistance dollars.

Senators COLLINS and KERRY join me in introducing the Haiti Reforestation Act to reverse the deforestation challenge. The bill aims to end within 5 years deforestation in Haiti and restore within 30 years the tropical forest cover in existence in Haiti in 1990.

While it is important to start putting trees in the ground, this bill is about more than just planting trees. Our government has tried that approach in the past and it has proven to be ineffective.

This bill empowers the U.S. Government to work with Haiti to develop forest-management programs based on proven, market-based models. These models will be tailored to help Haiti manage its conservation and reforestation efforts in ways that can be measured, and it does so without authorizing any new funding.

In last year's supplemental we provided \$25 million for reforestation pro-

grams in Haiti. This bill would make sure such existing funds are spent wisely and productively.

Haiti's former Prime Minister, Michele Pierre-Louis, sized up the problem in Haiti perfectly:

The whole country is facing an ecological disaster. We cannot keep going on like this. We are going to disappear one day. There will not be 400, 500 or 1,000 deaths [from hurricanes]. There are going to be a million deaths.

We must act to ensure that that day never comes. I urge my colleagues to support the Haiti Reforestation Act of 2011.

TRIBUTE TO CHRIS GRIGSBY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the incredible endeavors of a hardworking and extremely talented Kentuckian, Chris Grigsby of Laurel County, KY. Chris's lifetime of experience has taken him to many places, but he has always been proud to call Kentucky home.

Chris Grigsby graduated from Laurel County High School in London, KY. At the age of nine he taught himself how to play the guitar, mandolin, bass, and the fiddle, and continues to play and teach them to his family, stating that music is a major part of his life. After graduating high school, Mr. Grigsby enrolled in the Marine Corps.

Mr. Grigsby's passion for his position in the Marine Corps grew as he continued to travel the world and experience the endless opportunities that it provided. He was stationed for 2 years at Camp David where he was able to work closely with President Ronald Reagan. As his years in the Marine Corps came to a close, Grigsby found talent in other professions including, auctioning, truck driving, as well as being a police and security officer.

After working as a truck driver for 3 years, then as an officer with the London Police Department, as well as conducting his own truck hauling service, Grigsby came to realize his true passion was to be closer to home with his wife Bobbie and their family of five. As he set aside his traveling days he was offered a job at the U.S. Courthouse where he continues to be the lead court security officer. This August 17, Chris and Bobbie will celebrate their 21st marriage anniversary.

Chris Grigsby is a man who gives so others can prosper, and leads by setting an example. His life stands as an illustration that kindness does go a long way. A wonderful article about Mr. Chris Grigsby appeared recently in the Sentinel Echo, and I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Sentinel Echo, May 2, 2011]

ALL THAT HE'S DONE, HIS CHILDREN ARE HIS
NUMBER ONE

(By Sue Minton)

If gas prices were as high in 1968 as they are today, then 2-year-old Chris Grigsby and

his family may have been residents of Rockcastle County instead of Laurel County.

Grigsby likes to joke about how his family came to Laurel County.

"They were originally from Perry County. My grandparents and parents were part of the migration north to find jobs in the late 50s and early 60s," he said.

In 1968 his parents decided to come back to Kentucky from Michigan. "I joke, they were moving back to Hazard and ran out of gas in London and just stayed," Grigsby said. "But they didn't."

Before the Pomp and Circumstance of his 1984 graduation played out, Grigsby had joined the Marines. He graduated from Laurel County High School in June and reported to boot camp on Halloween Day.

He referred to his stay in the Marine Corps as the "best worst" thing that has ever happened to him.

"It gave me the opportunity to get out and see a little bit of the world," he said. "I always wanted to be a part of something. If I was going to do anything, I wanted to be the best at it that I could. And the Marines have the reputation of being the toughest 'the elite.' You join the Army, you join the Navy, but you become a Marine."

While at Parris Island in boot camp he was selected for the Yankee White Program.

"I was stationed at Marine Barracks 8th and I in Washington, D.C., the oldest post in the Marine Corps," he said. "While waiting on White House security clearance I got selected to go to the Pentagon. I was there for three months working with Casper Weinberger on a security detail for the secretary of defense."

Once Grigsby received his clearance he was stationed at Camp David for two years.

"We primarily worked internal security for the camp," he said. "I worked my way up through the ranks to the position of platoon sergeant. And that put me in direct contact with President Ronald Reagan."

Grigsby recalls eating lunch with President Reagan once and remembers how nice the event was. "He was the most wonderful person. There was no faultness to him. Sometimes you meet people and they put on this air of caring, but I felt like he genuinely cared about the people."

In 1988 Grigsby was discharged from the Marines and considers himself lucky.

"I remember vividly, in 1990 we were in the middle of Operation Desert Shield. My trucking partner and I were going to Union City, Tenn., to get a load of tires for Toyota. We were about Elizabethtown when the radio announced that we were taking fire and that was the start of Desert Storm. I was very fortunate that I got in and out before it began."

After his stay in the Marines, Grigsby worked as an auctioneer, long-haul truck driver, police officer and a security officer.

"While in the marines I attended auctioneer school and tried my hand at that," he said. "Vernon Holt, a local agent with Century 21, sponsored me to get my apprentice license. I went to California to help a cousin get his auction business started. But I never really pursued it."

But, while 'trying his hand' at it Grigsby met his wife, Bobbie.

"I was working as an auctioneer at the stockyard in Richmond, trying to get my foot in the auctioneer door. She was there with her family buying horses and I met her at the diner. On August 17, we will be married 21 years."

When auctioneering didn't work out, Grigsby decided he would like to learn how to drive a tractor-trailer. He went to truck driving school and long-hauled for about three years traveling to any place that was east of Denver, Colo., delivering mostly Toyota parts.

After being laid off from truck driving, he was hired as an officer for the London Police Department. While there he was one of the first officers to implement the narcotics K-9 Unit.

After leaving the London Police Department he once again decided to truck. This time buying his own vehicle.

"I went back on the road for financial opportunities," he said, "hauling whatever needed to go wherever for seven years. My claim is I've hauled everything from asbestos to zucchini."

"I liked seeing the country, but it was difficult for me. By this time we had two of our five children, and we were a close family. It was hard to be gone. There were things at home that needed my attention. In 2002 I got out of the trucking business and went to work at the United States Courthouse."

Currently Grigsby is the lead court security officer. He is the supervisor of a crew of men that are special deputies U.S. Marshals. "We primarily provide security for the courthouse, the judges and visitors."

Grigsby said on a couple of occasions they have had some excitement.

"We have been fortunate. It is not something that occurs every day. But there is a chance that it could happen," he added. "Security work is not what we do, it is what we can do and what we will do. We put our lives on the line every day. It is kind of like police work, but then it is not. In security you have to be ready to go from zero to all out in a split second. But, I like the job. It has all the necessities—pay is good, home time is good."

Grigsby spends some of what spare time he has playing music.

"I have played music since I was nine years old," he said. "Music is a major part of my life and my family's lives."

Grigsby, a self-taught musician, plays the guitar, fiddle, mandolin and bass. His older children, Emily and Charlie, who have had a few lessons but are taught mostly by their Dad, play several instruments.

"And it will just be a matter of time before Sarah and Grace start playing," he said.

"They, Emily and Charlie, along with Sarah and Grace does some," he said. Grigsby and Bobbie also sing. They perform a wide variety of different music, but mostly gospel.

"Music has always been a part of my life. Some families play sports—basketball, baseball, cheerleading—we play music. And through our music we have been to Laurel Heights, Laurel Village, and assisted living homes playing and singing for the people. We also play at festivals, schools and our church, Corinth Baptist."

Grigsby feels his biggest achievement is his children—Emily, Charlie, Sarah, Grace and 10-month-old Danica.

When the interview was almost over, Grigsby referred to a scene in the movie "Evan Almighty."

"God contacts Evan to build an ark. There is one part where his wife, Joan, is upset because they are having to leave, and God appears to her and says 'If someone prays for patience, do you think God gives them patience? Or does he give them the opportunity to be patient? That stuck with me. The world would be a much better place if we were kinder to each other. We live in such a traumatic world. If we would just take the time to speak to someone at the store or on the street and just be friendly, that would be the difference. That's what I try to do, just be kind to others.'"

ENDANGERED SPECIES DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, tomorrow, on the sixth annual Endangered Species Day, we as a nation have a

twofold opportunity. First, we have the chance to celebrate the successful recovery of a remarkable number of plant and animal species worldwide. Second, we have the opportunity to pause in acknowledgement of the hard work that still lies ahead of us on behalf of the nearly two thousand species that are endangered or threatened today.

Since its enactment in 1973, the Endangered Species Act, ESA, has helped to recover such iconic species as the gray whale, the peregrine falcon, and the bald eagle. In 1967, the bald eagle, one of our Nation's most recognizable symbols, was in danger from environmental contaminants, human intrusion, and other risk factors, and was listed for protection under the ESA. Through its careful, science-based approach, ESA management ultimately resulted in the successful recovery of bald eagle populations across the country. The bald eagle was delisted in 2007 and is now thriving. In the State of Maryland, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Refuge in Maryland is home to a healthy, flourishing bald eagle population. More recently the gray wolf, which was completely extirpated from our Northern Rockies States, is now recovering thanks to the careful protective management of the Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act.

The ESA provides resources and structure that are critical to our ability to improve the outcomes for threatened and endangered species. Since becoming law 38 years ago, with overwhelming support in the House of Representatives and unanimous support in the Senate, the ESA has been one of our Nation's most successful environmental statutes. The ESA not only improves outcomes for endangered and threatened species, it also improves local and regional economies. According to a 2006 Fish and Wildlife Service survey, wildlife-related recreation—meaning hunting, fishing and wildlife watching—generated more than \$122 billion in revenues in 2006. In my home State of Maryland, wildlife watching generated over \$1 billion in revenues in 2006, according to the same survey. This wildlife-related spending supports hundreds of thousands of jobs.

The Endangered Species Act, with its proven record of success in restoring species to health, remains a critically important tool in the protection of our natural environment. At this moment, nearly 2,000 animal and plant species are endangered or threatened worldwide—the protections of the ESA are therefore as important as ever. This Endangered Species Day, even as we celebrate the successes of our Nation's conservation efforts, let us also remember and pledge to protect the robust, science-based legislation that made those successes possible.