

coming back from taking Chase to meet her family in Florida. When she turned the corner in an airport concourse coming toward the planes, I could tell from the glow on her face and the look on her face that something special had happened in her life.

I said: Stefanie, what are you so happy about?

She said: I have found a husband. I am going to marry him. He asked me to marry him.

I was so happy for her and so happy for Chase because I had met him. They had dated while she was working in my office and later married. Chase works for the State Department and has been serving here in Washington. But he got a promotion, and he is going to the North Carolina coast, and he is going to take Stefanie with him.

I am losing the best person I have ever had doing what Stefanie has done for me. He married the best person I have ever seen, and she is doing everything in the world for him.

So I thought I would come to the floor tonight, not to list the accolades—which I could in the thousands—not to say all those platitudes we always love to hear said about ourselves or about somebody important, but to make a confession. I am in love. I am in love with Stefanie Mohler because for most of her adult life she gave her time and her effort to make me a better Member of the U.S. Senate. She supported my wife when she needed it, and I couldn't help. She supported our office when they needed it, and they couldn't help. She did all of the little things that you never ask someone to do because you think it is too little, but it is so important to make a difference in every day that goes by.

When she leaves in about 3 months, I am going to be sad. I will shed a tear or two. I will probably shed one for her before the night is over. But when she leaves, I want her to know and I want the whole Senate document to record that once in a while—every once in a while—somebody special comes along and makes a difference in your life, your effort, and your ability. Stefanie Mohler has been that for me. I will never forget her for all that she has done for me, and I will always be there for her if she ever needs me.

May God bless Stefanie Mohler, and may God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, climate disruption is the seminal challenge of our generation. It is the most significant test that human civilization on our planet has faced, and there are a lot of questions about how we are going to be able to come together as a community of nations and community of cultures to address this very significant threat to our beautiful blue-green planet.

It affects everything from our farms to our forests to our fisheries. We see

the impact in terms of disappearing glaciers, shrinking ice sheets, melting permafrost and dying coral. We see the impact on our farms, our trout streams, and our forests. We see the impact with migrating animals, migrating insects, and more powerful storms.

In response, communities across the globe are taking action. They are transforming their energy economies. They are developing aggressive strategies to save energy in their buildings, in their vehicles, and in their appliances. They are working to replace their fossil fuel energy supplies with clean and renewable energy.

How much do you know about the changes underway? Let's find out. Welcome to episode 3 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. The first question we have is, Why did American Airlines cancel 57 flights between June 20 and 22? Was it extreme temperatures? Was it a pilot strike? Was it severe storms? Was it a fuel shortage? The answer is A, extreme temperatures.

How is that the case?

When air gets hotter, it gets thinner. Thinner air provides less lift for planes to take off, and eventually the runway isn't long enough for the plane to go fast enough to get enough lift to clear the runway. Therefore, all of these flights got canceled.

It is not the first time it has happened. It happened in 2013 in Phoenix, with 18 flights canceled, but this was a pretty dramatic incident attributable to very extreme temperatures.

Let's turn to question No. 2. How long was the recent streak of record-setting monthly temperatures—meaning, for example, that a given month like May was the hottest May ever, June was the hottest June ever, and July was the hottest July ever? How many months in a row did this happen? Did it happen for 6 months in a row? Or for 12 months in a row? Is it conceivable that this streak extended beyond a year to 16 months or perhaps even for 2 years, to 24 months? Lock in your answer.

The correct answer is C, 16 months. From May 2015 through August 2016, each and every month was the hottest month on record. In September, 2016, the streak was broken, but only by a few hundredths of a degree. In fact, in September 2016, the temperature was still 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th century average.

I have a math question to put in here. If you had climate data and temperature data for 50 years, what are the odds that, by chance, 16 months in a row would be the hottest—each one the hottest among the 50 previous months? What are the odds of that? Pull out your calculators, and take 1 out of 50, and take it to the 16th power. What do you get? You get that the odds are less than 1 out of a trillion trillion. That is the odds. In other words, this didn't happen by chance.

Let's turn to question No. 3. Where in the world is the largest floating solar

project? Maybe you have never even heard of a floating solar project. There is one. In fact, there are several. Where is the world's largest? Is it in China? Is it in Brazil? Is it in India? Or is it in Australia?

By the way, here is a hint. All four of these actually have floating solar projects. Lock in your answer. Here is the answer.

The answer is A, China.

India has a small floating solar project, and it generates about 100 kilowatts. Australia's is 40 times larger, at 4 megawatts, and it is roughly the equivalent of two wind turbines. Brazil's is yet larger, at 10 megawatts. The largest floating solar project by far is in Liulong, China. The 40-megawatt solar plant is able to provide enough energy to 15,000 homes. Because it floats, it uses less energy than most solar farms because the water acts as a natural coolant.

There is something very symbolic about this largest-in-the-world floating solar project, and that is that it sits on a lake caused by the collapse of abandoned coal mines. It is as if it is saying to us: Let's transition from a fossil fuel economy to a clean, renewable energy economy, like electrons produced by solar power.

Question No. 4, last year plug-in hybrids and fully electric vehicles made up less than 1 percent of global car sales. It is a very small amount. What was the percentage in Norway?

Was it half a percent behind the world average? Was it 15 percent? Was it 37 percent? Or, perhaps, was it even more than one out of two cars sold in Norway? Lock in your answer.

Here is the right answer. The answer is C, 37 percent. When the world average is under 1 percent, it is pretty impressive that Norway is at 37 percent.

In 2016, plug-in hybrids and fully electric cars made up 37 percent of the new car sales in Norway. That is a huge increase in just a couple of years. Three years earlier, the electric vehicles—the plug-in hybrids and fully electric vehicles—accounted for only 6 percent of Norway's sales. In a short 3 years, it went from 6 percent to 37 percent. This growth is a combination of fees on gas-powered and diesel-powered cars and subsidies for electric vehicles.

Let's look at what else is happening with cars in the world. Volvo has announced that all of its new models from 2019 forward will have some form of electric drive. Then you see the growth of companies like Tesla, which only produces electric cars. It is becoming increasingly clear that the future of the global auto industry is electric.

Let's turn to question No. 5, our final question. This one hits close to home for me as a Senator from Oregon. What killed billions of baby oysters in Oregon in 2007 and 2008? Was it red tide? Red tide occurs when an algae bloom, and it is a red bloom. It discolors the water, turns it red, and releases toxins that are absorbed by the clams and

other sea life, so that we can't go out and dig up our clams and eat them for fear of getting poisoned.

Was it red tide that killed the oysters? Or was it the POMS virus, or the Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome virus, which affects Pacific oysters and can cause up to 100 percent mortality within days of initial detection? Was it sea lice—tiny jellyfish larvae that are tiny, almost invisible specks that are no larger than a grain of pepper? Or was it rising ocean acidity, caused by the emission of billions of tons of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air that get absorbed by the ocean through tidal action? Lock in your answer.

The correct answer is D, rising ocean acidity. How is this possible? How can you stand on the coast of Oregon and look out at the Pacific Ocean and envision that humankind has burned so much fossil fuel—so many fossil fuels—and that it has created so much carbon dioxide in the air and tidal action has absorbed that into the ocean and turned it into carbonic acid that it has changed the acidity of the ocean? It seems completely impossible. Yet over the last 150 years, the burning of fossil fuels by human civilization has increased the acidity of the ocean by 30 percent.

In 2007, when I was running for the U.S. Senate for the first time, the oysters started dying. The scientists got involved. They said: What is going on? They said: Is it a virus? Is it a bacterium?

It wasn't a virus. It wasn't a bacterium. After some time, they nailed it down simply to that the ocean water had become too acidic, that there was too much carbonic acid in the ocean from carbon dioxide pollution in the atmosphere. Where did that come from? From the burning of fossil fuels.

Now, the water comes into the Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery in a very large pipe, and then it has to be buffered; that is, the acidity has to be decreased before that water continues into the vats with the baby oysters. For all we know, they will have to do this forever more, until we can turn the clock back on global climate disruption.

If the oysters are being affected, what else is going to be affected in the sea chain? What is the impact on our coral reefs, which provide the foundation for many of the world's fisheries? That is something that we should rightly be very concerned about.

There you have it, folks, episode 3 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. How did you do? How many of those questions did you get right? The facts on the ground are changing very quickly as climate disruption increases and communities across the globe respond. Together we are racing the clock, and there is no time to spare. So stay engaged in the fight.

In the near future, I will bring you episode 4 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. In the meantime, if you have

a good idea for a climate disruption question, please tweet that question to me at @SenJeffMerkley, using the hashtag ClimateQ4Jeff. Together, let's keep fighting to save our planet.

Henry David Thoreau said: What use is a home if you don't have a tolerable planet to put it on?

Let's work together to make sure we have a tolerable planet, a healthy planet, not just for this generation but for our children and our great-grandchildren and the generations to follow.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 12 noon on Tuesday, July 18, there be 15 minutes of postclosure debate, equally divided in the usual form, on the Shanahan nomination; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate immediately resume consideration of the Bush nomination.

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in 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.

#### REMEMBERING DAVID DUFF

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to remember David Duff, a well-respected coal operator from Perry County, KY. David passed away on July 3 in Snowmass, CO, at the age of 67. He will be remembered by many for his kindness and generosity, especially toward the elderly, children, and our Nation's veterans.

David owned Pine Branch Coal Company, employing hundreds of miners in eastern Kentucky and serving as a leader in the industry. He was dearly loved by many in his community, as was shown by the many signs posted along the road leading to his home in the days after his passing.

Elaine and I send our condolences to David's wife, Susan, their children Lori and Ryan, their grandchildren, and all

of their family and friends. We hope that their memories of David will help them through this time of grief.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHIP HUTCHESON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate my friend Chip Hutcheson, publisher of the Times Leader in Princeton, KY, on his retirement after more than four decades in the newspaper business. Throughout Chip's long career, he was the quintessential community journalist who saw, as one colleague noted, "the newspaper as both a champion for and a guardian of the community." When he retired at the end of June, Chip was named the recipient of the National Newspaper Association's James O. Amos Award. He was only the second Kentuckian to ever win what is known as one of the two "highest and most distinguished tributes in community journalism."

Chip's relationship with the Princeton-based paper began at only 10 months old when his parents purchased the then-Princeton Leader and began to instill in him a love of the trade. Beginning at the age of 8, Chip spent time at the paper, watching his parents work. In junior high, Chip joined the team to proofread a section of the paper before it was sent to the printer. Later, he proudly wrote that, "Newspaper ink runs in my veins." During high school and college, Chip honed his skills writing for local and campus papers. After graduation, he entered the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam. When he returned, Chip went back to his trade and began a decades-long career of journalistic excellence.

Chip became the publisher of the Princeton Leader upon his parents' retirement in 1976. As local papers merged, Chip became the publisher of the Times Leader in 1992, continuing his family legacy. Chip admitted that his columns may have been a little "old school," but he proudly followed the tradition set by his father and his other role models of local community journalism. He used his writings to give readers an inside look into the lives of his family and community.

Although his efforts were always dedicated to readers in western Kentucky, Chip was recognized across the Commonwealth and the Nation for his outstanding work. He served on the board of directors of the Kentucky Press Association, including 1 year as its president in 2010. The Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame inducted Chip into its elite ranks in 2012, in recognition of his distinguished career of leadership and service. More recently, Chip served as president of the National Newspaper Association.

Chip has also been a great advocate for families seeking to adopt children internationally. With his wife, Karen, and grandchildren, Lemlem and Kashiku, Chip came to my office several years ago asking for relief from the many regulatory burdens in the