

the ability to inspire confidence in his troops and young leaders. He always led them from the front, and he ensured they were successful in any and all endeavors. We saw this at the outset of the Iraq war in 2003 when, as the assistant division commander for maneuver for the 3rd Infantry Division, he helped to spearhead the invasion, maneuvering the division from Kuwait to Baghdad in a record 22 days. We saw it in Afghanistan in 2003–2004, when he was the commander of Combined Joint Task Force-180. We saw it again in Iraq in 2008 when, as the commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq during the period when the surge forces were drawing down, he helped to achieve greater stability in the country. We saw it once more in Iraq in 2010–2011 when, as commander of U.S. Forces-Iraq, he oversaw the successful completion of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn.

In an age of tweets and blogs, General Austin never seeks the limelight, preferring to let his actions speak for themselves. He is a consummate professional, and our Nation and its Armed Services will feel the loss of this distinguished officer, gifted leader, and highly decorated warrior. I join my fellow members of the Senate Armed Services Committee in expressing my respect and gratitude to GEN Lloyd Austin for his outstanding and selfless service to our Nation. I wish him and his wife, Charlene, all the best.

REMEMBERING COLONEL THOMAS SCHAEFER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor a beloved U.S. Air Force hero, COL Thomas E. Schaefer, who sadly passed away on May 31.

In 1979, Colonel Schaefer was among those taken hostage in Iran while serving as a senior military attache to the U.S. Embassy. From November 4, 1979, to January 20, 1981, Colonel Schaefer survived 444 days of captivity, but never allowed his ordeal or his captors to undermine his spirit thanks to a strong faith in God. To keep his mind alert during that time, he read over 250 books, walked over 200 miles in his room to keep warm, and studied German.

Throughout this time, he overcame this adversity with bravery, endurance, and a spirit that became an inspiration for his friends, family, and all Americans—many of whom greeted him with open arms in 1981 following his release when he returned to his hometown, Rochester, NY.

Originally from Rochester, NY, where much of his family and many friends still reside today, Colonel Schaefer made a lasting impact on the community through speaking publicly about his experiences. He wanted each and every person to know that they possess an inner strength which allows them to overcome any challenge that may present itself in their lives.

Colonel Schaefer was a brave man, who endured the unthinkable, and his sacrifices should be remembered forever.

Thank you.

REMEMBERING FELIX AND MARIA NORAT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would like to honor the memory of SGT Felix Norat and his wife, Maria, two remarkable New Yorkers who were interred at Arlington National Cemetery last week. Sergeant Norat was a WWII veteran who served in the Army's 45th Infantry Division. His bravery and heroism earned him a Bronze Star for Valor, as well as a Purple Heart. Maria was a native of Puerto Rico who worked for the War Department in New York City. Maria and Felix were married nearly 70 years, a testament to their love and devotion to one another. I would like to commit their story—a quintessentially American story—to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today.

Mr. Norat's unit, the 45th Infantry of the Army, was one of the most battle-tested divisions of the entire war, and Mr. Norat was still among it when the division came to Munich days before the Germans surrendered.

Mr. Norat's late wife, Maria, upon moving to New York, rented a room from her future mother-in-law, who noticed Maria's penmanship and asked her to rewrite her letters to her son who was fighting in Europe. Often, Maria would include a note of her own at the bottom of each letter, encouraging Felix and wishing him well. She later recounted, in an interview with the local newspaper, "I was telling him how proud we were that he was serving this great country and how beautiful that was," she said. "I never thought I was going to fall in love."

But that is what happened. When Sergeant Norat returned home and met Maria, it was love at first sight. For Maria, it was nice to meet the man whom she would encourage and write; love came more gradually. The couple courted for 2 years and married in November 1947. Sergeant Norat attended Brooklyn College for engineering and worked in the construction business after 2 years. He and Maria bought oceanfront property and built the Ocean Beach Motel in Montauk Point, NY.

Though life moved on, the wounds and aftershocks of war did not so quickly fade. Throughout the year after he returned home, if Felix heard anything that resembled a mortar whizzing by, he would instinctively take cover, a result of several close encounters with mortar fire. During the invasion in southern France, he sustained a serious injury from a mortar shell, resulting in an extended hospitalization in Italy and for which he earned a Purple Heart. In his later years, he also recounted the story of a stroll that saved his life. Felix reported

that, a few yards into a walk down the trench he shared with three other GIs from the 45th Infantry, a German shell hit close by, killing two of his friends and taking off the arm of the third. Felix often recounted seeing photos of his friends' children and lamented that they "never knew what happened to their father."

Felix and Maria sold the motel in 1984, retired, and moved to Naples, FL, a few years later, where they spent their final years in retirement reflecting on the war and on their lives together.

Let the record show that this body recognizes the faithful service of Felix and Maria Norat and their contributions to this country. May their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren accept the thanks of a grateful nation.

Thank you.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the extraordinary life and service of a true hero and dedicated public servant whose time was tragically cut short, Officer Ashley Guindon of Merrimack, NH.

Born and raised in Merrimack, NH, Officer Guindon graduated from Merrimack High School in 2005. She later joined the Marine Corps following graduation, honoring the service of her father, New Hampshire Air National Guard member David Guindon, who passed away after returning from serving in Iraq.

In her high school yearbook she wrote, "As I take flight it only makes me closer to [you] daddy. Mom, thanks for everything it'll be a long road but we can manage and it will only make [you] stronger." Underneath her picture in her high school yearbook, the caption read, "live for something rather than die for nothing." Officer Guindon did live for something. She lived for her country and she answered the call of duty.

Officer Guindon began her career with the Prince William County Police Department in Virginia and was sworn in as a police officer on February 26, 2016. Tragically, she was killed in the line of duty on her first day.

Officer Guindon responded to an emergency call on her first day of duty as an officer with the same sense of professionalism and dedication demonstrated by the very best of our law enforcement community. Officer Guindon responded quickly and compassionately, embodying her true spirit of selflessness. Her caring manner and desire to help those in need will not be forgotten.

Officer Guindon left behind her mother, Sharon, and her beloved family pug, Scout. We are deeply saddened by the loss of Officer Ashley Guindon, an extraordinary young woman who served our country and her community with honor, courage, and dedication. She

represented the very best of our law enforcement community, and it is an honor to recognize her service. She will be truly missed and my thoughts and prayers remain with her family. We will never forget Officer Guindon's service and sacrifice to keep us safe.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT JAMES "JIMMY" GERAGHTY

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the exceptional service and the extraordinary life of New Hampshire State Police Lieutenant James "Jimmy" Geraghty of Bedford, NH. I join his family, his friends, and the law enforcement community in New Hampshire in mourning Jim's passing after a courageous battle with cancer. I had the honor of working with Jim over the years, and I know that he made a positive difference for so many people in our State. Jim truly embodied a life of service, a life of heroism, and a life of integrity.

Lieutenant Geraghty served honorably in the U.S. Army for 5 years, where he was stationed at Fort Benning in Georgia, Fort Polk in Louisiana, and Fort Richardson in Arkansas. Ultimately, he earned the rank of sergeant and received an honorable discharge. After courageously serving our Nation, he then returned home to New Hampshire and embarked on a career in law enforcement, first serving as a police officer in the Hudson Police Department, after which he became a trooper for the New Hampshire State police.

Jim was a member of the New Hampshire State police for 24 years and rose to the rank of commander of the New Hampshire State police major crimes unit—a post in which he served until he became ill last year. Lieutenant Geraghty handled some of the most troubling and horrific cases. He always conducted himself with incredible dedication and commitment.

In 2009, Lieutenant Geraghty led the investigation into the brutal Mont Vernon homicide that focused on multiple, juvenile defendants and was a "complex, and extremely time-consuming investigation." Despite these challenges, Jim's thoroughness and professionalism as commander of the major crimes unit allowed the prosecution to successfully convict all the defendants involved.

As New Hampshire's former attorney general, I worked closely with the major crimes unit, and those of us who had the privilege of working with Jim saw his natural talent for leadership and keen ability to work collaboratively with others. He represented the very best of New Hampshire's law enforcement officers.

While Jim was known for his many professional accolades, he was a humble man who never wanted to discuss

his accomplishments. Instead, Jim lived by the motto "family first," which was very apparent to anyone who knew him. Jim and his wife, Valerie, were married for 30 years. Together they had four wonderful children—a son, Jimmy, and daughters, Colleen, Katie, and Erin.

I am honored to recognize Lieutenant Jim Geraghty and his tremendous contributions to New Hampshire as the commander of the major crimes unit. Jim was an amazing individual and a committed family man. There is no question that he lived his life with great dedication, courage, and integrity.

We are all deeply saddened by the untimely loss of this true hero, a dear friend, and a beloved father, Lieutenant Jim Geraghty. My thoughts and prayers remain with Valerie, Jimmy, Colleen, Katie, and Erin. I continue to offer my deepest condolences and gratitude for Jim's life and his work. Jim gave so much to New Hampshire and our Nation and truly represented what it means to be an American.●

275TH ANNIVERSARY OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Epping, NH—a thriving community in Rockingham County that is celebrating the 275th anniversary of its founding. I am proud to join citizens across the Granite State in recognition of this historic event.

The land where Epping stands today was given by the town of Exeter in 1710 as the part of the "Great Land Give-away." In 1741, Epping officially separated from the town of Exeter and was established under Governor Benning Wentworth during the westward expansion of New Hampshire.

Epping is renowned for its many brickyards that thrive off the town's supply of naturally occurring clay. While the first brickyard did not open until 1840, many previous generations learned the trade and produced their own bricks. Evidence of their hard work is still visible today and indicative of the nature of Epping's residents.

Epping has produced three New Hampshire Governors, the most notable being William Plummer. Governor Plummer was a lawyer, a Baptist preacher, a historian, and an author. He was also one of New England's first weathermen, recording weather conditions daily from 1796 to 1823.

Steeped in a rich history of hard work and dedication, Epping is a shining example of what makes New Hampshire great. This year, on the occasion of Epping's 275th anniversary of its founding, I am proud to join the more than 6,000 residents in celebrating this special milestone and Epping's many wonderful contributions to New Hampshire and our Nation.●

REMEMBERING RONDA BYRD SCOTT

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I must share some bittersweet news about a beloved Montana woman. After a long life of dedicated service and leadership CSM Ronda Scott passed away on July 7, 2016.

Ronda attended Helena High School in 1972 and receiving her associates degree from Western Montana College Ronda and went on to become an influential member of the National Guard in 1975. Ronda's dedication to her country and her tenacious spirit was rewarded when she was elevated to the rank of command sergeant major, a first for a Montana woman. She served her State, her country, and her fellow soldiers selflessly as a member of the honor guard and served in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During her 34 years of service, she received multiple honors and distinctions, including the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit Medal. After retiring in 2009, Ronda continued to dedicate her life to others. However, this time her priorities were her beloved grandchildren and the community of Helena. Not only was she a leader in uniform, she volunteered her time for events and organizations such as Race for the Cure, the American Legion, the Wine Fair, and many other veteran service organizations.

Ronda fought her final battle against bone cancer and graciously lost the ultimate fight we will all face one day. Those close to her say that, despite the circumstances, she never lost her cheerful spirit or love of life. I thank Ronda for her service and the impact she left on the city of Helena—she truly paved the way for Montana women. I hope she finds rest and that her family finds joy in all the wonderful memories she left behind.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1777. An act to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4372. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 15 Rochester Street, Bergen, New York, as the Barry G. Miller Post Office.

H.R. 4960. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 525 N Broadway in Aurora, Illinois, as the "Kenneth M. Christy Post Office Building".

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for