

only possible if concerned Americans register as an organ donor and, subsequently, inform their family members and loved ones of their intention to donate.

That is why, as National Eye Donation Month approaches, I encourage my colleagues to work with their local eye banks, and the Eye Bank Association of America, to promote eye donation and provide more people, like Teresa Walton, with the miracle cornea transplantation provides. There is no gift more meaningful, or more profoundly important, than the gift of sight.

TRIBUTE TO W. DON NELSON

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise today to express my best wishes and appreciation to a staff member who is leaving my office after many years of public service.

W. Don Nelson has served with distinction as my State director in Lincoln, NE, since I was elected in 2000, which is no small job in a State that stretches 500 miles.

Although we share the same last name, we do not share a family relationship. We do share a passion for public service. W. Don, as he is known throughout Nebraska, has a long history of bipartisan government service at the highest levels.

Mr. Nelson worked for former Congressman Douglas Bereuter when he was director of the Nebraska State Office of Planning and Programming. He also served as a chief policy adviser for former Nebraska Governors Norbert Tiemann, Jim Exon, and former Wyoming Governor Ed Herschler and was chief of staff for Nebraska Governor Bob Kerrey. Before Don became my State director he was in the private sector serving as managing director for the Nebraska office of a major national securities firm.

To say that W. Don Nelson was an important and vital part of the staff for those of us whom he served is an understatement. His background as a lawyer and investment banker made him invaluable in government service but his abilities stretched far beyond that.

W. Don Nelson is one of the most fiercely loyal and completely trustworthy individuals I have ever had the privilege to know. His intellect and depth of knowledge on virtually any issue is uncanny. He has the courage to confront adversaries at the highest levels and the compassion to help those who are less fortunate. He is a gracious host and gentleman to friends, and a devoted father and husband to a loving family.

W. Don may be retiring but not to a rocking chair. The W. Don Nelson that so many Nebraskans know will never sit back and rest on his laurels. His so-called retirement will be in front of a computer screen and stalking the halls of government buildings visiting with elected and appointed officials from the other side of the desk, as a reporter.

After answering questions from reporters for much of his career, he will be asking the questions. He is crossing over to start his own newspaper, called Prairie Fire, in Lincoln, NE. Its objective is to be the progressive voice of the Great Plains offering thoughtful, bipartisan public discourse about all matters relating to politics and the arts and, I imagine, Don's passion, the environment.

All of us will miss Don, his quirky sense of humor, his vintage neckties, his sports cars, and even his outward display of pride in Cornhusker Country for his alma maters, the University of Florida and Florida State University.

We wish him every success in his new role as editor, publisher, and writer.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE PROGRAM RECOGNITION

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I am honored to speak to you today about the wonderful work being done in a school in my home State—Big Sky High School in Missoula, MT. Big Sky High School is a leader in science education and a wonderful example of how creativity and innovation can prepare students for the 21st century.

To the students, teachers, parents, and administrators at Big Sky High School, I commend you for your dedication and imagination. Big Sky High School should be an example to schools all over the country of what we can do if we make a real commitment to teaching our students the skills necessary to keep America competitive in the global economy.

Big Sky's science programs emphasize real-world applications and collaboration. For example, in the elective "Advanced Problems in Science," students work on research projects and learn how to document their results and present them to the community. Many of these projects are featured in science fairs and other competitions, giving students experience and connecting them to the scientific community.

Science teacher Jim Harkins, who has taught at Big Sky for 24 years, is an example of how a great teacher can inspire students to go into the sciences. Let me tell you about Jim's goals for science class in his own words. "I try to tell the students that the classroom, text book setting is not real science," he said. "Science is not learned in books while sitting at desks. In this class, Advanced Problems in Science, our goal is to simulate their curiosity in a real-life science setting. This program provides Montana students with competitiveness on national and international levels."

To see the success of this program, you need to look no further than the students themselves. Big Sky alumnus Jayce Getz was an active participant in these science programs and he was re-

cently honored with one of only 30 mathematical sciences postdoctoral research fellowships from the National Science Foundation. Jayce will begin a professorship at Princeton next fall. Jayce attributes some of his current success to his participation in Big Sky's science program. "Kids in Missoula, Montana, can and do get involved with important research in the sciences," he said. "The trick is to get started early on."

Yet at Big Sky, kids do start early. The halls are filled with the future scientific leaders of America. Students study the genetic code of a cyanobacterial strain and test sail designs in wind tunnels by using an innovative interdisciplinary approach.

By nurturing the curiosity and creativity of these students, Big Sky teachers like Jim Harkins ensure America's youth are given the education and tools necessary to succeed in the 21st century. I applaud Jim and his students. They are examples of what makes Montana's school system the best in the Nation.

To Mr. Harkins and students of Big Sky High School, I extend my congratulations. •

RETIREMENT OF RICK SHAPIRO

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Rick Shapiro, who recently retired as executive director of the Congressional Management Foundation.

I became acquainted with Rick early in my Senate career, when I asked Rick to help me and my staff strengthen the management of my Senate office. That began a very useful relationship with Rick and CMF.

Under his leadership, CMF grew in size, scope, and impact. Rick has made CMF an integral part of the early organization of nearly every new House and Senate office, through CMF's practical publications and its role in new office orientations.

For many offices like mine, Rick used his skills in organizational management to help members and their senior staff improve how they run their offices and serve their constituents. His confidential counsel and evaluation, and that of a strong staff that he recruited and supported, has allowed many Senators and Members of Congress to focus on their jobs as legislators, with the confidence that their offices would be well run.

Rick also used his extensive knowledge of strategic planning to ensure offices have a strategic vision and the means to deliver on that vision. He and his staff have facilitated hundreds of staff retreats, helping House and Senate offices produce ambitious, but realistic, plans for their work.

Rick was the driving force behind CMF's research into cutting edge topics. For example, CMF's research and guidance on the Internet and electronic communications has been the single most important force in bringing many