

Many who knew Matt in school knew of his desire to serve in the military after graduation. He was an enthusiastic participant in his school's Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

"All he ever wanted to do when he graduated was join the Marines and serve his country, and that's what he did," says COL Rick McClure, Matt's senior instructor in Corbin High's JROTC program.

Matt was an "outstanding young man. He was quiet. Always had a smile. Just a super young man," Colonel McClure says. "And as long as I knew him, what he wanted to do was to graduate from high school and be a marine . . . I'm just so thankful that we have guys like Matt that will go and give their lives for the freedoms we enjoy."

Matt's wife Nikki remembers the surprising way Matt asked her to marry him. It was on Christmas Eve. Matt and Nikki were with family, opening presents. One present was addressed to both of them, and Matt opened it to reveal a Cracker Jack box.

"He handed it to me and said open it," Nikki says. "When I did, everyone's hand shot for some, and by the time I could pour some in my hand it was crumbs. There fell the ring in my hand, and I looked at him and he was down on one knee and asked me to marry him. Of course I said yeah." Matt and Nikki were married on May 22, 2009.

For Matt's mom Jody Tonkin, it is too hard to pick just one memory of her son. "I don't have just one," she says. "As his mom, all my memories are the best."

Matt's aunt Theresa Jackson Hopkins, remembers when Matt was a little boy and went on a trip to Disney World. "He had a smile on his face the whole time," she says. "That had to be the highlight of his life, until he met Nikki."

Matt worked hard to prepare himself for the service, and joined the Marine Corps right after high school. In 2008 he was deployed to Iraq. He also served on missions in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Cuba. After his military service concluded, he was looking forward to a career in law enforcement.

Matt's uncle Tom Jackson, remembers the day Matt came home from Afghanistan for a hero's funeral. At the terminal of the London-Corbin Airport waiting to meet the plane carrying Matt's body were over a hundred Patriot Guard Riders, with American flags on their motorcycles, there to escort the fallen marine to the funeral home.

"As we followed the hearse from the airport, the Riders slowed, and there beside the road was a small group of men, women, and children waving flags as tears ran down their faces," says Tom Jackson. "I could read their lips saying 'thank you' and at that point in time there was an outward burst of emotion that I just could not contain. I was crying like a baby, a sight that

I'm sure that my daughter and grandson had never seen from me."

The number of people who wished to thank Lance Corporal Jackson for his service was so great the funeral home chapel could not accommodate them all. The city of Corbin graciously donated the use of the Arena at the Southeastern Kentucky Ag & Expo Complex, where hundreds came to pay their respects.

We must keep Matt's friends and family in our thoughts as I recount his story for the Senate today. We are thinking of his wife, Nichole A. Jackson; his father, Timothy Wayne Jackson; his mother, Jody Tonkin; his brothers, Jerricho Tonkin, Barry Daniel Powell, Dustin Johnson, and Wayne Spurlin; his stepmother, Lorrie Johnson; his stepfather, Billy Bowers; his grandmothers, Mary Jackson and Carol Gable; his uncle, Tom Jackson; his cousin, Michael Ryan Hopkins; his aunt, Theresa Jackson Hopkins; and many other beloved family members and friends. Matt was preceded in death by his grandfather, Edgar Jackson.

Matt's Uncle Tom can still recall a time he and a 9-year-old Matt were walking in the woods after dark and Tom feared they were lost. Matt was scared, but put on a brave face nearly until the end—when he finally said, "Uncle Tom, hold my hand," just as the two of them reached the truck.

The family of LCpl Timothy Matthew Jackson must be very proud that little boy grew up to become one of our country's most honored heroes, a brave marine. I want them to know this U.S. Senate honors Lance Corporal Jackson for his life of service. And we honor the immense sacrifice he made on behalf of a very grateful Nation.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### FISCAL POLICY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, we are involved in a very important national debate about our finances, our deficits, our debt, investments in our economy, including the creation of jobs, and how we take on those problems in the most effective manner to build a strong financial foundation for our Nation going ahead and a strong set of opportunities for families to thrive. In the course of this debate, there has been a very interesting development that merits our attention, and that development is this: Some of my colleagues across the aisle have, over time, chosen to put key programs for the wealthy and well connected not in an appropriations bill but in tax legislation. There are advantages to doing so. With appropriations, programs have to be defended year after year. It has to be reviewed in committee. It may have to go through an authorization process

as well as an appropriations process. But if a program for the wealthy and well connected is placed in the Tax Code, then, unless a sunset clause has been instituted, that program is a gift that keeps on giving, unexamined in the course of the standard appropriating process.

By putting these programs for the wealthy and well connected into the Tax Code, some of my colleagues across the aisle have said that as a result, there is an additional advantage. We can claim these programs are off-limits, and we can claim that if anyone seeks to examine these programs for the wealthy and well connected, they are seeking to "raise taxes," and we will scare the American citizens into revolt against that effort to examine these sacred cows.

I think this attitude, quite frankly, underestimates American citizens. American citizens understand very well what is up. They understand there is an effort to put programs for working Americans in legislation where it has to be authorized regularly, where it has to go through the appropriations process annually, but the programs for the most wealthy and well connected are put over here behind the fence where they don't have to go through that process, and then they say those are sacred cows and we can't touch them.

There is a big difference between fighting for fairness for working Americans and fighting to defend the benefits for the best off in our society. This is a debate that must be on the floor of the Senate.

It was in 1976 that I came here as an intern to Senator Hatfield. As it turned out, I was assigned to the Tax Reform Act of 1976. In that assignment, I was reading all the mail from Oregon. Then, as the debate came to this Chamber, I would meet Senator Hatfield at the elevator doors, just outside these double doors to the Chamber. Of course, in those days we didn't have a television camera in the Chamber, and in those days we didn't have e-mail to communicate. So staff members would line up and meet their Senators coming off the elevator and brief them about the debate: What were the ups and downs, what were people back home saying, what type of vote it was, whether it was an up-or-down vote, a motion to table, and so on and so forth. Then I would run up to the seats for the staff to observe the debate, and then I would come back down when the next vote on an amendment came up.

That review in 1976 was a tough discussion, because anytime we talk about cutting a program, anyone who benefits from that program is very upset. But there was an understanding on both sides of the aisle that we owed it to the American taxpayer to spend every dollar in the best possible fashion, and, therefore, there could be no fence walling off programs for some for consideration, while the programs for

others merit full examination. Everything needed to be talked about. Everything needed to be weighed as to the value it provided.

Again in 1986, a decade later, an even larger effort—a major effort—was undertaken to examine every tax program, whether it was one that benefited people here or people there, to weigh it in the context of our fiscal responsibility to the Nation. It was Senator Hatfield from Oregon who was head of the Finance Committee and who led that debate on the floor of the Senate. I emphasize that Senator Hatfield was a Republican. Republicans back then believed in fiscal responsibility. They didn't believe in setting off one part of the Tax Code for the wealthy and well connected that would never be examined again, while the programs for working Americans were on the table. No. They looked at everything across the entire spectrum.

So here we are not in 1976, not in 1986 but in 2011. It has been a quarter century since we have had a serious review of the programs embedded in the Tax Code. I must say we have every reason to examine every program funded, whether through the appropriations code or the Tax Code, because we face serious financial circumstances. It is in this context that I would have expected to hear the echoes of 1986—that every program is up for examination and every program is going to be tested against a rigorous set of circumstances to say it is the best use of our dollars. But, instead, my colleagues across the aisle take the position of putting up a very high fence around the tax provisions for the wealthy and well connected, saying their No. 1 goal is to protect those provisions. Programs for seniors are on the table. Dismantling Medicare is a Republican plan. Programs for those who don't have enough food to eat are on the table. Unemployment has been on the table. Funding for the infrastructure we need to rebuild our country is on the table, but this set of sacred cows is not, this set of sacred programs for the wealthy and well connected.

Quite frankly, that is wrong. That must change. We must bring that debate to the floor of the Senate as our colleagues did a quarter century ago, as our colleagues did 35 years ago.

So when it comes to these programs, there must be no sacred cows and there must be no sacred horses. This chart says "running away with our tax dollars." One of the tax programs my colleagues across the aisle are insisting be walled off from examination is a special writeoff for thoroughbred racehorses. Yes, racehorses. This is the bluegrass boondoggle which allows millionaire and billionaire racehorse owners to write off the cost of their horses in an accelerated manner, reducing the normal 7-year period to just 3 years. This bluegrass boondoggle will cost U.S. taxpayers, over the course of the coming 10 years, \$126 million, according to CBO estimates, after modeling

the impact of this tax provision. This is equivalent to us writing a check over this coming decade for \$126 million. This is equivalent to a grant program. This is equivalent to subsidizing a loan program. No program, simply because it is in one bill—the tax bill—rather than in another bill—an appropriations bill—should be off-limits. Horseracing may have been called the sport of kings—

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). The Senator will suspend.

The Senator has used 10 minutes.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you, Mr. President. Is there a 10-minute rule in effect?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is.

Mr. SCHUMER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. I believe I am the next speaker. I ask unanimous consent to cede the Senator from Oregon 3 minutes of my 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank my colleague from New York, and I appreciate those 3 minutes.

So horseracing may have been called the sport of kings, but that doesn't mean owners of horses—those millionaires and billionaires supporting those horses—need royal tax treatment. As long as these tax subsidies are preserved, the richest and best off will remain in the winner's circle, while working families don't even get a chance to compete.

There is no doubt that closing this loophole alone isn't going to solve our deficit problem, but it is a good place to start because, otherwise, we are going to cut \$126 million from Head Start or \$126 million from Medicare for our seniors or programs that help retrain laid-off workers. Giving "triple crown" treatment to millionaires, while workers are put out to pasture is not right, and it is not the American way.

I have proposed searching through the Tax Code to find wasteful tax subsidies and eliminate unnecessary giveaways. This year is the right time to start. No one program should be singled out. We should set a series of standards and test each tax program against those standards on whether they create jobs, whether they make a stronger economy, whether they take America forward, and whether that \$126 million spent in this category or that is more important to the Nation than other cuts we might be entertaining. Those are the tests that need to be applied in a thoughtful and thorough manner. It is time to stop walling off the programs for the wealthy and well connected while attacking programs that make working America go forward in a stronger fashion.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first hour and the Republicans controlling the second hour.

The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. First, Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Oregon. Once again, he is forthright, he is courageous, he is on the money, and people should listen to him because he says a lot of good things about a lot of subjects, including this one. I appreciate what he has said.

After weeks of stops and starts, we are now approaching crunch time in the debt ceiling talks. I believe a grand bipartisan bargain is possible but only if my colleagues on the other side of the aisle take off their partisan blinders. Neither side can afford to cling to their ideological positions any longer.

To get the economy humming on all cylinders again and avoid a default crisis, we need to say goodbye to a few sacred cows. Yet, mere weeks after voting to repeal ethanol subsidies, the other side's leader, the Senator from Kentucky, has drawn a line in the sand against including any and all revenue changes in the debt deal. He has said that repeal of special interest tax breaks is "politically impossible." Well, that is a curious idea given that the Senator from Kentucky and 33 of his colleagues are on record as supporting the end of ethanol giveaways. It seems Leader MCCONNELL would rather end Medicare as we know it and force cuts to Pell grants and cancer research than institute a little shared sacrifice.

On this side of the aisle, we want to repeal tax breaks that have no purpose whatsoever other than to bloat our budget deficit.

Today, I want to highlight one of the most egregiously wasteful loopholes in the Tax Code: the tax break for yacht owners. Yes, believe it or not, Uncle Sam subsidizes the purchase of sprawling, luxurious, 72-foot Viking yachts. As long as your yacht has a place to sleep and a place to—how shall I put it—relieve yourself, you can classify it as your "second home" and claim the mortgage interest deduction. That's right. The deduction Congress helped create for middle-class families to realize the American dream of home ownership is helping millionaires and billionaires get a 35-percent discount on their yachts. In fact, how-to books on tax avoidance advise readers that "if you're paying for your yacht in cash, you're paying too much." Millionaires who would otherwise write a six-figure check for their yacht without batting an eye instead take out a loan so they can claim the mortgage interest deduction. The IRS's only requirement is