

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT OMAR A. JONES

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to remember a fallen hero, Nebraska Army National Guard Sergeant Omar A. Jones of Maywood, NE.

Sergeant Jones served as an electrician in the 623rd Engineer Company, Nebraska Army National Guard, out of Wahoo, Nebraska. Sergeant Jones died at Forward Operating Base Deh Dadi in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, on July 18, 2011.

Omar grew up in Mississippi and lived in Bogota, Colombia for many years. He graduated from high school in Colorado and chose to enter the Army instead of pursuing a college athletic scholarship. He served two tours in Iraq. One as an infantryman in the active duty Army, and one with the Nebraska Army National Guard. His love of country compelled him to seek an assignment in Afghanistan. He volunteered and even changed units and developed new skills for this opportunity.

In October 2010, he deployed to Afghanistan with the 623rd Engineering Company. It was a tough decision to deploy again because his wife Ava and two children had become the center of his life. But, it was for their freedom he chose to serve again overseas.

His commanders and fellow Soldiers recall Sergeant Jones as kind, friendly, and helpful. They say they counted on Sergeant Jones for a big smile and a willingness to listen. He loved being a soldier. A former commander put it this way:

He had the biggest heart of any soldier I knew.

His decorations and badges earned during a distinguished career over three combat tours speak to his dedication and bravery. He received the Combat Infantry Badge, Combat Action Badge, Marksmanship Qualification Badge (Expert), Driver and Mechanic Badge, Overseas Service Bar (2), Army Commendation Medal (2), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device (2), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and the NATO Medal.

I cannot put into words how the death of Sergeant Jones will impact the lives of those closest to him. Nebraska is honored to call him one of our own, and I know Nebraskans in Maywood and Wellfleet will provide his family with care and love during this difficult time.

Today I join the family and friends of Sergeant Jones in mourning the death of their husband, son, father, and friend. I ask that God be with all those serving in uniform, especially the brave men and women on the front lines of battle. May God bless them and

their families and bring them home to us safely.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Utah.

TRIBUTE TO COLLEEN MONSON BANGERTER

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I stand to address this body to honor the life of one of Utah's great citizens.

A good friend of mine is former Utah Governor Norman Bangerter, who announced on Saturday that his beloved wife of 58 years had passed away after a long-time battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Colleen Monson Bangerter, having been born in 1935, was the mother of six children, the mother also of one foster son, and in many respects was a friend to all of Utah's 3 million residents.

She served faithfully in many capacities, including as PTA president and other offices within the PTA. She also served faithfully in a variety of positions as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Just a few years ago, she and her husband, former Governor Bangerter, served as they presided over the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in South Africa. They worked hand in hand throughout their entire lives—in raising their children, in running Governor Bangerter's campaigns, and in running the State throughout his time as Governor, which wasn't an easy time for our State.

During Governor Bangerter's two terms in office, our State faced significant financial difficulties, faced significant flooding challenges, and the Bangerters weathered these adverse conditions well, serving as standing examples to all the citizens of Utah for what it means to rise to the challenge of adversity.

Colleen Bangerter was someone who had friends in many corners, and she also had many talents, some of which are not known by everyone, including the fact that she was the State hopscotch champion in the State of Utah in 1947. There are not many First Ladies in the United States who can claim that distinction, and she definitely did. She was also pleased to have been the recipient of the highest award that can be granted by the Boy Scouts of America, which she received just a few years ago. But of all the honors, including the honors that went along with being the First Lady of the State of Utah and serving with someone who, in my opinion, was one of the great Governors ever to serve our State, her greatest honor, her greatest prize was that of her family.

She loved being a mother, loved each of her 6 children, their 30 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. We as Utahns mourn the loss of this great citizen of our State. We mourn the loss of this friend. Our thoughts and our prayers go out to former Governor Bangerter and his family.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

REMEMBERING COLLEEN MONSON BANGERTER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to pay tribute today to a remarkable woman, quintessential wife and mother, and superb first lady for the State of Utah—Colleen Monson Bangerter. Sadly she passed away on the evening of Friday, July 29, 2011, from the effects of Alzheimer's disease. She was at home, the place she loved to be with her husband former Utah Governor Norman H. Bangerter.

Colleen was a wonderful human being who was always willing to serve others. She served as Utah's first lady from 1985–1993, while her husband Norman H. Bangerter was the Governor. During her years as first lady she undertook many causes close to her heart, including teenage drug use, and challenges facing women and families. She hosted a yearly drug awareness conference for teens and took First Lady Nancy Reagan's Just Say No Program to every corner of the State. Additionally she hosted an annual conference on strengthening families to address the important challenges affecting the health and well-being of families across our great State.

She stood by her husband's side as he led Utah through a very important time in our State's history. They advocated for economic development and she was a tremendous ambassador for Utah as they met with leaders throughout the Nation and even overseas encouraging new business development.

Colleen not only excelled at the initiatives she undertook for our state, she also served in many capacities as she raised her children including the PTA, and in many important positions for her church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Colleen and Norm presided over the Johannesburg, South Africa Mission from 1996–1999. In this role she was a kind, and loving asset to the many missionaries who joined them in the work in South Africa.

Colleen and Norm raised six children and one foster son. They now have 30 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. She was the light of her family and could always be found in the middle of the fun. She enjoyed spending time at their cabin in beautiful Utah, as well as their second home in St. George. She always made people feel welcome and embraced many who crossed their paths.

Colleen Bangerter will be very missed by her wonderful husband Norm and their family. There was a special warmth and goodness about this lady and I will never forget her twinkling eyes and bright smile. She was kind to all she met, and was a partner in every sense of the word to her husband. Elaine and I love Norm and Colleen very much, and hope that Norm and his