

Tikrit. While in country, Nicholas survived gunshots, 24 I.E.D. blasts, and a helicopter crash. He continues to be treated for injuries that he suffered in the war.

Since retiring from the Army in 2008, Nicholas attended the University of Montana and now drives trucks in North Dakota.

After serving his country with honor, Nicholas Wells never received all of the medals he earned from the Army.

Earlier this month, in the presence of his family, it was my honor to finally present to Nicholas his Iraq Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars. This decoration is a powerful symbol of true heroism, sacrifice, and dedication to service. This Iraq Campaign Medal is presented on behalf of a grateful nation.●

RECOGNIZING PROLITERACY

● Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize ProLiteracy, the world's oldest and largest member organization of adult literacy and basic education programs in the United States representing more than 1,100 community-based organizations and adult basic education programs, which collectively serve more than 286,000 adult learners.

For more than 50 years, ProLiteracy has been headquartered in a suburbanized industrial park in Syracuse, New York. Now, ProLiteracy is moving to the Near West Side of Syracuse. The renovated building is an environmentally and technologically advanced facility that allows the organization to produce and test new and better curricula and educational materials, as well as to develop and implement local training, technical assistance, and professional development projects. The knowledge, best practices, and key findings ProLiteracy will generate through these efforts will be shared locally, nationally, and globally.

Because ProLiteracy's headquarters will be located in an area readily accessible to adult learners, the organization is providing learning experiences such as an adult literacy library housing New Readers Press materials and other resources.

ProLiteracy is to be commended for the work they do and the efforts they support every day to help increase the quality of and access to adult literacy services. An estimated 30 million adults nationwide do not yet have the basic literacy skills to read or write above a fifth-grade level. An additional 60 million American adults do not read or write better than the eighth-grade level. Every day, ProLiteracy works to enable these Americans to receive the necessary resources and skills they need to succeed in postsecondary education, occupational training, and establishing a career pathway.

Thank you to ProLiteracy for being the leader in ending the adult literacy crisis in Syracuse, New York—and in communities around the Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO LLOYD JACKSON

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I would like to take a moment to recognize a fellow West Virginian who has devoted himself to the service of our State and the advancement of our education system. As a former college president, I know how invaluable education is to building our communities, growing our economy, and raising and inspiring the next generation. I commend West Virginia State school board member Lloyd Jackson for his enduring commitment to such an important cause.

My friend, Lloyd Jackson served as a State senator for 12 years and he has been a leader in improving both the early and higher education systems of West Virginia. While a senator, he was the primary sponsor of the PROMISE scholarship legislation, a merit-based financial aid program that has helped thousands of West Virginians afford college.

He has also been a vocal advocate for prekindergarten care, and his dedication has led to vast improvements in our State's preschool education. He began his fight through personal experience; his wife had to drive their children long distances to a private day care because of the lack of access in their area. Mr. JACKSON believed that all children should have the same chance to receive a quality early education.

As State senate education chairman, Mr. Jackson championed comprehensive early childhood legislation. In 2002, he helped create West Virginia Universal Pre-K and put the State on track to have universal access by 2012. Thanks to his efforts, West Virginia is today considered a leader in providing public and universal preschool education. In the 2011–12 school year, over 15,000 children were enrolled in prekindergarten, and this year every 4-year-old in the State will have access to quality schooling. In a 2011 report, West Virginia ranked fifth in the Nation in preschool access for 4-year-olds and fourth in spending on prekindergarten programs.

Lloyd Jackson has fought long and hard to make sure our children are receiving the education they deserve. I applaud his commitment to education, and I am proud of the success he has helped West Virginia achieve. Providing our children with a strong education is the greatest investment we could make in the future of our State and of our Nation. Lloyd Jackson deserves our appreciation, and I am proud to have worked with him for years and I am delighted to congratulate him for all he has done for education in West Virginia.●

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH AND VANESE CEDAR

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, every year I have the honor, as a member of the Congressional Coalition on

Adoption Institute, to recognize a West Virginia family for its efforts to promote adoption and provide homes for our Nation's vulnerable children. It is a wonderful program that highlights the change one couple can make in the life of a child.

Throughout my career, I have been a strong advocate of legislation that supports adoption and other permanency efforts. I am inspired by the men and women who devote their lives to caring for these children. Today, I would like to recognize one such West Virginian family: Kenneth and Vanese Cedar, who are truly angels in adoption.

Kenneth and Vanese have cared for 57 children over the years, including two biological sons of their own. Currently, they have adopted three children and serve as guardians for two teenagers. They also care for a foster child. They have raised their children in a close and devoted family, taking them to church, teaching them gardening and cooking, and playing sports together.

Even when challenges have arisen, Kenneth and Vanese have remained dedicated to helping their own family and other children in need. In 2009, Kenneth lost his job. Yet the couple took the obstacle as an opportunity to go back to school and earn regents bachelor of arts degrees, which they hope to use in social work and child protective services. When one of their sons nearly passed away from acute respiratory disease syndrome, they stood together as a family until he recovered, and he recently welcomed a child of his own.

Kenneth and Vanese Cedar are a selfless and giving couple who deserve our respect and admiration. They have provided so many children with not simply a home but a family. I would like to thank these angels in adoption for the love and care they have provided to so many. They are truly an inspiration.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVE AND LAURA WHELCHER

● Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a remarkable foster couple from Harrisburg, NE, whom I recently nominated to be 2012 'Angels in Adoption' recipients. Dave and Laura Whelcher are the parents of two grown biological children, Chance and Jenna, as well as four adopted children, Reuben, Josefina, Arielle and San Juan, who are siblings. They are hoping to finalize the adoption of a fifth sibling, Kayleigh, by the end of the year. Each of the adopted children has come into their home with special physical, occupational or speech therapy needs.

Dave and Laura's dedication to providing these children with the love and support they need is incredible. As I witnessed firsthand during a visit to their family farm in August, the Whelchers are doing an outstanding job ensuring their children are able to live full and happy lives.

But the Whelchers' kindness and compassion does not stop with their

children. Three years ago, the couple created Camp Grace, a summer camp for other children with special needs. Held monthly at the Whelchel farm, the camp is designed to help children work toward specific therapy goals. They also donate countless hours of their time coordinating with volunteers, therapists, and other families to ensure the camp's success.

It is an honor to nominate Dave and Laura as 'Angels in Adoption'. The award, which honors those who have enriched the lives of foster and adopted children in the U.S., is a small token of appreciation for the love and compassion they have shown their children over the years. I could not think of a more deserving family for this award. My hope is that more families will follow the wonderful example set by the Whelchels by providing loving homes to deserving children.●

TRIBUTE TO RYAN AND AMBER JOHNSON

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Ryan and Amber Johnson of Sioux Falls, SD, as my nominees for the 2012 Angels in Adoption Award. Since 1999, the Angels in Adoption program through the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institution has honored more than 1,800 individuals, couples, and organizations nationwide for their work in providing children with loving, stable homes.

After being married for only a short time, Ryan and Amber Johnson began to consider expanding their family. After overcoming initial personal setbacks, the Johnson family decided to open their home to children in need by becoming foster parents. The couple quickly accepted the opportunity to become long-term foster parents of three siblings between the ages of 7 months and 6 years, and later, the Johnsons provided a temporary, loving home for a 4-year-old foster child. The Johnsons were soon blessed again with two Native American half-brothers as foster children. It quickly became evident to Ryan and Amber how wonderful the addition of these two boys was to their family. Shortly after, Ryan and Amber adopted Lukias, age 3, and are in the process of finalizing the adoption of his younger brother. During the adoption process, the Johnson family learned that they were pregnant, and on May 1, 2011, welcomed their newest family member, Sophia. The young family now consists of 3 siblings, ages 1, 2, and 3.

Foster homes regularly see children come and go, staying for varying lengths of time. The changing environment often places an emotional toll on the caregivers who develop deep, personal relationships with their foster children. Despite the challenges that foster parents face, the Johnsons have used their life lessons to create a warm, loving home for children in need of a nurturing environment to grow and develop. Ryan and Amber plan to

continue taking in foster children and possibly even expand their family by giving other children a place to call home.

National Adoption Day is around the corner, and it is important to recognize the compassionate families who bring joy to the lives of children as foster and adoptive parents. It brings me great pride to be able to honor South Dakotans Ryan and Amber Johnson, my nominees for the 2012 Angels in Adoption Award.●

TRIBUTE TO ALAN HAMEL

● Mr. UDALL of COLORADO. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a true leader of Colorado's water community, Mr. Alan Hamel. Alan retired from his position on the Board of Water Works of Pueblo, CO, at the end of August after more than 50 years of service for the board.

Alan began his career as a student helper in 1960 working summers for the board. He returned after graduating from Colorado State University in Pueblo to become a full-time pump station operator. Over the next 20 years, Alan worked his way up the ladder through various management positions until he was appointed executive director in 1982.

Under Alan's direction, Pueblo has built one of the most modern water infrastructure systems in the Nation. Because of his leadership, the Pueblo area's future water supplies are sufficient and secure, which is truly impressive given all of the water challenges facing Colorado. The board has also benefited from extraordinary continuity during Alan's 29-year tenure at the helm, which I am confident will continue under new executive director Terry Book's guidance.

Alan has also been a water leader statewide. He is a member of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, CWCB, Colorado Water Congress, CWC, and Statewide Water Supply Initiative. He has also held leadership positions on the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District and Arkansas Basin Roundtable among many others. He also received CWC's top award in 2010, the prestigious Wayne Aspinall Water Leader of the Year Award, for his lifetime of achievement.

On a more personal level, Alan has earned the respect and admiration of the Colorado water community because he is a true public servant in the best sense of the word. He is unflappable, a fountain of knowledge about water, and always seeks common ground with opposing views while fighting fiercely and fairly for the needs of his community. He cares deeply about Pueblo and Colorado and has served both remarkably.

And above all, Alan is a family man who knows none of this could be possible without the support of his wife Mary Kay and children. While he lives and breathes water, his family comes first and foremost.

As with most water warriors, Alan's retirement will only be partial. He will continue his work on CWCB and the Arkansas Basin Roundtable, and I am sure many of us will still call upon his wisdom and experience often. I suppose after more than 50 years of service he has earned the right to switch to part-time work.

I wish him well in his next endeavors and congratulate him on an impressive career.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 5, 2011, the Secretary of the Senate, on August 3, 2012, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives that the Clerk is directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives failed to agree to the resolution of the Senate (S. Con. Res. 56) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 5, 2011, the Secretary of the Senate, on August 3, 2012, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 3510. An act to prevent harm to the national security or endangering the military officers and civilian employees to whom internet publication of certain information applies, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 2103(b), and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Speaker appoints the following individual from private life to the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress on the part of the House of Representatives for a term of 6 years: Mr. C. Kurt Dewhurst of Michigan.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 5, 2011, the Secretary of the Senate, on August 7, 2012, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the