

will miss his comity, his courtesy, and his refreshing bipartisan spirit always seeking consensus solutions for the good of the country. Whether in committee or on the Senate floor, he never succumbs to the bitter, destructive partisanship which has all too often characterized this chamber in recent years.

Senator WARNER has spoken out against his own party when he felt that the wrong course was being pursued. When the horrors of Abu Ghraib came to light, JOHN WARNER did not hesitate to help write the legislation to restrict the use of torture.

Senator WARNER embodies the guiding principles set down by another of our country's brave warriors, GEN Douglas MacArthur, who proclaimed his leading lights to be, "Duty, honor, country."

Mr. President, without qualification, I can say that it has been an absolute pleasure to have served with this distinguished and esteemed Virginia gentleman, and I will miss him.

CHUCK HAGEL

Mr. President, I came to know Senator HAGEL in 1997 when we worked together on the Byrd-Hagel Resolution related to the Kyoto Protocol. We made a good team because our effort was approved unanimously, by a vote of 95-0.

In our work together, I made a new friend because I found Senator HAGEL to be a likeable and cooperative person as well as a knowledgeable and hard-working Senator.

My respect for this dynamic Senator increased as I watched him become one of the Senate's most outspoken critics of Mr. Bush's war in Iraq. Several of us were already pointing to the disastrous results of the Bush administration's flawed and failed Iraqi war policies. But Senator HAGEL's opposition to the war carried very special impact. He is a conservative, a member of the President's own political party, and a military veteran. In fact, he still carries shrapnel in his chest and remnants of burns to his face from his service as an infantryman in Vietnam. Senator HAGEL now calls Mr. Bush's war in Iraq "an absolute replay of Vietnam."

I will miss my friend and colleague. The Senate needs strong, independent voices like Senator HAGEL—lawmakers who are willing to put the best interests of our country and American people over partisan politics.

PETE DOMENICI

Mr. President, when the Senate convenes next January, it is difficult to accept that Senator DOMENICI will not be here.

This son of an Italian immigrant grocer was elected to the Senate in 1972, making him the first Republican in nearly 40 years to be elected to the Senate from the great State of New Mexico. He is now the longest serving Senator in the history of New Mexico.

In the Senate, he established himself as an expert on fiscal policies and the intricacies of the Federal budget. Hav-

ing served with Senator DOMENICI on the Appropriations and Budget Committees, I have come to know and respect him not only as a dear friend and colleague, but also as a formidable opponent. Senator DOMENICI and I have clashed swords many times on the Senate floor, and, believe me, when you clashed with him, you would have the fight of your life. He has one of the sharpest minds on Capitol Hill. He is one of the most knowledgeable people on the budget on Capitol Hill. And he is always prepared.

Oh, how I regret that he will be leaving us all too soon. But I would like to use this opportunity to thank the senior Senator from New Mexico for his wonderful service and to congratulate him on an outstanding career in the Senate.

Thank you, Senator DOMENICI, for all your work for your State, and our country. And, thank you, PETE, for being a friend.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR BENJAMIN VENNING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Major Benjamin Venning, U.S. Marine Corps, for his 3 years of service to the U.S. Senate and for his continued service to our Nation and its Corps.

From December 2005 to December 2006, Major Venning served in my office as a military fellow. He came to my office soon after a tour in Fallujah, where his actions in service to the United States earned him a Bronze Star. Major Venning had experienced first-hand the rising violence in Iraq. His on-the-ground experience in Iraq gave him tremendous insight on issues affecting servicemembers and veterans.

Many who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have returned with serious physical injuries or have even paid the ultimate price. Others have returned with more invisible wounds, injuries that are not immediately apparent but that bring pain and suffering to a returning veteran and his or her family. Today, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress syndrome are recognized as signature injuries of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. While Major Venning served on my staff he helped draw attention to these invisible wounds. With his relationships at Bethesda Naval, he helped me understand the impact of traumatic brain injuries on returning soldiers and marines. With Major Venning on my team, I was able to ask hard questions about how our government was responding to the growing number of veterans needing help for these serious injuries.

In April 2006, I sent a letter that Major Venning worked on, which was one of the first to ask the Department of Veterans Affairs to closely review its ability to provide proper mental health care to returning veterans. Another Senator from the State of Illinois signed that letter: Barack Obama. Today, as the world awaits his inau-

guration, the President-elect has promised he will continue to improve mental health treatment for troops and veterans suffering from combat-related psychological injuries.

After his service as a military fellow, Major Venning was named the Deputy Director of the Marine Corps Senate Liaison Office. It is no surprise that he was as loved in that office as he was in mine. It was my pleasure to host his promotion to major, with his friends and family in attendance, in my office in the Capitol. His commanding physical presence is matched only by his compassion and understanding of the issues facing our returning servicemembers, which was never on better display than when he helped shepherd wounded veterans as my guests at the State of the Union.

Major Ben Venning is a marine in the best tradition of the Corps. His efforts have informed the Congress and have represented the Corps' values and capabilities. His performance here will leave a lasting mark on my office, the U.S. Senate and the Marine Corps long after he has departed.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is my pleasure today to congratulate and thank Major Benjamin Venning of the U.S. Marine Corps. This week, Major Venning finishes up a highly successful assignment as Deputy Director of the Marine Corps Liaison Office to the U.S. Senate, which is responsible for providing information about the Corps to this institution. He has served the Senate and the Marine Corps superbly, and he is a credit to the entire Corps.

Major Venning learned about the Senate during a fellowship in 2006 with Senator DURBIN of Illinois. He worked on timely reserve pay and budget issues, getting to know the ins-and-outs of the often arcane appropriations process. Senator DURBIN, as I am, is a member of the Senate's Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, which handles the Senate's work in writing the annual budget bill for the Department of Defense. That was an ideal perch for Major Venning to grasp the complicated but essential financing of our extensive national security operations.

In his next assignment, joining the Corps' liaison office, he brought the same sense of intelligence and integrity that he showed in that year with the senior Senator from Illinois. Major Venning was always prompt in answering questions about the Marine Corps, whether about plans for growth of the force or the minutia of a particular program. He and the entire team in the liaison office provided excellent support for Senate delegations traveling to foreign nations to meet with international leaders and to review foreign assistance programs. He ensured that extensive itineraries unfolded smoothly and productively.

Major Venning is a marine through and through, displaying great dedication to and knowledge about the force. Staffing a recent mission overseas, for example, hewing to longstanding tradition, he made sure that the Corps'

birthday was observed in a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday."

It should be little surprise to anyone who has known Major Venning over the years—in his years growing up in South Carolina and Virginia or at college at the Virginia Military Institute—that he would become such an asset to the Corps. I have no doubt that he will bring the same sterling qualities in his next assignment with Company A, 4th Amphibious Assault Vehicle Battalion at Norfolk, VA.

Major Venning will go far in his future endeavors with the Corps and beyond. I know that all Senators join in wishing him all the best and in expressing our heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

REMEMBERING RICHARD AND JEAN DEWINE

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the parents of our good friend and former colleague from Ohio, Mike DeWine. Richard and Jean DeWine died just a few weeks ago, 4 days apart from each other. Dick was 85, and Jean was 83. They were together almost their entire lives, sharing a beautiful love story and 65 wonderful years of marriage.

I had the honor of meeting Mike's parents in February when I was visiting Young's Jersey Dairy in their hometown of Yellow Springs, OH. It was a privilege to talk to them. They were so gracious and kind. I could see how proud they were of their son and how proud they were of our Nation.

Mike spoke about his parents' lives and especially their love of family at their joint funeral service held on November 5, 2008. In tribute to Dick and Jean, I ask unanimous consent that the entirety of his remarks be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of mine.

There were no two finer Americans than Dick and Jean DeWine. May God bless them and their family.

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

Thank you all so much for coming today and for your friendship and love. Thank you to JoFrannye, Patty, Jocelyn, and the choir for the music, and to our grandson Albert for playing the piano before Mass.

Thank you Father Geraci and Father Hagan for being the celebrants today, but I have to say to Father Tom that right now, Dad must be thinking: "This Mass is much, much too long!"

I once asked Dad why he kept going to Fairborn to Mass. He told me he found a great priest there, whose homilies were exactly 3 minutes long!

Fran and I thank all of you who helped care for my parents, enabling them to stay in their home the last few years, especially Patrick, Jamie, Megan, and Barbara—thank you. All of my parents' care givers have been just great.

And, thanks to all of you who stopped by to visit my parents. Cousin Jerome, we thank you for always being there to brighten my parents' day.

When I was growing up, I always thought that I had the greatest parents in the world.

I never changed my mind.

My parents both grew up in Yellow Springs and both lived on Xenia Avenue. Dad was born at home in a house, which is the present day Wind's Cafe Wine Cellar. They lived next door to the family feed store. Growing up practically in the feed store, itself, and right in the heart of Yellow Springs, Dad was surrounded by a colorful cast of characters who would make a novelist proud! He could remember watching out his bedroom window on Saturday nights, as fights would erupt between patrons of the local bars.

One time, when Dad was a young boy, my grandfather asked him if he wanted to ride with his employee, Jimmy, when he took a feed delivery to Springfield. He told Dad he could drag the bags from the back of the truck up to the front, so that Jimmy wouldn't have to get on and off the truck to get them.

Before leaving town, Jimmy and Dad each had a dime and bought a 5-cent Bluebird pie. Since they both had a nickel left over, Jimmy asked my young Dad if he wanted to play the numbers. And, he did!

Later that day, when they got back to the feed store, my grandfather, shouted, "Dick, the Sheriff's been looking for you! Were you playing the numbers? Dad ran out of the store, screaming, "The Sheriff will never find me!"

He went out and hid among the stacks of feed sacks. When my grandfather finally found him, all he said was, "Here's your \$25—you won!"

At the same time, my mother was growing up not far up the street. Mother's father was a professor of literature at Antioch College. He was an expert in Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Milton. He and my grandmother greatly influenced my mother, particularly instilling in her a great love and appreciation for words.

My grandfather had grown up on a farm in upstate New York, and every summer, he would take his family back there so he could help with the farm work. Some of Mother's fondest memories were of those idyllic summers—playing with her sisters, Judy and Dorothy, in the ice house on hot summer days, riding hay wagons, walking to get groceries at the local general store, and watching her grandmother milk cows on a one-legged stool!

As a young girl, Mother loved to ride horses. In fact, her parents kept a horse at their house on Xenia Avenue! They called the horse Cheyenne. Once when Mother was about 11 years old, she rode Cheyenne all alone from Yellow Springs to Wilberforce, some 7 miles away, using only the directions and map that my grandfather drew for her.

In the summer of 1940, one of my father's best friends was Herbert Berger. That year, Herbert went away for the summer. He had asked Dad to "look out for" his girlfriend, who happened to be 15-year-old Jean Liddle. Well, Dad did. And, my parents were inseparable from then on.

Dick DeWine and Jean Liddle married 3 years later on September 2, 1943. Dad was 20, and Mother was 18.

World War II, of course, was raging at this time. Dad went in as a replacement. He was a Private with K Company and saw combat in France, Germany, and Austria. Captain Bell was their leader. About five years ago, Dad sent an email about first seeing Captain Bell when he and his buddy, Ernie Dessecker, had arrived in Europe and were awaiting their company assignment. This is what my dad wrote:

"We were told that the next morning, we would be assigned to some infantry company. That night, we went into a bar and were bought some beer by some GI's who knew we were—for want of a better word—

very uptight. All they talked about was Captain Bell and his K Company. They told us that if we wanted to do a lot of fighting that would be the company to be assigned to. That was not really what [Ernie] and I had in mind!

The next day, we were loaded on a truck and at each town, it would stop and some names were called to get off. When Dess and I were told to get off, the first thing we asked was, "What company is this?" When told it was Company K, we both wished we could climb back on that truck and head for the rear echelon! Of course, in a very short time, we were so very proud to be part of Captain Bell's Company K. . . ."

Dad never forgot the men with whom he served, maintaining friendships for over six decades. He also never forgot the horrific things he saw when K Company was sent to the Dachau concentration camp shortly after it was liberated in April 1945. From the time I was just a kid, Dad told me stories about Dachau and how people in the nearby town would tell the soldiers that they hadn't really known what the Nazis were doing. Dad could never quite comprehend that.

On the day before the German surrender in Europe, Dad spent the night in a fox hole near Innsbruck, Austria. He heard rumors that the War was nearing an end. But still, Dad stayed awake all night in that fox hole, fearing that the enemy would attack. He remembered thinking that he saw German troops coming at him. When he compared notes with all his buddies later, they, too, had experienced the same thing.

When the War did end that next day, they rode into Innsbruck, where people greeted him and the other soldiers with a shower of flowers. Meanwhile, Mother and Aunt Judy celebrated the German surrender by riding on a fire truck in an impromptu parade down the streets of Yellow Springs. Dad's two younger siblings, my Aunt Mickey and Uncle Jerry, watched the parade with pride.

Last week, I started reading my parents' letters to each other when Dad was fighting in Europe. They are letters of great passion and love, written by two young kids, who were only married a year when the War separated them. They write of their plans and dreams and of the child they hoped to conceive as soon as Dad got home. Dad's letter refers to that child as "Mike," while Mother's letter references Michael—a distinction they would each make throughout my life.

Dad came home in April, in time for Reds Opening Day, and I was born on January 5th, that year.

Dad taught me to fish, to hunt, and to love OSU football and Dayton Flyer basketball. But, his real passion was the Cincinnati Reds!

When Dad was 16, he and one of his buddies camped out in line for 36 hours to get tickets for the 1939 World Series, when the Reds were playing the Yankees. They ended up in two different ticket lines, but had made a deal that whoever got up to the ticket counter before the tickets ran out would buy two. Dad was able to get two tickets, but then he couldn't find his friend. It got close to game time, and Dad had to go inside the ballpark.

When he was inside, though, he went up to the top deck at Crosley Field and searched again for his friend. He looked down below, outside the ballpark, and there was his buddy, walking away in tears, empty-handed.

Dad reached into his pocket and pulled out the silver dollar that his father had given him and wrapped the other baseball ticket around it. Then, he threw it over the railing, hoping and praying that it would fall at the feet of his friend.

Amazingly, it did—and they both watched that game together.