

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

REMEMBERING BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES KEMP McLAUGHLIN

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to honor the legacy of a member of our greatest generation, the founder and first commander of the West Virginia Air National Guard, a World War II veteran, an American hero, and a friend of both of ours, retired Brig. Gen. James Kemp McLaughlin.

He was born on December 7, 1918, in Braxton County, to James and Almira McLaughlin. Kemp was a staunch leader with unparalleled patriotism, and his devotion to God, State, and country was unmatched. Gayle and I were honored to call him a friend, and I know I join so many when I say that 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. Kemp took part in some of the most important battles of World War II. Following his education at West Virginia University, Kemp joined the U.S. Air Corps at age 23, shortly before the attacks on Pearl Harbor, the day of his birthday.

He flew nearly 40 B-17 Flying Fortress bomber missions during the war, including support for the troops on the beaches of Normandy in 1944. In 1934, Kemp led a 350-plane attack on a factory in Germany, a raid that became known as Black Thursday. On too many occasions, Kent's planes would be so damaged that it was a miracle he made it back safe.

His actions were instrumental in not only destroying Nazi efforts, but as one of the "Mighty" 8th Air Force in Europe, he was also instrumental in developing what is known as air superiority, a vital factor in deciding the outcome of a modern conventional war. He paved the way for all citizen airmen who strive to follow in his footsteps.

Kemp completed 39 combat missions during World War II and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross four times. His vast experience aided him years later when he was asked to lead the Air National Guard's 167th Fighter Squadron in Charleston, WV. When that squadron moved to Martinsburg, Charleston's Guard unit became the 130th Airlift Wing.

Throughout the rest of his extraordinary life, Kemp continued to pay homage to his fallen comrades and serve his community. He served as Kanawha County commissioner and as a member of the West Virginia House of Delegates. He is a legend here in West Virginia and was one of the most selfless people that I have ever had the pleasure of calling a dear friend.

As Governor, my most honored titled was that of commander-in-chief of the Guard. I have seen firsthand how the

Air National Guard protects the citizens of West Virginia when we are in our most desperate hour of need and how they protect our country when called upon to serve at the command of the President of the United States. The integrity of our Guard is due in large part to Kemp's legacy of excellence and his commitment to seeing our Guard and our home State flourish.

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 other 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 Kemp 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.

Kemp is survived by his children, Laura, Mary, and Kemp, Jr., and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I know he and Constance, his lovely wife of nearly 50 years, are looking down on each of you and all of us with a smile.

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. 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 Kemp McLaughlin, 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 Kemp's generation. It is our responsibility and privilege to ensure that their service and sacrifice is never forgotten. The sun will never set on Kemp's legacy of service, his generosity, his love for his family, and his devotion to God, our home State, and our beautiful country.

I know with the condolences of myself and you, Madam President, that we will always remember and keep Kemp in our prayers.

Thank you, and God bless.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

HONORING MASTER TROOPER WILLIAM MODEN, CORPORAL DANIEL GROVES, SERGEANT JOSHUA VOTH, KEN JONES, TRAVIS DAVIS, AND TROY JACKSON

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I rise to give thanks to the brave men and women of law enforcement in Colorado and across the country. Every holiday season, I am reminded of the sacrifice that these brave officers make in order to make sure that everybody's holiday season is enjoyed safely and that every day is enjoyed safely and securely.

Across the United States this year, 115 law enforcement officers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. In Colorado, we honor those who lost their lives this year. Master Trooper William Moden was killed earlier this year when he was struck by a vehicle as he was investigating a crash. He served the Colorado State Patrol for 12 years. Corporal Daniel Groves was also killed by a passing vehicle while assisting another driver during the blizzard last winter. Corporal Groves also served the Colorado State Patrol for 12 years.

Unfortunately, I also come to the floor to honor three other brave men and women—you can see them here—who have given their lives just this past month. Sergeant Joshua Voth served the Colorado Department of Corrections and was stationed at the Canyon City Correction Facility. He was killed this month when an issue with the boiler caused an explosion. Sergeant Voth was 28 years old and leaves behind his wife and three children. He served at the Canyon City facility for 3 years and helped teach inmates valuable skills to help smooth the plan to rehabilitation.

We also lost other beloved members of our first responder community. They need to be remembered and honored as well. Ken Jones, a member of the Summit Fire and EMS, was killed on December 7 while responding to a fire at Copper Mountain. Ken served in that department for 20 years and was known by his colleagues as "a firefighter's firefighter." Travis Davis, the deputy chief of operations for Summit Fire and EMS, remembers him as an "Oak" and said everyone in the organization learned something in Ken's steady and calm demeanor. We thank Ken and his family for two decades of service and send our sincerest thoughts to all those who knew him.

I also would like to recognize Troy Jackson, a former assistant chief of operations for the South Metro Fire Rescue, who passed away just yesterday morning after a battle of what is believed to be job-related cancer. Chief Jackson was first hired in 1990 and served nearly three decades before stepping away in 2016 due to his health. He was open about his battle with cancer, in hopes that he could teach other firefighters how to avoid these risks.

We thank Chief Jackson for his service and send our thoughts and prayers