

roads between Nome and Anchorage. As a matter of fact, Alaska has almost 200 communities that don't have any roads connecting them to other places. There were no commercial airlines back then. The nearest train station to Nome was roughly 700 miles away. So, in the winter, people traveled mostly by dog sled.

On the night of January 27, 1925, musher "Wild Bill" Shannon tied a 20-pound package of serum wrapped in protective fur around his sled. He and his nine dogs started the hundreds-of-miles journey—the "Great Race of Mercy" it was called back then—across the frozen Alaska land. The entire Nation was watching. This was reported in newspapers all across America.

Wild Bill went for some time. Miles later, he met up with another racer and another team of dogs, and this relay of dog mushers carrying the serum for the sick kids in Nome continued until the lifesaving serum reached Nome 5 days later—pretty remarkable.

The original race, as I mentioned, in 1925, began to be reenacted, with some twists, in 1973. There were no relays and just one musher and his dogs running the whole route. It continues today in honor of that lifesaving mission that happened—and saved the kids, by the way—in Nome almost a century ago.

What a race it is. The mushers face frostbite, howling winds, and blizzards. They risk getting lost in the great Alaskan wilderness. In fact, they risk their lives along the way.

Entering the race at all requires fierce determination, but winning the race, like Peter Kaiser just did, requires even more than determination. It requires years of grueling training, it requires guts, and it requires an Alaskan-sized heart. That is what Pete Kaiser has.

Let me tell you a little about Pete, our Alaskan of the Week and our 2019 Iditarod champ.

He is 31 years old. He was born and raised in Bethel, and he traces his mushing roots back to his great-grandfather, who came into the country as a gold miner and made extended trips with his dog team from the interior part of the State to Bristol Bay. His great-grandfather met and married a beautiful Yupik woman who had been raised in an orphanage, and that was his great-grandmother.

He grew up with dogs. He and his sister loved mushing. When Pete was in college, he decided he really wanted to know everything about dogs that he could, and that passion turned into dog mushing full time in the great State of Alaska. According to him, that mushing, that determination, and that hard work gave his life focus and purpose.

Pete has won another race, Bethel's Kuskokwim 300, four times in a row,

and he has run every Iditarod since 2010, placing fifth three different times. This year, he won it all. He took the gold.

This was not an easy year on the trail. In 2017, it was one of the coldest Iditarods on record. Most of the trail most of the time out there was 30, 40, or maybe even 50 below zero. It was very cold, very dark. This year, interestingly, was one of the warmest. The lack of snow in some areas presented challenges. One area of the trail—almost 80 miles, on what we call tussocks or rolling tundra—was in many areas without snow. It was like mushing over bowling balls, said Pete after he won.

But he kept his cool and ran a strategic, determined race, and, importantly, he knew the area. While other mushers trained in the more urban areas, he stuck with rural Alaska, where the trail really gets rough, and he knew how to handle it.

He husbanded his strength and the power of his dogs to maneuver into position on the Bering Sea coast toward the end of the race. It was there, as other teams faltered, that he charged to victory, besting a good friend of his by just minutes, one of the closest finishes in Iditarod history.

Yesterday I got to call Pete to congratulate him. He said at the end, dog-tired, that it was all a blur. They don't sleep much—for almost 9 days.

Speaking of dogs, he said that his champion dogs were eating a lot right now and getting a well-deserved rest.

You can see some of those beautiful dogs, who by the way, love to run. They love to run.

In Alaska, our Iditarod winners are like rock stars. They become very famous overnight. Pete will be no different. He will be an inspiration to so many, partly because of his hometown and his humble roots.

Myron Angstman, another longtime musher and Pete's hero, said that most local mushers aren't sponsored. He said: "They're not wealthy and they don't have a family kennel already established." But Pete's success will inspire others.

Pete agrees. When a reporter asked him what his victory means for his community and for smaller towns in Alaska, he said that it "shows that somebody" from out in the rural parts of the State "can have a dream and put it all together and work hard and things can happen like this." Those are inspiring words, and I am sure we will see new generations of mushers heeding Pete's call and jumping into the field as a result of his example and his success.

Thank you, Pete, for reminding all of us that with enough hard work, grit, guts, and determination, any kid from any small town or any village can follow their dreams and make them a reality.

Congratulations, again, to you and your wonderful, hard-working dogs on being the 2019 Iditarod champ, and congratulations for being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:01 p.m., adjourned until Friday, March 15, 2019, at 11 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

MICHAEL O. JOHANNIS, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

TROY D. EDGAR, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE CHARLES H. FULGHUM.

PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

EDWARD W. FELTEN, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2025. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 14, 2019:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DONALD W. WASHINGTON, OF TEXAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

JANICE MIRIAM HELLREICH, OF HAWAII, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2024.

ROBERT A. MANDELL, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2022.

BRUCE M. RAMER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2024.

IN THE COAST GUARD

COAST GUARD NOMINATION OF ALEXANDER C. FOOS, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION

RODNEY HOOD, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 2, 2023.

TODD M. HARPER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 10, 2021.

FEDERAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION

WILLIAM I. ALTHEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS EXPIRING AUGUST 30, 2024.

MARCO M. RAJKOVICH, JR., OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS EXPIRING AUGUST 30, 2024.

ARTHUR R. TRAYNOR III, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 30, 2022.