

forged countless friendships with those around him and made immeasurable contributions to the community.

Each and every day, Bob went above and beyond the call of duty to help Members of Congress, staff members and Capitol visitors find their way, whether it was through complex parliamentary procedure or to the nearest elevator in the Capitol. His vast knowledge of the Senate's operations was garnered from decades of public service. Following Bob's days as a page, he served in the Democratic cloakroom, and was later promoted to deputy sergeant-at-arms, deputy assistant under-secretary of legislative affairs at the Department of the Treasury, and Democratic staff director for the Committee on House Administration. Bob retired from the Hill in 2002, having accrued enough years of service to make him eligible for retirement. Too young and active, however, Bob returned to work just months later at the Jefferson Consulting Group, where he quickly made a name for himself.

My dad, former Senator David Pryor, first met Bob during page school and saw in him the same quality as everyone else: a passion to help others. Throughout the years, they remained close friends. Bob traveled to Arkansas to campaign several times for my dad, and later he joined me in Little Rock on the campaign trail. Even with all his qualifications and prestige, no job was too small. I remember him canvassing in the Arkansas heat, stuffing envelopes and hammering yard signs into the ground. And no job was too big or difficult. Following my campaign, Bob helped me coordinate inauguration events and setup my office, and he helped orient a number of my staff members who were new to Washington and the Senate. His willingness to do anything for anybody at anytime is what made Bob loved by so many.

Jim English, a former assistant Secretary of the Senate, said Bob was "the kind of person who would give you the shirt off his back. He was a man with loyalty to the Senate and to his friends."

Longtime friend Bill Norton who worked with Bob in the cloakroom and earlier as a page added, "Bob loved Congress as an institution; those were his happiest days."

While he took his work seriously, Bob was also known to enjoy his weekends with friends and family on the *Margaret B* while fishing on the Chesapeake. It was on such a day when Captain Bob was enjoying the afternoon on his boat, having just caught a 36-inch striper, when God chose to take Bob home.

Bob was also a devoted family man. As good as a friend he was to us, Bob was an even better son, brother and uncle. I want to express my deepest condolences to the Bean family: his mother Margaret; brothers, John, Kenneth and Brian; sister-in-law Patti; niece Rachel and nephew Christian.

Bob's commitment to service provides inspiration to us all. We will miss

Bob Bean. We will remember him well. We will celebrate his life, and we will try to live up to his dedication and generosity.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO FRENCHBURG JOB CORPS

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to the Frenchburg Job Corps Center in Frenchburg, KY. On June 24, 2004 this center will celebrate a milestone anniversary. For 30 years the Frenchburg Job Corps Center has taught a variety of skills to our Kentucky workforce, helping the men and women of Kentucky to improve their job skills and their general well being.

I am grateful for all the work that the Frenchburg Center has done over the last 30 years. Their contribution to the Commonwealth of Kentucky should not be underestimated. Through the work of this center many men and women have been enabled to become valuable pillars of their local and state economies.

The skills that these men and women learned range from the culinary arts to apartment maintenance. But all of these skills have been of inestimable value when it comes to doing one of the most important things in life, providing for yourself, your family and your community.

I believe the Commonwealth would not be the same without the dedication of these men and women and I thank the Frenchburg Job Corps for its 30 years of dedication to the workforce of the Kentucky. •

TRIBUTE TO JIM AYERS

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the extraordinary efforts of one man who exemplifies the spirit which makes Tennessee the volunteer state.

That man is Jim Ayers of Parsons, TN. Parsons sits at the intersection of Highway 412 and 69, just west of the banks of the Tennessee River. It is the largest town in rural Decatur County. At 18, Jim left home to attend Memphis State University. Working 30 hours a week, he paid his way through college, graduating with a degree in business administration. Jim was the first in his family to earn a college degree. He went on to success in a number of industries—from banking and real estate to manufacturing and health care.

Many American success stories would end right there. For Jim, this was just the beginning.

In 1999 Decatur's Riverside High School graduated 129 students and sent 36 on to post-secondary education. That's 27 percent. This month 101 of 111, 90 percent, of students graduating from Riverside, will go on to 2 and 4-year colleges and universities.

The difference between 1999 and 2004? Jim Ayers.

You see, Jim realized the opportunities he had because his parents had motivated him to further his education. To perpetuate this encouragement, Jim created the Ayers Foundation Scholars Program. The program supplies counselors to assist every student with college counseling and planning and grants renewable scholarships of up to \$4,000 to any Decatur County student who wants to go on to college.

This year Jim's foundation disbursed \$578,000 to more than 300 young men and women attending 13 different schools. To meet any remaining tuition bills, counselors found an additional \$800,000 in Federal and State grants and other scholarships. Since its inception, the foundation has also spent in excess of \$175,000 to help 68 teachers from Decatur and Henderson counties to obtain masters degrees or plus 30 certification.

Last week at a dinner in honor of this first class of Ayers' foundation graduates, Jim announced the foundation will begin funding scholarships for students at Henderson County's Scotts Hill High School. In addition, Jim committed to extend funding for advanced degrees for teachers in Perry County.

Decatur's favorite son came home to make this a place where the American dream thrives.

Mr. President, I have spent a lot of time thinking about leadership, character, and education. Men like Jim serve as examples to us all of the opportunity education provides and the difference one man can make in the fabric of the American character.

Thank you for allowing me to honor my friend Jim Ayers. •

TRIBUTE TO LINDA KURZ

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, Sieglinde Kurz received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Fontbonne College, St. Louis, Missouri in 1961 and her Masters Degree in Health Care Management from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois in 1976.

Linda Kurz started her career with Department of Veterans Affairs in November 1965 as a Research Chemist in Renal Hypertension Research at the St. Louis VA Medical Center.

Linda Kurz, during her government career was the Administrative Assistant to the Associate Director, Hines, Illinois; Associate Director, VA Medical Center, Tomah, Wisconsin; Associate Deputy Regional Director, Northeastern Region, Albany, NY; Associate Director, VA Medical Center, Marion, Illinois; Director, Construction Project Coordination and Budget, VA Headquarters, Washington, DC; Director, VA Medical Center, Marion, Illinois. She left the Marion VAMC to accept the position of Director at the St. Louis VAMC.

Linda Kurz served as Director of the St. Louis VA for 5 years and 8 months from May 1998 through January 2004, one of the largest and most complex VA facilities in the Nation.