

enabled scientists to discover more than 2 new million variants in our genetic makeup, many of which can cause serious health problems. We will make leaps and bounds in understanding Down syndrome, autism, and cancer, and devising effective gene therapies for a host of diseases.

Dr. Phillippy put it this way:

It is really easy to get up and go to work in the morning because our work is making such a difference.

What a dedicated public servant.

In management excellence, Megan Meacham, Allison Hutchings, and Sarah O'Donnell, Director, Deputy Director, and Team Lead respectively at the Department of Health and Human Services' Rural Strategic Initiatives Division under the Health Resources and Services Administration, created the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program to provide grant funding for a wide array of innovative and effective opioid use prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

The program, which they established 5 years ago, has served more than 2 million people each year in more than 1,800 rural counties across 47 States and 2 territories. As Megan Meacham has stated, "We are here to help and passionate to serve. Even when we hit a roadblock, we find a way around it."

We know the challenges of opioid addiction. Our public servants are answering the challenge.

In management excellence, Gloria Morgan Shepherd, Executive Director, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, is one of three DOT senior managers being honored for helping to craft and implement the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

We were proud to pass that bill. It wasn't so easy to implement it. Dedicated public servants at the Department of Transportation are making sure our legislation carries out its intended purpose. Thanks to their work, DOT initiated 1,887 transportation projects last year that were awarded nearly \$10 billion in discretionary funds on top of \$82.3 billion in formula funding that will help modernize the Nation's highways, bridges, shipping ports, railroads, and airports.

Gloria Morgan Shepherd and her colleagues implemented 76 new or expanded grant programs and initiated bridge repair programs, a national electric vehicle charging network, and a host of safety initiatives. That is what we intended. Our public servants at DOT are carrying that out.

In management excellence, Rear Admiral Nancy Hann, Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Commissioned Corps and Director of NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, has implemented policies to curb sexual harassment, assault, and bullying among employees aboard NOAA's marine fleet and aircraft, creating a safer workplace and changing the organization's culture.

Admiral Hann, who has been with NOAA for 26 years, said:

It is really important for everyone to have a voice and to feel comfortable physically, emotionally, and mentally in the workplace. I have the responsibility to be the voice of the people who don't feel like they have a voice or are too scared. I take that responsibility very seriously.

We are all better off because of Admiral Hann's work.

The Paul A. Volcker Career Achievement Award: Dr. Eric J. "Rocky" Feuer, Chief, Statistical Research and Applications Branch, Surveillance Research Program, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, has developed new methods to estimate the chances of individuals being diagnosed with cancer at different times during their lives.

Over the past four decades, he has designed a sophisticated system using statistical analysis to understand national cancer trends better, leading to significant prevention, screening, and treatment options that have benefited millions of Americans.

In 2000, he created the Cancer Intervention and Surveillance Modeling Network, allowing statisticians and scientists to address critical cancer-related questions collaboratively. He has stated that the statistical analysis he has engaged in over the course of his career is "backbencher type of work," but added it has helped "move people to action" and improve healthcare.

Yes, we are dealing with cancer challenges in our communities, and people like Dr. Feuer are making a huge difference.

Safety, security, and international affairs: Lisa Hsiao, Assistant Director, Consumer Protection Branch, Department of Justice, has protected the public from harmful or misleading trade practices by businesses across a wide range of industries, including Altria, R.J. Reynolds, Facebook, and Dish Network, securing some of the largest fines in U.S. history and requiring the disclosure of important safety and privacy information.

As Dr. Lisa Hsiao has said, "I'm proud that through these cases we have created law that can be built upon. As a lawyer, it's pretty rare to be able to make precedent that both protects the public and effects good public policy."

Protecting consumers, protecting the public, that is what public servants do.

Management excellence: Robert Gorman, Senior Trial Attorney, Department of Transportation, is one of three DOT officials in the Office of Aviation Consumer Protection who has led an aggressive campaign to require airlines to compensate air travelers for airfare and other related costs for canceled or significantly delayed flights due to circumstances within the airlines' control. The campaign has produced a record \$8.4 million in fines and more than \$1 billion in passenger refunds.

Robert Gorman and his colleagues looked for patterns to determine if an

airline were repeatedly being unresponsive or noncompliant with respect to consumer complaints, leading the Aviation Consumer Protection Office to issue two regulatory notices, launch investigations, bring enforcement actions, and in some instances, reach settlements for travelers to be reimbursed.

Thanks to Robert Gorman and his colleagues, the skies are finally friendlier for fliers.

Science, Technology, and the Environment: Dr. Sarah Nelson, Director of Defense Programs Office of Experimental Sciences, National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, played a leading role in overseeing scientists who, for the first time in history, produced a fusion reaction that produced more energy than it required, a breakthrough with enormous implications for abundant clean energy and national defense. When harnessed and expanded to utility scale, fusion energy will produce reliable electricity without releasing greenhouse gases or producing radioactive waste.

Dr. Nelson started as an intern at the NNSA's Lawrence Livermore research laboratory.

She said:

It was a tremendously influential experience for me, but I had no idea that I'd be sitting in this chair 20 years later when such a scientific breakthrough would be accomplished. If we are able to use this technology someday to enable clean energy, [it would be a game-changer].

She is right on that.

So we can debate the proper role and size of our government, but I hope we can all agree that we want the best and brightest to serve. These individuals and their fellow honorees represent the best our Federal workforce has to offer. But we should be grateful for all public servants who go to work each day determined to make a positive difference for their fellow Americans, and we should be grateful all year long.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS ANDREW CHAPOTON

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I thank the Presiding Officer for that heartfelt welcome here on the Senate floor.

I know the Presiding Officer is excited, and I know the pages are excited. Heck, half of America is excited because, once again, it is Thursday afternoon, and I am back on the floor giving probably my favorite speech of the week, the "Alaskan of the Week." As many of you know, it is an opportunity for me as I love to come down to the Senate floor and brag about somebody in my State who makes it such a great State. Usually, it is somebody who is doing something good for their local community, maybe for the State, maybe for the country, maybe for the world.

Boy, we have had so many famous Alaskans of the Week, but this one—

this one, my colleagues—is really special. It is about real special heroism that we see in Alaska a lot. It is about a young man named Andrew Chapoton. I am going to talk a lot about Andrew—he is an Army soldier up in Alaska—and how his bravery and heroism saved some lives in a way that is just remarkable. But I always like to begin my speech by talking a little bit about what is going on in Alaska.

I try to get home with Julie, my wife.

Hi, Julie.

She is up in the Gallery. Am I allowed to do that? I am doing it anyway.

Anyway, pretty much every weekend we have been home. Boy, over the last couple of weekends, I was out on an epic—epic—Kodiak hunting trip. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to partake in one of our State's most cherished traditions. It was an experience I won't forget. I will never forget it.

Kristin Wilson, if you are watching, I know you love bears, and I love bears too. She is a big fan of the "Alaskan of the Week."

But I also like to talk about what is going on with the weather.

It is still pretty cold in a lot of places, but the Sun is higher in the sky. It is actually getting really high. The days are getting longer and longer. Today, in Anchorage, the Sun rose at 5:30 a.m., and it will set tonight at around 10:30 p.m., gaining more than 5 minutes since yesterday. So sunlight is really increasing rapidly. Birds are migrating by the tens of thousands. The excitement of spring is in the air. Winter is finally retreating. We love winter in Alaska, but, boy, we had a long, cold winter in most places.

So, if you are watching, by the way, in the Gallery or on TV, come up to Alaska. It will be the trip of a lifetime. I guarantee you it will be the trip of a lifetime.

Now let's get to our Alaskan of the Week, SFC Andrew Chapoton, and the heroic actions he took last May—about a year ago—that earned him the U.S. Army Soldier's Medal. That is the highest honor a soldier can receive for an act of heroism in a noncombat situation.

Andrew was born and raised in the township of Clinton, MI, but he knew that he was always going to join the military. Being in the military, from his perspective and his family's perspective, was a good, honorable thing to do. Of course, he is right. His father fought in Vietnam, and his grandfather fought in World War II. Both of his sisters are in the Army. So he enlisted when he got out of high school and did a number of deployments—three tours to Iraq, a deployment to Haiti—and then was stationed in Alaska from 2015 to 2018 as part of the 4th Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. It is what we call in Alaska the 4-25. I am a marine, but the 4-25 sure is one of my favorite units in the entire U.S. military, but that is a story for another day. I love the 4-25.

Andrew and his wife love Alaska—the hiking, the camping.

He said:

Everything [is] available right outside my front door.

So they were determined to come back to Alaska. They bought a house in beautiful Eagle River, outside of Anchorage. They did come back. In 2021, he came back to Alaska where we now have the storied U.S. 11th Airborne Division. A lot of people don't know that. We stood up an airborne division in Alaska just last year, so now we have the 82nd Airborne Division on the east coast and the 11th Airborne Division in Alaska. Andrew and his wife, now with two children and another one on the way, love Alaska.

So what did Andrew do to win the Army Soldier's Medal? Here is how the Army described it in the summary of that medal:

Sergeant First Class Andrew Chapoton voluntarily risked his own life in the heroic pursuit of saving others at a deadly car wreck near Seward, Alaska. His extraordinary act of valor exemplified the highest standards of selfless service and character as he repeatedly put himself in mortal danger to save others trapped in a horrific . . . car wreck. SFC Chapoton dove into the burning vehicles again and again to save three trapped occupants, without [any] regard for his own life [or his own safety].

So that is the summary.

Here is the longer version of why this great American, great Alaskan, is today's Alaskan of the Week.

Last May, Andrew and his wife had an out-of-town visitor who wanted to go whale watching. OK. That is something we do in Alaska. It is amazing. It is a great thing to do in our State. So one of the great places to whale watch is out of Seward, which is a few hours south of Anchorage. He almost didn't go as he had done that tour often, but in his words, he caved and said: Let's go do it.

So they all went. Their friend, his spouse, and their two kids got in the car and headed to Seward. They had a great time. By the way, it is another great thing to do in Alaska—whale watching. They saw a lot of whales, and they were celebrating the trip on the way back.

Then something tragic—horrible—happened. On the Seward Highway, two cars collided—a Jeep and a Dodge Dakota—almost right in front of his car. He had to swerve to miss them. It was a nasty, horrible crash. Debris went flying; smoke was billowing from both cars; and gasoline was dripping out of these cars. But Andrew didn't continue to drive. He pulled over on the shoulder, jumped out of his car, and without thinking, in his words, "as cliché and corny as it sounds, 18 years of training kicked in, and I ran toward the scene of the accident." That is what Andrew said. As a result, he saved the lives literally of three people.

Now, he doesn't even have a memory of how he got from his car to the accident—training, bravery, heroism—but he does remember approaching the first

car, the Dakota. He was flagging people down and yelling for a medic. There were three people in the Dakota, but none of them were moving, and the car was bursting into flames. He tried to smash the driver's door open. He had to move the camping equipment that had fallen on the driver, and he was able to get her safely out of the car.

At this point, the car was engulfed in flames, but he went back in and got another person out of the car and to safety, which was so difficult because the car door had been smashed and crushed. Unfortunately—and we know this is hard for Andrew. I hope he is watching, by the way, and his family—he went back again but could not save the third person. The door was also crushed, and he couldn't open it. He couldn't find a pulse. He says it haunts him to this day.

But, again, Andrew's instincts and training kicked in, and he transitioned to getting the driver out of the other burning car, the burning Jeep. After he got that passenger out, he performed Combat Lifesaver triage and lifesaving medical care for these three very seriously wounded Americans.

This story of heroism doesn't end there.

Both cars, by now, had turned into raging infernos. Flaming liquid was flowing down the road and toward one of the injured passengers. With the help of another Good Samaritan, Andrew moved one of the gravely injured passengers away from the impending explosion of this car. Then he shielded her body when the car did explode. Debris and shrapnel were flying everywhere. Even after the fire department arrived, Andrew continued to take the lead in performing lifesaving medical treatment.

Eventually, a Life Flight helicopter arrived to take the seriously injured individuals to the hospital. Andrew stayed and gave his statement to the troopers. He handed his keys to his wife, got back in his car, and drove back home several miles—a couple of hours—to Anchorage. It was a quiet ride.

He said:

I used up every single ounce of adrenalin that was in my 38-year-old body.

His children saw much of what happened, and they are proud of their father, and Andrew is proud and so deserving to receive the Army Soldier's Medal. But he did say he would trade that in a thousand times over if only all the passengers had survived.

These are the kind of people who live in Alaska—brave, selfless, and heroic. And these are the kind of people—by the way, America—who make up our military. Not every American citizen would have done what Andrew just did. As a matter of fact, I would say most people probably wouldn't—people who risk their lives, their own lives, whether it is protecting Americans at home or people abroad, so that others could live. That is what our military members do.

This is how the Army summed up this heroic action:

SFC Chapoton's ability to perform these heroic acts under extreme pressure while simultaneously taking control of the scene [of this horrific crash] is a testament to his [U.S.] Army values. [Fundamentally] understanding the extreme personal risk to his own life, SFC Chapoton selflessly endangered himself again and again to save American lives. He risked his own safety to help avert a catastrophic outcome. Without his selfless courage in the face of grave danger, more lives would have been lost.

So thank you, Andrew, for your bravery, your heroism, your example, not just to your friends and family or to Alaskans but to all Americans and all veterans. Thank you for protecting our Nation. Thank you for volunteering to serve. Thank you for making your home in Alaska. Thank you for your heroic actions on that day. We want to congratulate you for being awarded the U.S. Army Soldier's Medal, one of the highest honors a soldier can achieve and, certainly, Andrew, one of the highest honors you can achieve in the U.S. Senate: being our Alaskan of the Week. Great job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I do the wrap-up and lay down some stuff we are doing next week, I would like to talk about the week we just had.

As Democrats here in the Senate work to continue to avoid default, the No. 1 issue affecting our country has also been a very productive week in the Senate. So much has happened around the country over the past few days that it may have overshadowed just how busy things have been in the Senate this week and the kind of productive week that we have had on many important issues that affect the American people. I am very proud of what we were able to accomplish.

On the floor, with the return of Senator FEINSTEIN, the Senate today advanced Bradley Garcia to serve as circuit court judge for the DC Circuit—one of the most important Federal courts in the country—and Members should be ready to vote on confirmation come Monday. That is probably the second-most important court in the country, and we are appointing a very good person as circuit court judge there.

Off the floor, the Judiciary Committee was busy as well. The Judiciary Committee just reported out six more judicial nominees for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench. Judges were a top priority last Congress, and they remain a top priority in this Congress. We are hoping to move forward on many more judges.

Also, yesterday, the Commerce Committee, under the able leadership of MARIA CANTWELL, also reported out the Railway Safety Act—sponsored by Senators BROWN and VANCE of Ohio—with bipartisan support. This is significant.

After the derailment of East Palestine, the need for the rail safety reform became clear as day, and Americans are demanding that the Senate take action.

The Railway Safety Act is a major step forward for avoiding accidents similar to the one in East Palestine and improving rail safety across the country. It is going to make all our railroads safer. We have all seen so many of these derailments, often because the railroads weren't doing what they were supposed to. This act is a big step forward in requiring them to do so. I look forward to working with both sides to bring the Railway Safety Act to the floor.

And, today, the Senate Banking Committee also held a hearing, a big step on our bipartisan SAFE Banking Act that we have worked on together, Mr. President.

The SAFE Banking Act would ensure cannabis businesses have equal access to critical banking infrastructure in States that have legalized cannabis. We have all heard the tales of small businesses, and even larger ones, walking around with a huge amount of cash because they can't do banking. SAFE Banking would change that and allow them to bank as other businesses because it is legal in many States.

And I am working to ensure we include criminal justice provisions in SAFE Banking Plus—most importantly, the expungement of criminal records for certain low-level marijuana offenses.

We have made a lot of good bipartisan progress on SAFE Banking last Congress. And after today's hearing, we hope there will be a markup on this bill in the near future. We are really moving forward in a record way on a very important issue.

Finally, last, but certainly not least, the HELP Committee also advanced PBM and generic drug-pricing reform. It will reform the PBM system, which we know is one of the reasons the cost of drugs is so high. Hopefully, with the reform, the cost of prescription drugs like insulin for non-Medicare Americans will come down. We reduced insulin to \$35 for those on Medicare, but we need to work on reducing insulin costs for everybody, and this bill is a major step forward in that direction.

So it has been a busy week—significant progress on many issues: judicial nominees; rail safety; SAFE Banking reform; and PBM reform, which can lower insulin costs for millions of Americans. It has been a good, strong week. And I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for moving forward.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations: all nominations placed on the Secretary's Desk in the Coast Guard; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that

the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE COAST GUARD

*PN440-1 COAST GUARD nominations (314) beginning ALAINA M. ACCUMANNO, and ending KRISTEN E. ZELMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 14, 2023.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and 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.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. OE-23. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 21-52 of July 30, 2021.

Sincerely,

MIKE MILLER

(For James A. Hursch, Director)

Enclosure.