

Wetzel grew up working in his father's coal mines. He was humble and kind with an unparalleled sense of humor, and his devotion to God, State, and country was unmatched. I was honored to call him a friend, and I know I join so many when I say West Virginia has lost a shining star. He is dearly missed.

Ever since the historic beginning of our State, we have never failed to answer our country's call. No demand has been too great, no danger too daunting, and no trial too threatening. Wetzel wanted so dearly to serve our country that, when he was 17, he lied about his age to join the Army. It was in the military that he received the nickname "Sundown" because of a childhood story he told his Army buddies. As a boy, he and a friend would occasionally sneak into a chicken pen, grab one of the birds, then sneak off to the woods where they would butcher their ill-gotten fowl and have a chicken fry. A sergeant asked him, "When's the best time to steal a chicken?" He replied, "Well, any time after sundown." The name stuck.

Wetzel served as an anti-aircraft gunner stationed at Hospital Point at Pearl Harbor on the day of the Japanese attack, December 7, 1941. During the attack, he shot down Japanese fighter planes that were about to attack the hospital. Wetzel was wounded during the attack, and it was an absolute honor to work on his behalf and present him with the Purple Heart nearly 76 years later. Along with so many of his friends and fellow veterans, we presented Wetzel with the Purple Heart that he so rightfully earned on that fateful day. We all hold that memory dear and are deeply thankful to have presented that award to Wetzel in person.

Wetzel remained in Hawaii until March of 1942. From there, he traversed the Pacific, fighting the Japanese on Guadalcanal and Bougainville Island. His outfit was about to head to the invasion of the Philippines when a colonel from Morgantown sent him home. The colonel asked how long he had been away, and when Wetzel told him, he responded, "Lord, how do you stand it? I've been out of West Virginia for six months, and it's about to kill me. If you've got anything to pack, pack it." Wetzel agreed with him, and after 3 years and 4 months overseas, he finally made it back home.

After serving in the military, Wetzel worked for and retired from the Department of Highways. Never one to be comfortable in retirement, he became a bus driver for Tri-River Transit System, where he earned the title of, at the age of 89, the oldest bus driver in America. Throughout the rest of his extraordinary life, Wetzel continued to pay homage to his fallen comrades, attending multiple anniversary ceremonies of Pearl Harbor.

When visitors come to West Virginia, I jump at the chance to tell them we are home to the most hard-working and patriotic people in the Nation. We

have fought in more wars, shed more blood, and lost more lives for the cause of freedom than most any State. We have always done the heavy lifting and never complained. We have mined the coal and forged the steel that built the guns, ships, and factories that have protected and continue to protect our country to this day. I am so deeply proud of what West Virginians, like Wetzel, have accomplished and what they will continue to accomplish to protect the freedoms we hold dear. We have every reason to be proud and to stand tall knowing that West Virginia is the reason Americans sleep peacefully at night.

Wetzel is survived by three children, Sherry Handley, Beverly Sanders, and Greg (Regina) Sanders; two grandchildren, B.J. (Tracey) and Ashley Sanders; three great-grandchildren, Savannah (Kyle) Handley-Watts, Georgia, and Macon Handley; his sister Willa Faye Fry; and a host of many, many extended family and dear friends. I know he and Kathleen are smiling down on each of you.

West Virginia is great because our people are great—Mountaineers who will always be free. We are tough, independent, inventive, and honest, our character shaped by the wilderness of our State—its rushing streams, its boundless blue skies, its divine forests, and its majestic mountains. We are West Virginians, and like the brave, loyal patriots who made our State the 35th star on Old Glory, our love of God and country and family and State is unshakeable. I know that 20, 50, or another 156 years from now, that will always remain the same. That legacy laid the groundwork for heroes like Wetzel, and now he serves as an inspiration to all who wish to follow in his footsteps and live a life filled with patriotism, service, faith, and family.

There are so few of our American heroes left from Wetzel's generation. It is our responsibility and our privilege to ensure that their service and sacrifice is never forgotten. It is an honor to have called Wetzel a friend and to have helped him receive the recognition he very much earned and deserved. The sun will never set on Wetzel's legacy of service, his generosity, his love for his family, and his devotion to God, our home State, and our beautiful country.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. BRUCE CORLISS

● Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, today I wish to honor the career of one of Rhode Island's ocean and coastal experts, Dr. Bruce Corliss. Dr. Corliss has served as dean of the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography since 2012. In March, Dean Corliss announced he would be leaving URI GSO early next year.

Dean Corliss started at URI GSO as a graduate student. He completed both his M.A. and Ph.D. in oceanography at URI. He then completed postdoctoral

work at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and served as a scientist at WHOI until joining Duke University as a professor in 1984, ultimately becoming director of the Duke University/University of North Carolina Oceanographic Consortium. Dr. Corliss served as chief scientist on more than a dozen oceanographic research cruises and has published over 60 research papers.

In 2012, Dr. Corliss heard the call of the Ocean State and returned to his alma mater as dean. Under his leadership, URI GSO expanded its oceanographic and coastal research programs and is currently revitalizing its Narragansett campus; NOAA selected the university to lead a multi-university Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute; and last summer, URI GSO was awarded a new NSF research vessel, to be named the R/V *Resolution*. The vessel will replace the R/V *Endeavor*, which URI GSO has operated for 40 years.

Dean Corliss will leave URI GSO having reaffirmed its place as one of the world's preeminent ocean research institutions. His work will be reflected in the new research vessel on GSO's docks, in new buildings and labs that will house the next generation of marine researchers, and in new depths of understanding we will reach through the Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute.

Dean Corliss has been a friend and an ally in the fight to protect and preserve our oceans and coasts. URI GSO has greatly benefited from his scientific expertise, leadership, and support for ocean research. On behalf of the Ocean State, I recognize and salute him on an impressive career and a lasting legacy at the University of Rhode Island.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13848 OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2018, WITH RESPECT TO THE THREAT OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN UNITED STATES ELECTIONS—PM 26

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report, which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides