

home and abroad. We here in the Senate will miss Aiko's extensive knowledge and extraordinary work ethic as she returns to the Department of Defense. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Aiko's husband, Haru, and their children, Callea and Kent, for sharing her with us this past year. The Senate schedule isn't always the most "family friendly" but Aiko has been able to juggle the competing demands masterfully. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Aiko Lane for her outstanding service to our Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE 240TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, 240 years ago, the Navy Chaplain Corps was established. Chaplains serve our Nation by serving the members of our military—providing prayer, comfort, support, healing and restoration.

Chaplains go into the darkest places on earth to serve those who risk their lives for our Nation. They have seen the worst, but still provide hope for something greater. Over the course of their ministry, 16 Navy chaplains have given the ultimate sacrifice. Additionally, two chaplains have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their devoted service.

After over a decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, chaplains today continue to bring support and hope to those affected by war. Protecting and advancing the religious liberty of both chaplains and servicemembers is essential to preserve our honored heritage.

On the 240th anniversary of the Navy Chaplain Corps, we recognize their dedication and devotion, their service to a cause greater than themselves, and their selfless sacrifice for our nation. We also recognize the importance of protecting their right and the right of every servicemember to practice their religious beliefs.

On this day, we recognize all Navy chaplains who have answered the call to serve where it matters, when it matters, with what matters since 1775.

TRIBUTE TO BOB FORD

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Bob Ford, who is retiring from Senate service. Bob is a valued, longtime member of my staff and dear friend.

In September of 2002, Bob joined my staff as the State director for business, economic, and rural development. Bob, originally from the Sunny Slope area of Canyon County, brought to the position a profound knowledge of rural and economic development shaped by his service as the State manager of rural development for the Idaho Department of Commerce, where he worked for 17 years in various capacities.

To say that Bob assisted me in a number of issue areas is an understatement. He has worked on far too many efforts to count. In addition to his

work on rural and economic development issues, he has worked on initiatives related to housing, labor, trade, veterans, energy, banking, budget, taxes, immigration, water resources, transportation, and much more.

Highlights of his contributions as a member of my staff include his successful work to stop the transfer of the terminal approach control radar, known as TRACON, from the Boise airport. Bob spent countless hours working with affected parties to build an overwhelming justification for retaining TRACON at the Boise airport. He also worked heavily on trying to restore a key Amtrak corridor between the Midwest, the Intermountain States, and the Pacific Northwest.

As a fellow veteran, Bob has utilized his shared understanding of serving our Nation to connect with Idaho's veterans community and help improve veterans' access to quality services. He has attentively and efficiently administered the presenting of the Spirit of Freedom Award, which is an annual award to veterans and volunteers to recognize their great contributions to our armed services and veterans.

Bob is pragmatic and witty. He brings his calm, commonsense approach to any task, and I will miss his logical counsel and good humor. Bob is so widely admired that there has been no shortage of Idahoans who have shared fond memories of times they have worked with Bob over the years and the achievements he has made for the people of our great State.

Bob, you have done "not bad for a kid who grew up on a farm in Sunny Slope on the banks of the Snake River." I hope that retirement will provide much-deserved time fishing, and that I will still get to benefit from your wise assistance from time to time. Thank you for your outstanding, committed service. Congratulations on your retirement. I wish you all the best.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO VIRGIL COURNEYA

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Virgil Courneya on being selected as National President of the Fleet Reserve Association, FRA. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his achievement in being selected to lead an organization that does so much for our Nation's military community.

Mr. Courneya enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1972 and served his country for nearly a quarter century. Throughout his military career, he received numerous assignments across the country, where he served in California, Nevada, North Carolina, Hawaii, and Pennsylvania. He also served overseas in Japan and Bolivia. Before retiring in 1996, he achieved the rank of master gunnery sergeant. Mr. Courneya's service is invaluable to our country, and I am grateful for the sacrifices he made for our freedoms.

The FRA is a congressionally chartered military and veterans service organization that serves active members and veterans of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. In his new role, Mr. Courneya will work to strengthen the organization and increase national recognition of the work being done by the FRA on behalf of our Nation's heroes. He will also serve as an advocate for the issues important to sea service members and their families.

Mr. Courneya has been a member of the FRA since 1982 and is currently a member of the FRA Branch 274 in Reno. Throughout his service to this organization, he has held numerous important roles on the local, regional, and national levels, including serving as both the association's west coast regional president from 2004 to 2006 and national vice president from 2012 to 2013.

I am grateful for Mr. Courneya's many contributions to sea service members and veterans throughout our Nation and State. His actions represent only the greatest of Nevada's values and place him among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. I would also like to recognize his wife, Helen, who was selected as the national president of the auxiliary. Our State is fortunate to have role models such as Mr. and Mrs. Courneya serving Nevada's brave.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize Congress has a responsibility not only to honor the brave individuals who serve our Nation, but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for veterans in our State and across the country. I am grateful to have Nevadans like Mr. Courneya working towards a common goal: fighting to ensure the needs of our military community are met.

Mr. Courneya has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the U.S. Marine Corps. I extend my greatest gratitude for his service to defending our freedom and his work on behalf of the FRA. I am humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Courneya on being selected as national president of this important organization.●

CONGRATULATING PAT SKORKOWSKY

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Clark County School District Superintendent Pat Skorkowsky on being named National Superintendent of the Year by Jobs for America's Graduates, JAG. This award is truly prestigious and attained by only the most influential educators across the country.

JAG is a nonprofit organization that is focused on improving the educational outcome of America's youth

to ensure they are equipped to succeed in higher education and the workforce. The Nevada chapter of this State-based national organization has been a driving force to help integrate the JAG program into 19 schools in the Clark County School District, assisting the needs of more than 700 students in 37 schools across the State. Mr. Skorkowsky played a significant role in implementing this program after a successful pilot trial at several schools across our State.

Over 25 years ago, Mr. Skorkowsky began working as an educator for the Clark County School District. Throughout his tenure, he has served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, academic manager, deputy superintendent, and now as superintendent. Mr. Skorkowsky spearheaded the idea that drives the nation's fifth largest school district: "Every student in every classroom, without exceptions, without excuses." During his time as superintendent, Mr. Skorkowsky has upheld this philosophy, implementing strategies to improve the academic experience for every student who attends a Clark County School. Southern Nevada is fortunate to have someone of such great experience working on behalf of the future of Nevada's youth.

As a father of four children who attended Nevada's public schools and as the husband of a teacher, I understand the important role that educators play in enriching the lives of Nevada's students. Ensuring that America's youth are prepared to compete in the 21st century is critical for the future of our country. Mr. Skorkowsky has worked tirelessly to help prepare students across southern Nevada to be career and college ready, and I am grateful to have him serving as an ally to future generations of Nevadans.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Mr. Skorkowsky for his dedication to enriching the lives of Nevada's students and in congratulating him on receiving this award. I wish him well as he continues creating success for all students who enter the Clark County School District.●

REMEMBERING GLEE S. SMITH, JR.

● Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, on November 16, Kansas lost one of its greatest citizens when Glee Smith, Jr., passed away at age 94. Today, I pay tribute to Glee and celebrate his life, his legacy, and his service to our State and Nation.

Glee was born and raised in 1921 in Rozel—a rural central Kansas town with a population of 156. After high school, like so many members of our "greatest generation," Glee served our Nation during World War II as a first lieutenant in the Army Air Corps.

After the war, he returned to further his education at the University of Kansas, where he earned a bachelor's degree in journalism in 1943 and a juris

doctorate in 1947. During this time, Glee married Gerry Buhler, his wife of more than 70 years. Together, they moved southwest to Larned, where Glee partnered with Maurice Wildgen to found the Wildgen & Smith Law Firm. Within 2 years of establishing his law practice, Glee was elected to his first position of public service as Pawnee County attorney and later to the Larned Board of Education, on which he served for 12 years.

These two roles provided the bedrock for Glee's work on behalf of Kansans and instilled a deep respect for the rule of law and commitment to education. He was a 67-year member of the Kansas Bar Association—20 of which were spent as a member of the Board of Governors. In addition, President Gerald Ford appointed Glee to the First Board of Directors of the National Legal Services Corporation, which he served on from 1975 to 1979. He also served on the Kansas Board of Regents for 8 years, including 2 as chairman. These are just a few of the many other causes that Glee took part in and often ended up leading. Many remember Glee's leadership from his 16 years in the Kansas State Senate, during which he served as Judiciary Committee chairman, Ways and Means Committee chairman and president of the senate for his final 8 years.

The comments left on Glee's obituary in the Lawrence Journal-World do service to the impression that he left on those around him:

"Glee was a great person and a true gentleman[.] He was a great person to work with in governmental affairs and socially as well."

"[I] loved his stories of how Ger[ry] and he met and that he loved her from the moment he saw her!!! Their love and devotion have been inspiring . . . It was an honor to get to know him."

"There will always be an empty seat at First Presbyterian Church where Glee sat beside his beloved Gerry. He was a stately gentleman and a truly gentle man. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him."

"One of the rewards of serving on the Kansas 4-H Foundation was serving alongside people like Glee. Leadership, Vision, Wisdom, Caring, Friend—a few words that describe Glee Smith."

"Although his impact was great in his efforts on behalf of the State of Kansas and KU, it was most significant in all the lives he touched along the way."

Glee Smith taught through his actions that true satisfaction in life comes from service to others. This is the legacy we should all hope to leave behind for the next generation.

I always believe what happens in the nation's capital is important, but the truth is that we change the world one person at a time. While our work in the Senate matters, much more is accomplished by a person like Glee. I would ask my Senate colleagues to join me in extending our sympathies to Glee's wife; three children, Sid, Stephen, and

Susan; three grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren as they begin this new year in the absence of their loved one.●

REMEMBERING MAJOR GENERAL WILL HILL TANKERSLEY

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to MG Will Hill Tankersley, a patriot and friend. General Tankersley died Saturday, November 28, 2015, at the age of 87. General Tankersley exemplified the attributes of service, loyalty, and, perhaps most precious to him, duty. He leaves behind an adoring family, generations of friends and admirers, and a legacy that will persist long after his passing.

He was born February 28, 1928, to a family with deep roots in Alabama. In fact, his grandfather settled around what would become Montgomery in 1815, 4 years before Alabama achieved statehood. When only a boy, his father, Felix Marcus Tully, passed away, leaving him in the care of his mother, "Miss Corrie" Melton Hill. His paternal grandfather, Judge Will Hill, became a father-figure to young Will Hill, ensuring his mother and her young family were provided for and that Will Hill and his brothers received an education.

Despite facing these difficult odds, Will Hill attended the Citadel and Marion Military Institute before gaining acceptance to West Point, from which he graduated in 1950. Soon after graduation, before his class had even gone through basic training, he was sent into combat in Korea, serving six campaigns as a combat infantryman. For his service, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star, and Combat Infantry Badge.

The West Point Class of 1950 has the tragic distinction of suffering through some of the heaviest wartime losses in the history of the academy; he was one of only six of his classmates in his regiment not killed, wounded, or captured. In fact, at the age of 23, then-Lieutenant Tankersley had the unfortunate distinction of being the oldest living infantry lieutenant in the 19th Infantry Regiment.

It was in 1953 while stationed at Fort Benning that he met Theda Clark Ball, also of Montgomery, whom he soon married. She was the love of his life, and her special place in his heart remained after her death in 2013, after almost 60 years of marriage.

Once leaving the regular Army, Will Hill returned to Montgomery and joined the investment bank Sterne Agee & Leach. His 45 years at Sterne Agee saw him rise to the top of the organization, becoming a vice president, board member, senior vice president, chairman of the executive committee of the board of directors, president of the company, and finally the vice chairman emeritus for life. He retired in October of 2003.

General Tankersley's dedication to principle and sense of civic duty to his city, State, and country are well known.