

happy little community is now barely there.

Scenes from West Liberty are replicated across the State in places like Magoffin, Menifee, Kenton, Morgan, Laurel, Lawrence, Martin, Pulaski, Johnson, and Trimble counties, which are among the hardest hit.

And too many Kentucky families are mourning what was taken from them by the storms that can never be replaced.

In Lawrence County, Joyce Chaffins, 65, and her granddaughter, 14-year-old Samantha Wood, died when a tornado struck their home. Samantha was a ninth-grader at Lawrence County High School, where she played in the band and was a member of the National Junior Honor Society.

The storm has also claimed James Gregory Brooks, 48, Donald L. Beemon, 78, and Linda Beemon, 73, of Kenton County.

In Johnson County, in Middle Fork, a tornado ripped the home of Gregory Perry, 20, right off its foundation and carried it over a 25-foot embankment into rushing creek rapids, where, according to the county coroner, the house “just disintegrated.”

Gregory was killed, along with Sean Shepherd, a 16-year-old boy from Prestonsburg who had the misfortune of visiting Gregory at the time.

More lives taken by this destructive force of nature include Sherman DeWayne Allen, 49, Debbie Allen, 49; Wilburn Pitman, 81, Virginia Pitman, 73, and Ethel Pruitt, 64, all of Laurel County.

In Morgan County, husband and wife Charles and Betty Sue Endicott, both in their early 50s, were caring for Charles’s mother, Elizabeth Endicott, 72, after her recovery from a stroke.

A tornado struck their trailer home, killing all three of them. Charles’s sister, Marita Moore, surveyed the scene of destruction and said this: “There’s not even a memory left down there.”

More Kentucky families who do not deserve such a painful loss include the families of Beverly Bowman, 47, Anita Smith, 53, and Vershal Brown, 79, all of Menifee County; and Alex Clayton Dulin, 86, Emma Dean Cecil, 87, and Wilmer Cecil, 90, all of Morgan County.

In Pulaski County, 74-year-old Helen Placke was found dead in her home. She had sought shelter from the storms inside a closet—but to no avail.

In Kenton County, in the town of Falmouth, Courtney Stephenson died when her car was suddenly lifted and catapulted across six lanes of traffic on I-75. She was 42 years old.

It is sobering and humbling, to think about the many wondrous technologies and abilities we have in this great country—from the medical advances that can place tiny tools into the smallest human capillaries, to our scientific discoveries that enable us to send cameras to the outermost edges of the solar system and actually take pictures of other planets and send them back to Earth.

And yet human life is still so fragile when confronted with the powerful forces of the natural world.

I would be remiss, if I did not conclude my remarks with a note of gratitude—and that is gratitude for the many brave and heroic first responders and other Kentuckians who have rushed to the aid of those hardest hit by these storms.

Over the last week, my office has been contacted by people throughout the country asking how they can help. We have pointed them to various places in the Commonwealth where the people on the ground have coordinated incredible assistance to those in need.

Volunteers from the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Goodwill, the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association, the United Way, and the business community have come together to provide food, blood, resources, and shelter to those in need. Many churches and civic organizations have taken up collection drives.

And many Kentuckians of good heart, without any prodding, have on their own simply loaded up their cars with bottled water, food, and whatever else they can spare and driven to scenes of tornado wreckage to ask, “How can I help?”

Government has a key role to play as well. FEMA is on the case. And my friend Senator PAUL and I have sent a letter to the President urging him to approve Governor Steve Beshear’s request for federal assistance.

The Kentucky State Police have played a vital role in collecting water, food, clothing, and other resources, and distributing them to the communities that need them.

And as always, the Kentucky National Guard is in the foreground of disaster relief. More than 220 members of the Kentucky National Guard and Air Guard were mobilized and deployed to 10 counties after Governor Steve Beshear declared a statewide emergency.

Even in the face of such tragedy, the burden on our hearts is eased by the good will and good works of so many Kentuckians willing to serve and come to the aid of their neighbors. It makes me proud to represent the people of Kentucky in this United States Senate.

#### REMEMBERING JIMMY LEE VANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to a man who spent his life working to strengthen his local community and helping the citizens who reside there along the way. Mr. Jimmy Lee Vance of Corbin, KY, encompassed every aspect of a tried and true entrepreneur, and he had the special quality of a generous heart.

Mr. Vance was a religious man who cherished the words of the “red letters” in the Bible, words spoken by Jesus Christ. Those who knew him believe he exemplified the attributes that those letters described, and that it was a creed of love, forgiveness, and grace

by which he lived. Sadly, Jimmy Lee Vance left this world on December 20, 2011, due to complications from cancer. He was 70 years old.

Originally from Hart County, KY, Mr. Vance held an array of jobs before settling down in Corbin permanently. He served his country in the U.S. Navy, and later received a degree in accounting from Western Kentucky University on the GI bill. Jimmy took a job with the Internal Revenue Service’s office in Louisville, KY, and then purchased a Corbin CPA firm, which he spent the next few years building up before eventually selling it to Ms. Mary Lynn Long. Next, Jimmy set his sights on the areas of real estate and business management, and in these fields he would make his greatest contribution to the Commonwealth.

Jimmy honed in on the area surrounding Interstate 75 near Corbin. He and his friends put a major effort into breaking new ground and building from the ground up. After years of planning and construction lead by Mr. Vance, Corbin’s Exit 25 has become one of the most popular stops on I-75. The restaurants, movie theaters, shopping centers, and hotels just off of the exit bring in thousands of travelers each year, courtesy of Jimmy and his innovation and hard work.

Next came the billboards. Mr. Vance knew that in order to entice travelers to enter the city of Corbin, he had to let them know what was waiting for them. Jimmy was really the first man in the area to get into the billboard business. The billboards undeniably led to massive tourism in the area, and Jimmy knew this. It is amazing that advertising in its simplest form, along with Jimmy’s innovative imagination and hard work could combine for such a home-run success for the area’s economy.

Mr. Vance was instrumental in virtually every field of business in Corbin. He had help in large part from his wife Donna Barton, who was one of his best business assets. Together they owned and operated the Landmark Inn, and Donna was notorious for catering to the needs of all the Landmark Inn’s guests. The couple’s customer service was unmatched, and the family atmosphere they provided was an experience unlike any other to the people who would stay the night while traveling on I-75.

Along with hotels, Jimmy was responsible for bringing many different businesses to the area, which resulted in hundreds of new jobs for the residents of Corbin. But what truly stood out about Jimmy to the locals was his remarkable character. One Corbin-area leader said, “Sometimes when Jimmy and I had lunch, someone would come up needing money for a meal or pay bills, and Jimmy without any fanfare gave them help. Those were things about Jimmy you didn’t read in the papers.”

Jimmy Lee Vance was a humble servant of God, a beloved family man, and

a dear friend to many. All of us could learn a thing or two from Jimmy. His moral code and business skills were an inspiration to young entrepreneurs of all types. He lit a fire inside them, and that is what true leadership is all about. Jimmy's life may have come to an end, but his legacy will continue to live on; he inspired others to do great things.

At this time I would like to ask my colleagues in the Senate to join me in commemorating the life and times of Mr. Jimmy Lee Vance, a true American entrepreneur and philanthropist.

A news article was recently published in Corbin, Kentucky's own Times-Tribune newspaper, recognizing the achievements Mr. Vance made throughout his lifetime. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Times-Tribune, Feb. 13, 2012]

JIMMY LEE VANCE—REMEMBRANCES OF JIMMY LEE VANCE

BORN SEPTEMBER 29, 1941—DIED DECEMBER 20, 2011

Jimmy Lee Vance was born in Hart County September 29, 1941, and raised on a small farm by his parents, the late Lee Walter and Eva Vance. He was preceded in death by his sister, Norma Reed. He graduated from Canmer High School and served in the U.S. Navy. He received an honorable discharge and used a military G.I. Bill scholarship and graduated with a BS degree in accounting from Western Kentucky University. Jimmy and his first wife, Mildred, had two children: Jason Vance (wife Kim) of Corbin, and daughter Kim (husband Shannon Rahn) of Richmond Hill, Georgia. Jimmy later married Donna Barton in 1990, and they were together until his death December 20. He left two step-children, Amber Noell and Kari Moore, and eight grandchildren, Erika Vance, Hunter Rahn, Wes Rahn, Lee Vance, Jaci Beth Noell, Lauren Moore, Jaken Noell, and Ryan Moore, and a sister, Virginia Patenaude and husband Pat of Canmer, Kentucky.

Jimmy worked for the Internal Revenue Service's Louisville office and later purchased Henry Martin's respected Corbin CPA firm. Jimmy continued the growth of the business and later sold it to Mary Lynn Long. Jimmy then focused his attention on real estate and business development. He and his partners transformed the land near Corbin's I-75 Exit 25 on Cumberland Falls Highway. This is one of the most formidable business areas off the I-75 Expressway, with the opportunity for continued growth. He was a business leader willing to take risks, with a vision of not just seeing how things are now, but how they could become with initiative and creativity.

A major Technology Center now managed by Corbin High School was one of Corbin's first major operations built on land Jimmy and his partners developed. Many meetings and training sessions have been conducted in this facility, including Chamber of Commerce luncheons, wedding receptions, and political events which have brought many people to our area. The Technology Center is impressive and will be a key asset to our area for many years.

The Corbin Arena rests on top of a mountain facing across Cumberland Falls Highway toward the Baptist Regional Medical Center and west to I-75 Exit 25. This majes-

tic entertainment center would never have happened if Jimmy and his partners and government leaders had not worked together to make it possible. The location of the arena on top of the mountain, right or wrong, can't be blamed on Jimmy. His group helped make this location for the arena possible. The challenge in making it a success rests on the shoulders of our local leaders and all of us.

Many of us enjoy visiting Applebee's or Dino's or Fiesta Mexicana for an enjoyable meal. Exit 25 has 40,000 cars and trucks pass by each day on I-75, and many stop off to eat, shop, buy gasoline, or stay in our motels. PT Pro's attractive Therapy Center adorns this property developed by Jimmy and his group. Several young business leaders such as Darryl and Mark Lawson told me, "Jimmy wasn't too busy to give us good suggestions on real estate, or tax issues, or good business ideas. He helped us so much." Sometimes when Jimmy and I had lunch, someone would come up needing money for a meal or pay bills, and Jimmy without any fanfare gave them help. Those were things about Jimmy you didn't read in the papers.

For years he and Donna owned and operated the Landmark Inn, which has been a key place for many travelers to stop for rest on tiring trips. A good Redhound buddy, Bob Coleman, who passed away last year, often came to Corbin from Bristol to see Redhound games and friends. Employees at Landmark took good care of Bobby. Jimmy and his family also owned at one time the Best Western Motel. Jimmy told me about Donna's knowledge in handling business decisions. Donna has been a valuable person in Jimmy's businesses program.

When Jimmy purchased the Holiday Inn in Williamsburg, he had a billboard on the property. It wasn't long until Jimmy was in the billboard business, and soon there were many billboards in our area. We take for granted that people will stop off the interstate and do business in our area. Jimmy's billboards brought many travelers off the interstate to businesses.

Jimmy purchased the Eagle Falls property, which could have been a great addition for Cumberland Falls State Park. Jimmy drove me on a tour of the Cumberland Falls State Park Camping and Recreation Vehicle area, and it was running out of space. Jimmy's property near the Falls area could have provided additional space to enhance the ability of Cumberland Falls to grow and offer more services. This dream of Jimmy's wasn't completed. Jimmy focused attention on the fact that Cumberland Falls State Park for years has not been promoted and expanded into the type of great attraction it could be. This beautiful and scenic place could become a major attraction for a large segment of the eastern part of our nation. It needs a golf course and some remodeling. Eighteen Kentucky State Parks have golf courses, but the big one closest to a highly travelled interstate highway, Cumberland Falls State Park, has no golf course. Some of Jimmy's close business partners have been Dr. Don Barton, David Myers, Harold Huddleston, David Rossi, Boyce Worley, Darrell Sanders, Becky Myers, and John Warren. Also included was the late Dave Hudson, who was a special friend with Jimmy.

Today many of us enjoy seeing movies at the Tri-County Cineplex, and Nelda Collings Barton, her daughter Suzie, and son-in-law Greg Razmus built this impressive complex on a site developed by Jimmy and his partners. Nelda and the Razmus family are a valuable entrepreneur team that has been so helpful in many ways to our community. It hurts when you lose entrepreneurs in local communities and areas. They create jobs in your own hometown. They help create other small business leaders who learn from them

and take on that same spirit. Jimmy, Donnie Witt and I had lunch each month and sometimes talked about the Bible. Jimmy said, "I love the 'Red' Letters in the New Testament because they are a simple message from Christ. They are words built on love, forgiveness, and grace."

Jimmy suffered a very damaging stroke in 2008, but with the help of his family was soon back working on his projects. Sometimes it was a struggle, but Jimmy kept going. A short time prior to his death, tests determined he had an advance problem with lung and bone cancer.

During Jimmy's last days in Baptist Regional Medical Center, he was well cared for by the medical staff and his family. Rev. Bobby Joe Eaton, Chaplain of the Medical Center, "ministered unto Jimmy with love and prayer." Bobby Joe is a wonderful blessing in our community.

Each time I visited Jimmy in the hospital in his last days, son Jason was by his side and Jimmy's daughter, Kim, came from Savannah to be with him. Frequently Jimmy's handsome red-headed grandson Lee was there giving support to his grandpa. Soon after Jimmy's death, Donna had a liver transplant and is recovering very well. The Barton family has shown great courage these last years as they have dealt with those difficult experiences in life we will all face at some time. Joan Barton has been an inspiration to all of us as she has recovered from a serious accident and has stood strong with her husband Don and their family.

In closing, there is an old song that sometimes comes to mind during times of sorrow and sadness. It is titled, "Jesus Walked this Lonesome Valley." The words of one verse remind us of a journey we will face at the end of our lives when we say goodbye to family and friends and cross over to a new life with God.

"We must walk that lonesome Valley,

We have to walk it by ourselves.

Oh, nobody else can walk it for us,

We have to walk it by ourselves."

Our God walks that lonesome valley by our side and loved ones and friends give us comfort and love as we depart. God is with us as we begin our new life.

#### THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF 3-11

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, yesterday the world marked the anniversary of the triple tragedy—the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis—that struck Japan on March 11 of last year. I rise today to commemorate that heartbreaking day for our good friend and ally and to pay tribute to the remarkable resilience of the Japanese people in the face of this unprecedented series of catastrophic events. Even as Japan labors to rebuild devastated regions in the northeast, it continues to make enormous contributions to the international community, so let's take this moment to acknowledge the ambitious reconstruction effort underway in Japan and its indispensable role in world affairs.

Any one of these three events—a magnitude 9.0 earthquake that destroyed entire towns and villages, a tsunami that swept away thousands, and the ensuing nuclear crisis at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant—would have been enough to overwhelm and paralyze any country, any government. To