

Center in Nevada. During his 16-year tenure, he has strengthened the arts throughout his community by investing in literary and scholarship programs that have helped foster artistic development and brought new artists to Western Folklife's most notable event, the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering. Since 1986, Mr. Seemann participated in the annual National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, formerly the Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering. This event was renamed in 2000, after Mr. Seemann worked with Members of Congress to pass a United States Senate Resolution designating the poetry gathering in Elko as a nationally recognized event.

Mr. Seemann is not only a strong advocate for western arts and culture, but he is a nationally renowned folklorist. Prior to coming to the Western Folklife Center, he received the Western Heritage Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, as well as a Grammy nomination for the New World Records anthology *Back in the Saddle Again: American Cowboy Songs*. Mr. Seemann also received a Wrangler Award in 2003, for his production work on a joint project between the Western Folklife Center and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, *Buck Ramsey: Hittin' the Trail*. In 2006, Mr. Seemann was appointed by Congress to the Board of Trustees for the American Folklife Center. This Center is housed at the Library of Congress and works to archive and preserve American's unique culture. It was a tribute to Mr. Seemann's reputation that he was selected for this Federal board, and he represented Nevada well in this role.

Mr. Seemann will be missed by the many individuals he works with at the Western Folklife Center, but his contributions to western folklore will continue. I wish him well in his retirement and all the best in his future endeavors.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. NELSON. The administration sent several Cabinet Secretaries and high-ranking appointees to brief all Senators last evening on the crisis of the children on the border, and it appears they are getting their arms around addressing the problem of the children and the humanitarian crisis on the border. However, it is the opinion of this Senator that they do not recognize the root cause of the problem. If the administration would listen to their four-star general, the head of the United States Southern Command, General Kelly, and the testimony he has already given to the Armed Services Committee of what is the problem, then we could get to the root cause of the problem and stop these future humanitarian crises.

The problem simply is that we are not devoting the time and the resources—the money—to the interdiction of the big drug shipments coming

out of South America into Central America. They come in big shipments from Colombia through Venezuela by air or sea on the eastern side, from Colombia through Ecuador or originating in Ecuador out on the western side, coming into three Central American countries—Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. As a result, their drug lords have completely taken over those countries. As a result, the violence is the highest. Honduras is now the murder capital of the world. As a result of that drug violence—and there is very little law and order—the whole system is corrupted. For parents with children, it is logical that they would want to send their children to a safer environment.

The administration has to address this issue with regard to going back to what we did so successfully in Plan Colombia—interdict the drug traffic before it gets to those Central American countries because once it does in the big shipments, they then break it down into smaller packages and it goes north.

CYPRUS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 40th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of the island of Cyprus. Today, Cyprus remains a divided island, with a third of the territory still occupied by Turkish forces.

I am proud to stand with the people of Cyprus and call for an immediate end to the Turkish occupation of their country. On numerous occasions, United Nations resolutions have called for the respect of the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus and for an immediate end to the Turkish occupation. The Republic of Cyprus continues to demonstrate full commitment to a peaceful process that will reunify the island in accordance with these resolutions.

Over the past year, the Republic of Cyprus has taken significant steps to lay the groundwork for peaceful negotiations, including proposals that would bring the two sides together to build confidence, strengthen ties, and integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community. It is clear that the government and people of Cyprus stand ready to make the hard decisions needed to achieve peace.

Continued unrest that threatens the security and stability of the region further underscores the importance of supporting the Republic of Cyprus. A peaceful agreement that reunifies Cyprus would signal that just and fair resolutions can be achieved to end decades long confrontations. We must continue to stand with them to fight for a fair and responsible agreement—one that safeguards basic freedoms and human rights for all Cypriots. During his visit in May of this year, Vice President BIDEN reiterated the need for Cyprus to be reunited.

The Republic of Cyprus is a strong and trusted friend of the United States.

I am proud of the strategic partnership we have developed over the years. The Government of Cyprus currently hosts the joint mission responsible for carrying out the removal and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons as well as providing maritime cooperation to facilitate the process. The role of Cyprus demonstrates the island's important strategic location and critical international engagement efforts.

I am encouraged by renewed efforts to reach a comprehensive and fair solution to reunify Cyprus. I urge the government of Turkey to cooperate with negotiations and I applaud the people of Cyprus for their steadfast commitment to securing a peaceful and prosperous future.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the division of Cyprus, which began on July 20, 1974.

On July 20, 1974, Turkey began its brutal invasion of the island of Cyprus. By August 25, 1974, Turkish forces controlled more than one-third of the island. To this day, Cyprus remains divided.

Forty years later, it is long past time for a permanent solution that results in a free and unified Cyprus.

For decades, numerous rounds of negotiations have attempted to achieve a settlement. For too long, these efforts have failed to yield meaningful progress. However, a new round of talks began in February of this year. I am deeply hopeful that these negotiations will result in a fair and durable solution for all Cypriots.

A secure and stable Republic of Cyprus will strengthen the friendship and alliance between the United States and Cyprus. This relationship is based on our long history and our mutual goals and values, including a commitment to democracy, opportunity for all, and human rights.

Lasting peace in Cyprus will also reinforce Cyprus's role as a force for peace, prosperity, and stability in the region.

That is why we must continue to do everything possible to help Cyprus resolve the decades-long illegal occupation of Northern Cyprus by Turkey.

As Vice President BIDEN said in May during his historic visit to Cyprus, "For the sake of the boys and girls born on this island who deserve the possibility that only peace can bring, let's finally make hope and history rhyme together."

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT ANDREW R. LOONEY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to remember the life and sacrifice of Army SGT Andrew R. Looney who died on June 21, 2010 serving our Nation in Lar Sholtan Village, Afghanistan. Sergeant Looney and Army PFC David T. Miller died of wounds sustained when a suicide bomber attacked their traffic control checkpoint.

Andrew was born June 26, 1987 and grew up in Owasso, OK where he graduated from Owasso High School in 2005.

His father, Richard, said as a teen his son developed an avid interest in the military, and he was further inspired by military movies, in particular the HBO series "Band of Brothers." He grew up respecting authority, was "very compliable" and took things in stride which made military life a good fit for him. Therefore, it was a natural for him to enlist in the Army immediately after high school.

While deployed to Iraq in August 2007, he was severely wounded from an improvised explosive device and lost part of his right foot. After nearly a year of grueling rehabilitation and receiving a prosthetic at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX he felt a deep sense of patriotism and a burning desire to serve and get back to where he felt he was needed. In 2009 he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, Fort Campbell, KY where on April 24, 2010 he deployed to Afghanistan.

The last time the family saw him in April 2009 "he was looking forward to his assignment in Afghanistan," his father said. He thought he "was making a difference in the war, and was much needed."

On June 28, 2010, with hundreds of friends in attendance, the family remembered Andrew at Owasso Public School's Mary Glass Performing Arts Center. Before and throughout the service, hundreds of people lined the streets holding up flags in solemn tribute to Andrew.

In 2012, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin signed Senate Bill 1320 designating the section of highway from 96th Street North to 106th Street North as "Sergeant Andrew R. Looney Memorial Highway."

Andrew was posthumously promoted to Sergeant and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA.

SGT Looney is survived by his parents Martha and Cleo Looney, sister Joanna, and brother, Steven who completed a tour in the Navy in December 2009.

Today we remember Army SGT Andrew R. Looney, a young man who loved his family and country, and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

SPECIALIST JARED C. PLUNK

Mr. President, I also wish to remember a true American hero, Army SPC Jared C. Plunk who died on June 25, 2010 serving our Nation in Konar, Afghanistan. SPC Plunk and Army SPC Blair D. Thompson died of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked their unit using rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire.

Jared was born August 26, 1982 in Liberal, KS. He grew up in the Oklahoma Panhandle town of Turpin where he played football and graduated high school in 2001 before taking college classes at Seward County Community College.

After relocating to Stillwater, OK, Jared and his brother Justin enlisted

in the Army in August 2006 where they were bunkmates once again in basic military training. After graduation, he married his wife Lindsay and was assigned to 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, Fort Campbell, KY.

Jared's funeral was held July 4, 2010 at the Turpin High School auditorium. Reverend Stan Lehnart remembered him saying "He was not the valedictorian of Turpin. He was not the star of the football team. He was not the boy the girls wanted to sit next to at assemblies in this auditorium. He is the one who gave his life for us to sit here today. He is the one that served his country. He is a hero."

Interment was in the Liberal City Cemetery in Liberal, KS.

Preceded in death by his father, Glen "Tiny" Plunk, Jared is survived by his wife Lindsay, and two sons, 5-year-old Noah and baby Kason, mother Glenda Willard and her husband Gerald of Maryville, TN, brother Justin Plunk and his wife Caitlin of Norman, Oklahoma, brother Jordan Plunk of Maryville, TN, sister Raneé Massoni and her husband Jordon and their son Gavin of Maryville, TN, and sister Michelle Plunk of Maryville, TN.

Today we remember Army SPC Jared C. Plunk, a young man who loved his family and country, and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

ARMY STAFF SERGEANT TRAVIS M. TOMPKINS

Mr. President, I would also like to pay tribute to Army SSG Travis M. Tompkins. Travis tragically died on March 16, 2011 of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with a rocket propelled grenade in Logar Province, Afghanistan.

Travis was born November 26, 1979 at Fort Sill, OK to Leland and Vickie Tompkins. An active Boy Scout, he graduated from MacArthur High School in 1999 and enlisted in the Army in January 2000.

He was carrying on a tradition of service in his family that dates back to World War I. His father, Leland Tompkins served for more than two decades in an Army career that began during the Vietnam war and ended in the closing days of the Cold War. "He was a working soldier," Leland said. "He was a working leader. He cared about his soldiers. He volunteered for everything."

Moving frequently, Travis' assignments included Fort Sill, OK, Fort Leonardwood, MO, Fort Carson, CO, and Allied Joint Force Command in Brunssum, the Netherlands. He married Candice Brown on March 1, 2001 at Fort Carson, CO and was quickly deployed to Saudi Arabia from September 2001 to March 2002.

He arrived at Fort Polk, LA in June 2009 and was assigned to Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. In October 2011 he deployed to Afghanistan with his unit as a military policeman with the Brigade Special Troops

Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

The couple had recently renewed their vows on their 10th anniversary when he was home on leave. "It was the most perfect day," Candy wrote. "He was a wonderful man, an excellent soldier and above all the best father and husband and son and brother. I don't know how I'll ever live without him. He was our world."

A loving husband, father and son, Travis is survived by his wife Candice, two children, Madison and Gianna, parents Leland and Vickie Tompkins of Lawton, OK, sister Jenny Meek and her husband Troy of Fletcher, OK, niece and nephew Megan Meek and Dillon Meek, and his mother and father-in-law Wendy and Tim Brown of Lawton, OK.

His mother Vickie said that the main thing she wanted people who never met him to know is what a great son he was to her and what a wonderful husband he was to his wife Candy, and their children.

Private family funeral services and interment with full military honors were conducted at the Fort Sill National Cemetery, Elgin, OK. Travis was posthumously promoted to Staff Sergeant.

Today we remember Army SSG Travis M. Tompkins, a young man who loved his family and country, and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

TRIBUTE TO TRAVIS MOLLOHAN

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I want to thank a longtime and dedicated member of my staff, Travis Mollohan, and to wish him the best on his next professional venture—as director of State, corporate and community relations for West Virginia University.

Raised by caring parents, Todd and Brenda Mollohan, in the geographic heart of our State, Braxton County, Travis learned from a young age the value of being involved in his community and the importance of being a team player. As a proud Braxton County Eagle, Travis was a member of the high school's award-winning band, speech and debate team and president of the National Honor Society. Travis even volunteered for me during my unsuccessful 1996 gubernatorial run.

Travis graduated from Braxton County High School in 2000 and then attended college at West Virginia University. There, he was treasurer of the WVU Young Democrats, head of the Student Government Association's campus safety committee and studied abroad at Dublin City University in Ireland. Travis volunteered during my successful campaign for Governor in 2004 and began working for me in 2005 as deputy scheduler.

From my first days as the 34th Governor of the great State of West Virginia, my top priority was to deliver excellent customer service to our fellow West Virginians. Travis was ideally suited for my team—he was hard-working, smart and always there to lend a helping hand to those in need.