

Air Medal with oakleaf cluster, three Bronze Stars, and China's Liberation Medal. After his tour of duty in the war overseas, he taught instructor pilots how to teach combat air tactics to pilots. He served in the Air Force Reserve and retired in 1964 as a lieutenant colonel.

On August 11, 1945, Wendell married Helen A. Brumbaugh at First United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls. Wendell met Helen when she was a teacher at Vermillion High School. In January of 1945, he flew to Sioux Falls from Texas and drove his father's car to Vermillion to recruit potential Air Force pilots. Prior to speaking with students, he spoke with Helen for a few minutes in a school hallway. A month later, without further communication, Wendell sent a letter to Helen asking her to marry him. Helen replied, "I do not even know you well enough to say no." After many months of letters, Helen said, "Yes." They lived near Waco, TX, while Wendell taught instructor pilots at Lackland Air Force Base, then moved to Ann Arbor, MI, for 2 years before finally returning to Sioux Falls.

Wendell and Helen had five children, Doug, Gail, Gary, Allen, and Martha, as well as eight grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

As a dedicated public servant, Wendell served in the South Dakota Senate from 1977–78 and from 1981–1982. In his spare time, he enjoys golf, international travel, pheasant hunting, fishing, and camping. He was an active member of Hope Lutheran Church, where he served as President of the congregation and Sunday school teacher. He was also a member of Peace Lutheran Church and currently attends Abiding Savior Lutheran.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Wendell Hanson for his service to our country and wish him a very happy 100th birthday, good health, and prosperity.●

TRIBUTE TO PHILIP JONES

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I am pleased to recognize Philip Jones, the Jackson County Teacher of the Year from Marianna High School in Marianna, FL.

To Philip, his job is to improve a student's reading and writing skills. He believes this is best achieved through an openness to dynamic academic and social changes. Philip designed his English class curriculum with structured plans, which builds trust in his students after the first 9 weeks of the school year and allows them to communicate with him during class and through written assignments clearly and without negative distractions.

Philip has taught 10th grade English at Marianna High School for 6 years and serves as the chairperson for the English Department. He has also received the Florida Department of Education's High Impact recognition 3 years in a row. Philip earned his bach-

elor's degree in political science from the University of Florida in 2000 and his master's degree in environmental law from Vermont Law School in 2004.

I extend my best wishes to Philip for his dedication to his English students and look forward to hearing of his continued success in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO TRACY KERBY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Tracy Kerby, the Lafayette County Teacher of the Year from Lafayette High School in Mayo, FL.

An eighth grade language arts teacher since 2006, Tracy's colleagues note that she is always looking for opportunities to grow as an educator. Tracy is a great leader for her students to follow because of her high moral character and her desire to set her students up for success later in life.

Tracy loves being a teacher in the Lafayette District Schools because she has the ability to watch her students learn and grow. She enjoys watching her students succeed in class, athletics, at local fairs, or with volunteer events at their church.

I express my best wishes and gratitude to Tracy and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES MEARSHEIMER

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Charles Mearsheimer, the Collier County Teacher of the Year from Oakridge Middle School in Naples, FL.

Charles has taught U.S. history at Oakridge Middle School for the past 16 years and has worked in education for 24 years.

Charles believes in his students' ability to achieve success and in the invaluable power of teaching to ignite the passion for learning that will follow them as they grow throughout their educational journey. He also serves as an unofficial mentor for new staff members, passing along his own passion for teaching. Both his colleagues and students feel the contagious effect of his enthusiasm and has led to Charles being one of the most requested teachers at his school.

I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to Charles for his dedication to his students and look forward to hearing of his continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO JEANNINE MEIS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Jeannine Meis, the Leon County Teacher of the Year from Leon High School in Tallahassee, FL.

A teacher in the Leon County School district for 16 years, Jeannine is an educator who is consistently modifying her curriculum to create lesson plans that help her to connect with her stu-

dents while creating an atmosphere that is encouraging. Before Jeannine started her tenure at Leon High School, she taught elementary school at the Apalachee Tapestry Magnet School of the Arts and middle school students at Cobb Middle School, where she had the privilege of teaching some of her students again.

I express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jeannine for her work and look forward to learning of her continued success in her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO LEIGH NORRIS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I am pleased to honor Leigh Norris, the Hamilton County Teacher of the Year from Hamilton County Elementary School in Jasper, FL.

Peggy Sue Hasty, principal at Hamilton County Elementary School, described Leigh as a fine example of a dedicated teacher who works hard to ensure her students achieve academic success.

A sixth grade math teacher who has worked in the district for 21 years, Leigh considers teaching the profession she was born to do. She loves to inspire a passion for learning math, and shares the excitement with her students when they make gains or solve challenging problems on their own.

I offer my best wishes to Leigh for her work and look forward to hearing of her continued success in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO JUDITH PARIS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Judith Paris, the Wakulla County Teacher of the Year from Shadeville Elementary School in Shadeville, FL.

Judy's teaching philosophy guides her students to thrive in environments where they are encouraged to explain their thinking and also understand how their classmates think. She works to create a classroom that facilitates a love of learning and where students build self-confidence.

In her classes, groups of students often begin the school year at 40–50 percent proficiency in math and consistently improve their math scores to 90 percent or higher by the end of the school year. She credits their success to the instructional practices that she teaches to make students solve problems on their own and by working together.

Judy is a fifth grade math teacher and is also her school's math team leader and chair of the mathematics committee and coteaches faculty workshops on accelerated math. Judy earned her bachelor's degree in technical writing with a minor in mathematics from Louisiana State University and earned a post baccalaureate degree in mathematics education. She is certified in elementary education, middle school math, and high school math.