

the creation of the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, AWEPP, several years ago.

AWEPP, which receives approximately \$60 million annually, is a "voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land to conserve surface and ground water and improve water quality," according to the USDA. AWEPP assists farmers with the use of upland water storage ponds, irrigation system improvements, water quality improvement, and other similar efforts. It is a good program. According to ALFA—the association representing Alabama's farmers:

Since 2009, the AWEPP Initiative has made available over \$3.5 million to benefit the local economy. In Alabama, 102 farmers have improved efficiency in their irrigation operations which resulted in savings of about 875 million gallons of water per year.

However, USDA currently limits access to AWEPP to farms that have been irrigated previously a requirement that prevents most Alabama farmers from being eligible for this useful program. Farmers are often required to show past irrigation records, irrigation water management plan documentation, or a map showing farm acres with irrigation history. This prior history requirement prevents some worthwhile agricultural water enhancement projects from being eligible for AWEPP assistance, particularly in States where irrigation has not been significantly used. According to data in the 2007 USDA Agriculture Census, many farm acres throughout the country do not have a history of agricultural irrigation. This is especially true in my State. According to ALFA, "only about 5% of Alabama's farms have irrigated cropland," and this prior history requirement "has prevented the program from being more widely utilized" in Alabama.

My amendment No. 945, which was accepted, as modified, by unanimous agreement in the Senate yesterday, eliminates this unwarranted restriction and will help ensure that more farmers are eligible for USDA irrigation assistance programs. I thank the chairman and ranking member for their work in modifying my amendment to ensure that this clarification of law only applies "in states where irrigation has not been used significantly for agricultural purposes, as determined by the Secretary." As a State with relatively little agricultural irrigation in present use, Alabama and other similarly-situated States are clearly covered by the relief provided by my amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ADAM SCOTT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to honor Adam Scott, a former member of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas golf team, and the first Australian to win the Masters Tournament.

Through his determination and will to win, Adam was able to come back from a heartbreaking loss at the 2012 Open Championship to win the 2013 Masters in truly stunning fashion. In a tie for the lead heading into the 72nd hole, Adam birdied with a 20-foot putt. At that point, I thought Adam had clinched the title, but another great golfer, Angel Cabrera, was able to force a playoff with his own birdie. It was not until the second hole of that playoff that Adam, through yet another birdie, was able to call himself the Master's champion. This was his ninth PGA Tour win, but first major championship.

Adam hails from Adelaide, Australia, later moving to Queensland at the age of 9. In 1998, Adam came to my home State of Nevada to study and play golf at UNLV. While at UNLV, Adam was an All-American, finishing 11th at the 1999 NCAA Golf Championships. His victory at the Masters was the first major championship to be won by a former UNLV men's golfer.

UNLV's golf program has produced a lot of great players over the years, but until now, none had ever won a major championship. There have been several second-place and third-place showings, but never a champion. As a Nevadan, it is amazing to see a former UNLV player wearing the famous Augusta National Gold Club's green jacket.

On behalf of the Senate, I congratulate Adam Scott on his victory at the Masters Tournament and look forward to continuing to follow a career that has already made Australia and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas very proud.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the men and women of our Armed Forces who have given their lives in defense of the United States. Memorial Day has, since its inception in the years immediately after the end of the Civil War, been a special time for us to remember and honor all Americans who have died in military service. Nearly 150 years after the first "Decoration Day" was observed, it remains important that we as citizens of this great Nation take time to reflect on the brave servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf.

As I have noted, Memorial Day grew out of a practice started in April 1866 in Columbus, MS, with the decoration of the graves of Confederate and Union soldiers alike. The tradition of honoring both those who fell on both sides

of that conflict evolved into our modern observance of this sacred day.

Today, tens of thousands of American men and women continue to put their lives on the line to preserve and perpetuate the freedoms and liberties established with the birth of our Nation. The freedoms we enjoy in this country have often been paid for with the lives of these servicemembers. Their selfless example of service, whether made at Bunker Hill, Vicksburg, Iwo Jima, Inchon or the remotest regions of Afghanistan, inspires us to sacrifice and work for the good of our Nation.

This Memorial Day, Mississippians will again honor all brave fallen warriors, including the men and women from our State who have recently died in the service of our nation in Afghanistan and around the world.

For the RECORD, I offer the names of three brave heroes with roots in Mississippi, who have fallen since the nation commemorated Memorial Day last year. They are:

SSG Ricardo Seija, 31, of Tampa, FL, who died July 9, 2012

SFC Coater B. DeBose, 55, of State Line, MS, died Aug. 19, 2012

Specialist Patricia L. Horne, 20, of Greenwood, MS, died Aug. 24, 2012

We mourn their loss and honor them for their courage, dedication and sacrifice, and resolve that their lives were not given in vain.

This Memorial Day, the people of my State and throughout our great Nation will rightly set aside their day-to-day tasks to remember and say a prayer of thanksgiving for those who have laid down their lives for their country. We will also think of their families who share most acutely in their loss. I join them in saying thank you to those who made these great sacrifices.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD BENDER

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, when Richard Bender retires at the end of this month, the Senate will say farewell to one of its most respected, talented, and accomplished staff members. And I personally will be saying farewell to my longest serving legislative counselor.

They say that there are no indispensable people here in Washington. Don't believe it. For the last three and a half decades, Rich Bender has been my indispensable person—a staffer with an encyclopedic knowledge of parliamentary procedure, the legislative process, the Federal budget, as well as the rules and traditions of this body.

I am by no means the only Senator who has found Richard indispensable. In fact, he is a legend among Senators and staffers alike. Many times, the distinguished majority leader, Senator REID, has come to me with some version of this request: Tom, I am having trouble with this bill. Opponents are raising all kinds of legislative and parliamentary hurdles. Have Bender give me a call. And, by the way, Leader

REID asking you for advice on parliamentary procedure is about like Wynton Marsalis asking you for advice on how he can play the trumpet better.

In my Senate office, Richard has managed a broad portfolio, including budget and taxes, infrastructure, economic development, and a good share of appropriations. He has completed more than 37 years in public service in Congress, beginning in 1975 as a special assistant to Iowa Senator John Culver. In 1977, when I was still in the House of Representatives, he came to work in my congressional office in Ames, where he met his future wife, Laura Forman. Richard moved to my Washington office in 1980. He has been with me, now, for three and a half decades, making him the longest serving Harkin staffer on record.

Richard often says, with pride, that he is the guy in the office who handles asphalt and cement. What those two items translate into are new roads and bridges, revitalized downtowns, economic development, jobs and opportunity. Cities across Iowa, from Dubuque to downtown Des Moines and across to western Iowa, all bear abundant evidence of Richard's excellent work over the decades.

I have never encountered a staffer who can match Richard's mastery of the appropriations process—not just the know-how and know-who of appropriations, but even more importantly the tenacity and persistence required to advance specific projects over the course of many years and sometimes for more than a decade.

I don't know how many times folks in Iowa have thanked me for things that Richard played a huge role in getting done. Let me name just a few of them.

He deserves special credit for his many contributions to making downtown Des Moines the attractive, economically vibrant urban landscape it is today, including the downtown loop on the Martin Luther King, Jr., Parkway, as well as projects like Riverpoint and the Science Center, all of which have spurred development on the south side of town. He played a similar role in assisting the revitalization of Dubuque by securing funds for the brilliant development of the city's Mississippi waterfront.

Richard is fond of describing roads, rivers, and canals as the "arteries and veins of commerce," and he has been devoted to securing robust investments in essential infrastructure projects all across Iowa. I would mention, for example, Federal funding for the Des Moines to Burlington four-lane highway, and Highway 61 improvement in eastern Iowa.

Twice during Richard's tenure in my office, he has played a critical role in helping Iowa to recover from catastrophic floods. Following the devastating weather and flooding in 1993, he helped to secure major Federal funding to help Iowa cities, towns, and farms to recover. Likewise, after the

once-in-a-century flood of 2008, Richard dedicated himself to securing resources to help Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, and many other communities to rebuild better than ever.

Let me mention several other achievements:

Richard played a key role in defeating a 1994 appropriations amendment that would have severely damaged ethanol's expansion in the U.S. gasoline market. The vote on the motion to table was 50 to 50, with the Vice President casting the deciding "aye" vote.

He secured vital funding for airport expansion and upgrading in Des Moines and at other Iowa airports.

Richard played the key role in securing nearly one-half billion dollars to upgrade USDA's National Animal Disease Center at Ames.

He obtained Federal funds for the High Trestle Bridge over the Des Moines River on the recreational trail between Ankeny and Woodward.

Earlier this year, he successfully persuaded the Army Corps of Engineers to keep the lower Mississippi River open for navigation during a time of persistently low water.

Thanks to Richard's dogged efforts, we were able to secure funding for the new Federal courthouse in Cedar Rapids.

These accomplishments are Richard Bender's living legacy.

And no recounting of Richard's legacy in Iowa would be complete without mentioning his central role in devising and implementing the modern Iowa caucuses system. In 1971, Richard was working as a staffer for the Iowa Democratic Party, which was seeking a way to increase the active involvement of rank-and-file members in choosing our party's Presidential candidate. The party also needed a timely and effective way of reporting voting results. Richard's creativity, as well as his training in mathematics and statistics, made him the key player in developing the Iowa Democratic Party caucuses. Today, the caucuses are little changed from what he developed four decades ago.

Richard Bender is the quintessential selfless public servant. For him, it is never about personal gain or glory; it is about serving others. Nobody works harder. Nobody puts in longer hours. And nobody produces more consistent results than Richard.

Indeed, I also add a debt of gratitude to Richard's wonderful wife, Laura, and his beloved son, Michael. They, too, have sacrificed as Richard has spent such long hours both in the office and working at home on weekends and in the evening. Lots of people, when they retire, say that they are looking forward to spending much more time with their family. Richard really means it. I know that he has big plans for Laura and Michael, including travel, in the years ahead.

It is difficult to find words that do justice to how profoundly grateful I am to Richard for his wise counsel and

loyal service on my staff over the last three and a half decades. In addition, on behalf of my colleagues here in the Senate as well as in the House, so many of whom have also benefited from his counsel, I want to thank him for his exceptional service to the Congress and the American people.

Richard, I am deeply grateful to you for a job extraordinarily well done. I join with the entire Senate family in wishing you, Laura, and Michael much happiness in the years ahead.

CONGRESSIONAL BADGES OF BRAVERY

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor six outstanding members of the U.S. Marshals Service—Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Patrick James and Deputy U.S. Marshals Theodore Abegg, Travis Franke, Nicholas Garrett, Jeremy Wyatt, and John Perry—who played an instrumental role in the March 8, 2011, apprehension of a fugitive in St. Louis, MO, an incident that claimed the life of Deputy U.S. Marshal John Perry and resulted in the wounding of Deputy U.S. Marshal Theodore Abegg, as well as St. Louis Police Officer Jeff Helbling.

I commend the heroic service and incredible sacrifice of all these marshals, four of whom are from my home State of Missouri: Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Patrick James and Deputy U.S. Marshals Theodore Abegg, Travis Franke, and Nicholas Garrett. Deputy U.S. Marshal Jeremy Wyatt and fallen Deputy U.S. Marshal John Perry hail from Illinois. Last week, my colleague Senator DICK DURBIN of Illinois joined me at an awards ceremony in St. Louis to honor these distinguished U.S. marshals.

Before I talk about the bravery these law enforcement officials demonstrated in the line of duty, I need to mention the tremendous service the U.S. Marshals Service provides to the people of this country every day. As the Nation's oldest Federal law enforcement agency, the U.S. Marshals Service plays several crucial roles, including protecting Federal judges, operating the Witness Security Program, seizing illegally obtained assets from criminals, and apprehending Federal fugitives—a function which led to its cooperation with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and the formation of the U.S. Marshals Service Fugitive Task Force in St. Louis. Since the Marshals Service's inception in 1789, over 200 federal marshals, deputy marshals, special deputy marshals, and marshals guards have lost their lives in the line of duty. When the U.S. Marshals Service's steadfast devotion to crime prevention and mitigation is considered alongside its traditional witness protection and judicial security duties, the law enforcement officials of this agency truly exemplify the values of "Justice, Integrity, Service."

From my days as a prosecutor, I know how critically important the U.S.