

TROOP THANKSGIVING
RECOGNITION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I want to share with you a story of Thanksgiving that touched my heart. I am doing it just before Christmas to have you think about the effect of holidays on people away from home and especially troops stationed away from home and something you might do on a very small scale.

Two years ago, a barber in Cheyenne, WY, was cutting the hair of a young man from F. E. Warren Air Force Base and asked him what he was going to do for Thanksgiving. The airman guessed he would be spending it on the base. The barber, Glen Chavez said, Why don't you have Thanksgiving with my wife and I? Then Glen decided he better tell his wife. When he did she said, "Glen, I know you. It won't be just one and it won't be limited to a dozen. I'll help, but we need to find someplace bigger than our home." So Glen asked the Masonic Lodge if he could use their building. They said yes and Glen with the help of some friends fed 300 people from the base. Yes, the base serves a Thanksgiving dinner, but it is not the same if you eat it in the same mess hall you eat in every day. Chavez said he started the event to combat the loneliness that many members of the military feel when they are away from their families during the holidays.

The dinner was such a success that Glen decided to invite even more for the next year and to have more of the community involved. I am sure there is not a base and city anywhere that has the degree of cooperation and concern as Cheyenne and Warren Air Force Base. For example, people from the base help construct Habitat for Humanity homes. The school district built a new school on the base that also has kids attend who do not live on the base and have no military connection. The mix benefits everyone. Glen spent the year getting ready for this event speaking and enlisting the Chamber of Commerce and speaking at Lions, Rotary, and Kiwanis, to name a few.

So this year was the Second Annual Salute to our Troops. Steve Sears of Cheyenne Stitch donated T-shirts for the volunteers. The fire department cooked turkeys. They deep fried seven an hour for the 24 hours before the meal. A service club cooked 750 pounds of potatoes and mashed them. People from all over the community baked pies and cakes. Dozens of other volunteers helped out. Businesses donated door prizes. One prize was a 40-inch HD TV. This Thanksgiving they served over 500 people.

This year there was publicity to be sure all were invited. Posters went up all over the base and town. Some of that publicity made it to the blogosphere nationally. Glen got calls from 14 States commenting on the good idea and checking to see if they could duplicate it. Many who called told of personal difficulties, some with tragic endings, that this kind of an event can perhaps prevent.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an article about the event from the Wyoming Tribune Eagle to be printed in the RECORD. I want to thank Glen Chavez, the barber, for his idea and his ability to turn a dream into reality. Thanks also to all who made the dinner and appreciation of our troops possible.

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

[From the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle, Nov. 13, 2010]

TROOPS GET A BIG THANK-YOU
(By Josh Mitchell)

CHEYENNE—Daniel Fletcher with the Army National Guard has two families, and he felt fortunate to be with one of them on Thanksgiving.

The family he was with consisted of fellow soldiers and was some 500 members strong.

His other family is spread across the United States.

As Fletcher sat at a table surrounded by other soldiers at the Masonic Lodge, he reflected on the importance of being with loved ones on Thanksgiving.

"It means quite a bit," he said.

But Fletcher, 28, would have been alone on Thanksgiving had it not been for the outpouring of support from about 150 volunteers.

"I was going to sit at home and eat a TV dinner," Fletcher said.

The Second Annual Military Appreciation Free Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by Glen's Barber Shop of Cheyenne is an effort to show the gratitude owed to members of the armed services, organizer Glen Chavez said.

As Chavez looked across the dining room at families gathered around tables, he noted, "This is going to change Thanksgiving forever. Look at how awesome this is."

Chavez said he started the event to combat the loneliness that many members of the military feel when they are away from their families during the holidays.

The military serves the United States all year, and Chavez said it feels good to serve the soldiers for one day.

The support that Cheyenne shows for the military surprised Fletcher, who is from Poison, Mont. He said when he returned from Iraq he didn't think he would be greeted with much respect, but now he sees that there is a lot of support for the soldiers.

Sue Mattingly is not a member of the military, but she still feels a camaraderie with the local soldiers. Mattingly broke down into tears as she talked about losing her dad this year.

After her loss, local soldiers were there for Mattingly, who is a cook at the bowling alley, where many of the soldiers spend time. "They're like a family to me," Mattingly said. "Even though I'm a civilian, I feel like I've known them all my life."

Being away from family while serving overseas is just part of being a soldier, Greg Wheeler with the Wyoming Air National Guard said.

"It is what it is," Wheeler said. "You don't join the military and expect to be home every holiday."

But Wheeler was fortunate to be sitting at a table with his wife, children, mom and dad this Thanksgiving.

Marvin Wolf of Cheyenne remembers spending a Thanksgiving in South Korea during the Korean War.

"We had turkey, shrimp and all the trimmings," Wolf said. Wolf agreed that spending Thanksgiving with fellow soldiers is like being with a big family.

This Thanksgiving, Wolf said he is thankful for being an American citizen and for all the opportunities that the United States has offered his family.

Life is all about love and family, Wolf said. "That's what brings us together," he said.

Jennifer Roberts, whose husband is in the Air Force, was enjoying the Thanksgiving meal with her three children. Her husband couldn't attend the dinner because he was scheduled to work on the base in Cheyenne.

But having him at the base here was better than a couple of years ago when he was in Iraq over the holidays.

Her daughter, Brooke Roberts, 12, said, she is grateful to have her dad home this year.

Jennifer Roberts said tears came to her eyes when she arrived at the military Thanksgiving dinner Thursday.

"It makes you feel at home," said Roberts, who is from North Carolina.

There were over 50 sponsors for the event. U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., also made an appearance.

Chavez said he wants Enzi to take the idea of the military Thanksgiving dinner back to Washington to make it a national event.

Volunteer Terri Clark said, "It's an honor to serve them. They serve us. So it's the least we can do."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CARROLL COLLEGE FIGHTING
SAINTS

● Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, today I wish to recognize an outstanding championship college football team from my home State.

This past Saturday in Rome, GA the Carroll College Fighting Saints claimed another National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national title with a hard fought 10 to 7 win over rival and fellow NAIA powerhouse the University of Sioux Falls Cougars. The win gives the Fighting Saints an unprecedented sixth national title in the past nine seasons. Coming into the game, Sioux Falls had won 42 games in a row. In fact, their last loss was to Carroll in the 2007 title game.

Carroll College is a private, Catholic college in my hometown of Helena, MT. Carroll boasts an enrollment of about 1,500 students and is known around the country for its award-winning academic and preprofessional programs. The school is particularly strong in premedical, engineering, and nursing programs.

The game Saturday was a hard-fought victory marked by key big plays on offense led by Saints quarterback Gary Wagner and a tough defense that shut down the Cougars high-powered offense. Wagner, a native of Havre, MT, was named the offensive player of the game and scored the Saints' only touchdown on an amazing 83-yard run. The winning points were provided by place kicker Tom Yaremko on a clutch 22 yard field goal in the fourth quarter.

I would like to congratulate head coach Mike Van Diest and his coaching staff, along with Athletic Director Bruce Parker and Doctor Tom Trebon, the president of Carroll College, for their hard work and dedication in