

Unthank displayed courage, bravery, and patriotism well beyond his age. While in the service, he was a member of the 509th Paratrooper Battalion. During their training, the unit practiced jumping out of airplanes that flew at heights of 250 to 300 feet. Squad sergeant Ernie Komula of Wix's battalion will never forget how surprised his men were when the planes wouldn't go lower than 2,000 feet once behind enemy lines. Despite the unfamiliar new height, Unthank and the rest of the men didn't think twice about jumping out of that plane and fighting for their beloved country.

After completing a 5-year stint in the Army, in which he received both a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, he was honorably discharged in 1945. He attended the University of Kentucky for his undergraduate schooling. Then he went on to the University of Miami, where he obtained a J.D. in 1950. Once he had acquired the knowledge his parents had always hoped he would, Wix entered public service in what would turn out to be a prosperous and fulfilling professional life.

Judge Unthank worked as a practicing attorney in Harlan County for a short time before running for the public office of county judge. Throughout his political career, Judge Unthank used the slogan "You'll never be Unthankful with Unthank," and obviously the people never were because he never lost an election.

In the summer of 1980, President Jimmy Carter appointed G. Wix Unthank to the U.S. district court to serve as the presiding judge of the Eastern District of Kentucky. Eight years after his appointment, he assumed the honorable title of senior judge on the U.S. district court.

After many years of successfully running the courts in the Eastern District, Judge Unthank was honored with a portrait unveiling ceremony in Lexington, KY, in 1991 and Pikeville, KY, in 1992. At the ceremonies the judge was honored by his colleagues, family, and friends for the many achievements he had been blessed with throughout his lifetime up until that point. His portrait was hung in the courtrooms of both Lexington and Pikeville, which Judge Eugene E. Siler, Jr., who led the ceremonies, said that he believed were among the best courtrooms in the United States.

Judge Unthank was known for running a top-notch court system. He promoted collegiality amongst the judges and employees of the Eastern District. Under the leadership of Judge Unthank, they were more than just colleagues, they were a family. They enjoyed working together and seeing that the law was carried out equally and justly with each and every case.

Despite the judge's high-ranking senior status, he never shied away from work. He had an unheard-of workload for a senior judge. Day in and day out, he worked through social security cases, bankruptcy appeals, and retire-

ment disputes with hard work and dedication.

The words carved into the front of the Supreme Court Building in our Nation's Capital read "Equal Justice Under Law." That is a standard that we as a country hold up highly and a motto that those in the legal profession look to for guidance in every decision they make. Wix Unthank was no exception to this rule. He understands the importance of equal justice, and he demonstrated an unbelievable amount of integrity both in and out of the courtroom.

As I have said many times before, I am not in the business of speculation, so I would not testify to the character of Judge G. Wix Unthank if I was at all unsure of it. Therefore, with the utmost certainty, it is my pleasure today to stand and honor the Honorable Judge G. Wix Unthank for his tremendous contribution to his profession, his community, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and the United States of America, and I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in paying tribute to a brave veteran, a wise jurist, and a confirmed patriot of our great Nation.

CONGRATULATING STEPHANIE THACKER

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, today I wish to congratulate Stephanie Dawn Thacker, a native of Hamlin, WV, on her confirmation to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals.

It is my privilege and my honor to speak on her behalf, and I am so proud she was confirmed. I would like to thank my colleague Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER for nominating such a qualified jurist.

Stephanie Thacker's impressive background and extensive list of accomplishments in both the public and private sectors make her an exceptional judge for the 4th Circuit. She is renowned in our State for her mastery of the law and of the courtroom, and I have no doubt that she will make a highly successful Federal judge.

Ms. Thacker has dedicated much of her career to fighting some of the worst offenses in our society. As a trial attorney, Deputy Chief of Litigation, and Principal Deputy Chief, she spent several years prosecuting cases on Child Exploitation and Obscenity at the Department of Justice. Her outstanding work and leadership earned her a number of honors at the Department of Justice, including four "Meritorious" Awards and two "Special Achievement" awards.

Her impressive performance in prosecuting the case of United States v. Dwight York earned her the Attorney General's "Distinguished Service" award, one of the Department's highest honors. She was also a recipient of the Assistant Attorney General's award for "Special Initiative" and "Outstanding Victim and Witness Service."

Prior to her service at the Department of Justice, Ms. Thacker worked

with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia, where she prosecuted a wide variety of criminal cases, including money laundering and fraud. While at the U.S. Attorney's Office, Ms. Thacker participated on the trial team prosecuting United States v. Bailey, the first case ever brought under the Violence Against Women Act.

Since 2006, Ms. Thacker has been a partner at the law firm of Guthrie & Thomas in Charleston, West Virginia. There, she has concentrated on cases involving product liability, environmental and toxic torts, complex commercial defense, and criminal defense.

Ms. Thacker was a model student in both her undergraduate and legal studies. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, magna cum laude, from Marshall University, and her J.D., Order of the Coif, from West Virginia University College of Law. While at West Virginia University she was a recipient of the Robert L. Griffin Memorial Scholarship and Editor of West Virginia Law Review's Coal Issue. She has also recently been named "Outstanding Female Attorney" by WVU Law's Women's Caucus.

Ms. Thacker's wide-ranging expertise in civil and criminal matters, her impressive track record in the courtroom as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney, and her outstanding academic accomplishments will make her a first-rate addition to the 4th Circuit. I am proud to call her a fellow West Virginian and I am pleased that she has finally been confirmed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO KIKKAN RANDALL

• Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I wish to recognize Kikkan Randall, an Olympic athlete and World Champion Nordic skier from Anchorage, AK. On March 18, 2012, Kikkan was awarded the Joska crystal globe as the Cross Country World Cup sprint champion, recognizing her as the world's top sprint ski racer. She clinched the sprint title in Drammen, Norway, despite breaking a binding and skiing on one ski for part of the race. Nevertheless, Kikkan secured the sprint title with a World Cup record that included four podium finishes. This victory makes Kikkan the first American to win a World Cup Nordic skiing title since Bill Koch in 1982.

Kikkan made her Olympic debut in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Since then, she has represented the United States in the 2006 and 2010 Winter Olympics. In 2010 Kikkan finished eighth in the sprint competition, registering the best ever Olympic finish for a female American Nordic skier.

Kikkan has been a role model for thousands of young athletes through her extensive community involvement and encouragement of a healthy and active lifestyle. She has worked with young athletes and trained with her

fellow Alaskans as a member of the Alaska Pacific University Nordic Ski Team. Her hard work, training, and dedication have clearly paid off. She is an inspiration to young skiers and athletes everywhere.

I would like to congratulate Kikkan on her championship season and wish her the best of luck as she trains for the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, Russia. All of Alaska is proud of Kikkan and her accomplishments.●

REMEMBERING PETER DOUGLAS

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, earlier this month, California and the Nation lost one of our true environmental heroes when Peter Douglas, the longtime executive director of the California Coastal Commission, passed away. Peter was truly a giant among California conservationists, and our State is a much better and more beautiful place because of his life's work.

Peter Douglas was there at the creation of the California Coastal Commission, which for four decades has worked to protect, conserve, restore, and enhance the California coast and ocean for current and future generations. As a legislative aide in the early 1970s, he helped draft the 1972 Coastal Initiative and the California Coastal Act of 1976, which made the Coastal Commission a permanent public institution. After 7 years as the Commission's Chief Deputy Director, he was named executive director in 1985 and served brilliantly in that capacity for more than 25 years.

When Peter was diagnosed with cancer, he faced it as he did all the other challenges in his life with intelligence, courage, grace, and good humor. Last spring, Peter began writing a cancer blog. As he noted in his first posting, his doctors were "quite pessimistic and advised I get affairs in order and focus on my bucket list. But I am an inveterate and aggressive activist not about to give up on life, especially not my own. My time will come, but not quite yet I hope. Besides, I am too busy to die."

Peter kept writing, producing a remarkable record of his final battle with cancer along with his political autobiography and some profound personal insights. He advised his readers to "live mindfully and fully every moment. Keep hope alive. . . . When the time comes to pass over to the other side, try to embrace that passage with dignity and grace knowing you have done well." Peter Douglas certainly did just that.

On behalf of the people of California, who have benefitted so much from Peter Douglas's life work, I send my deepest gratitude and condolences to his sons, grandchildren, brother, sister, and extended family and friends. Peter's memory and legacy will live on with everyone who loves the California coast and our priceless natural heritage, which he did so much to preserve and protect.●

TRIBUTE TO JAMES MICHAEL KELLY

● Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, today I pay tribute to a dedicated public servant and true legal professional, James Michael Kelly. For nearly 40 years, he has served with distinction in his many roles at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This spring, J. Michael will be retiring from USDA's Office of General Counsel. It is a privilege to take this opportunity to recognize his many contributions and thank him for his service.

Since beginning his career at USDA in 1973, J. Michael has served as the department's Ethics Counselor, Acting General Counsel, Deputy General Counsel, and Associate General Counsel. In these roles, he has distinguished himself as a legal professional of the highest integrity. I had the honor of working closely with J. Michael during my service as Secretary of Agriculture. In fact, throughout his career he has worked with a total of 13 Secretaries of Agriculture. J. Michael has guided many at USDA in upholding all legal and ethical standards. His character, commitment, and professionalism are to be commended.

Though J. Michael's nearly 40-year history with USDA is impressive, it does not reveal the full extent of his service to our country. In addition to his years at USDA, he served for two years in the U.S. Army and for six years at the U.S. Small Business Administration. I thank J. Michael for his combined 47 years of military and civilian service.

I can personally speak to J. Michael's dedication to USDA, which will long be remembered and appreciated. I congratulate him on his retirement and thank him again for his service to our country. I also wish to express my gratitude to J. Michael's wife, Mary Jo (Josie), and their family for supporting his service. May God bless J. Michael and Josie as they begin a new chapter in their lives.●

RECOGNIZING DAVIS HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND

● Mr. LEE. Madam President, today I wish to congratulate the marching band of Davis High School in Kaysville, UT. The band was recently selected to represent Utah and the Mountain West region in the 124th Tournament of Roses Parade, an exceptional honor bestowed upon only 15 of the finest marching bands in the country.

Director Steven Hendricks has been a music educator for 24 years and the director at Davis High School for 22 years. During his time there, the band has tripled in size and has been a five-time Bands of America regional finalist. Mr. President, 2013 will mark the second time that the band will march in the Tournament of Roses Parade under Hendricks's leadership, having already received the honor once in 2003. Earlier this year, Hendricks was recog-

nized as Utah's Outstanding High School Music Educator by the Utah Music Educators Association.

It should also be noted and is of equal importance that Davis High School regularly sets a high standard of academic excellence. The school is consistently ranked as one of the top 1,000 high schools in the country. In addition, the Davis High School advanced placement examination scores are among the highest in Utah.

The members of the Davis High School Marching Band have worked diligently for this day, and the reward is undoubtedly well deserved. They will be able to demonstrate their talent and skill in front of nearly 1 million live spectators and tens of millions more watching on television. I know that the band will represent Utah and the Mountain West with excellence and professionalism.●

TRIBUTE TO LAUREN BARLOW

● Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Lauren Barlow for her hard work as an intern for the U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office.

Lauren is a native of Gilbert, AZ, and a graduate from Gilbert High School. She graduated from the Brigham Young University with a degree in English. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic which has made her an invaluable asset to the U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Lauren for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO GREYSON BUCKINGHAM

● Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Greyson Buckingham for his hard work as an intern for the U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee. I recognize his continued efforts and contributions to my office.

Greyson is a native of Kelly, WY, and a graduate of Jackson Hole High School. He is a student at Georgetown University, where he is majoring in history and government. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic which has made him an invaluable asset to the U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Greyson for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know