

role in the formation of Appalachian Computer Services in London. He also had a hand in Laurel Insurance Company and worked in the printing industry. In his spare time, G.W. loved UK athletics, rarely missing a home game.

G.W. was a close personal friend to me and a strong support of mine going back to 1984. I will always be thankful for his belief in me and his help over the decades. It was a pleasure to see him every time I made my way to London. I will miss our friendship.

Elaine and my prayers go to G.W.'s family, including his wife Elizabeth; his daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and Hal McCoy; his son and daughter-in-law, George William and Becky; his son and daughter-in-law, Winston and Shannon; his sister, Margaret Fouts; his five grandchildren; and many other friends and family members. G.W. was preceded in death by his parents, George W. Sr. and Willie Lee, and his brother William.

Mr. President, I ask my U.S. Senate colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of Mr. George Washington "G.W." Griffin and extending sympathies to the Griffin family. Kentucky is poorer for his loss.

An obituary detailing Mr. Griffin's incredible life appeared in the Laurel County-area publication the Sentinel Echo. I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[The Sentinel Echo, December 23, 2011]

GEORGE WASHINGTON 'G.W.' GRIFFIN—OWNER OF LAUREL GROCERY COMPANY

LAUREL COUNTY, KY.—George Washington "G.W." Griffin, 85, died December 19, 2011, from complications of pneumonia.

Born on February 28, 1926, in East Bernstadt, Griffin attended the Kentucky Military Institute, Wake Forest University and graduated from the University of Kentucky, where he was a member of the Kappa Alpha Fraternity. Having served in World War II, he was a proud veteran of the United States Navy.

He was a member of the First Baptist Church. He was a founding member and past president of the London Country Club and long-time member of Biltmore Forest Country Club. He served on the board of trustees of the University of Kentucky for 16 years, which is how he met his partner in crime and close friend, the late, great Dr. Otis Singletary. Griffin was past chairman of Laurel Grocery Company, Cumberland Valley National Bank, Institutional Distributors, London Rotary Forms, and the Food Marketing Education Council (the Red Coats). He was a board member of Cumberland College, National-American Wholesale Grocers Association, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Appalachian Computer Systems, and the Kentucky Grocers Association. He was an initial inductee into the Kentucky Grocers Hall of Fame. An avid golfer and thoroughbred horse owner/racing enthusiast, he traveled all over the world to pursue his passions, but his favorite place was always the great state of Kentucky. A diehard UK fan, Griffin never missed a home football game until he became too ill to attend.

He was preceded in death by his brother, William "Bill" Griffin.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Elizabeth Park "Sis" Griffin, and sister Margaret Fouts of Lacey, Wash.

The couple have three children, Elizabeth (Hal) McCoy of Hopkinsville, Ky.; George William (Becky) Griffin of Lexington; and Winston (Shannon) Griffin of London; and five grandchildren, Winston Park Griffin, Charlotte Grace Griffin, Griffin Bell McCoy, Catherine Rose Griffin, and Bella James Griffin.

The Griffin family extends heartfelt gratitude to Don Dossett for his loving care and assistance with G.W. Griffin these last two years.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday at First Baptist Church, 804 W. 5th Street, London, with Dr. Terry Lester officiating.

Burial will be in A.R. Dyche Memorial Park.

Visitation will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at House-Rawlings Funeral Home, 510 E. 4th Street, London.

Memorial contributions can be made to George W. Griffin Charitable Scholarship Trust, PNC Institutional Investments, 1900 East 9th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44114, Attn: Lauren Middleton.

CONSTITUTION DAY OBSERVANCE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this Monday, September 17, our Nation celebrated one of our greatest founding documents the document that has guided the discourse of our great Nation for 225 years. Every September 17, we celebrate Constitution Day.

Americans of all walks of life are united by the ideals of equal justice, limited government, and the rule of law. It was the vision and determination of the Founders who wrote and signed the Constitution that makes our celebration today possible.

More than two centuries ago, the Founders met in Philadelphia to create a constitution that would preserve liberty and foster freedom. They established three separate branches of government and a system of checks and balances among them. Ours is still the oldest written Constitution in use in the world.

The most important purpose of Constitution Day is to teach these lessons to the younger generations. I am pleased to say that the Kentucky Department of Education has made resources available to secondary schools across the Commonwealth to help them recognize this special day.

The University of Kentucky marked Constitution Day by inviting speakers and holding historical forums. And at the University of Louisville, Constitution Day was celebrated with a constitution quiz bowl and constitution cupcakes.

So on this day, we recognize the students, teachers, and community leaders in Kentucky and across the Nation who promote and protect the ideals of our glorious Constitution.

We also say a special thanks for our men and women in uniform who defend it.

More than two centuries ago, the 39 signers of our Constitution gave us a more perfect union through a document that endures and guides us here today.

They understood, as we all must, that above all, government serves to

secure the blessings of liberty for the people of our great Nation. It is an honor to stand on this floor and recognize how we have reaped the fruit of their efforts these many years later.

REMEMBERING GEORGE JOHN 'G.J.' SMITH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a Kentuckian who was a coach, athletic director, and teacher to many and a confidant and good friend to even more. Kentucky mourns the passing of Mr. George John Smith of London, KY, who passed away on August 17 of this year at the age of 59.

Known as G.J. to his many players, friends, and fellow baseball fans, Mr. SMITH was a Laurel County native born in 1953. He began his coaching career at Laurel County High School in 1977. When he stepped down from that position 26 years later, he was ranked among the winningest high school baseball coaches in Kentucky with over 600 victories.

G.J. was also the athletic director at South Laurel and the Laurel County Board of Education. He was inducted into the Laurel County Sports Hall of Fame and the Kentucky High School Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He was also a member of Mt. Zion Church of Christ.

In college, G.J. played basketball at the University of Kentucky under coach Adolph Rupp. He is survived by his wife Judy; two sons, Cameron and Trey; a sister and brother-in-law, Charlie Jean and Terry Mack; and many other beloved family members and friends.

I ask my U.S. Senate colleagues to join me in extending sympathies to the family of G.J. Smith as well as his many friends and players. As the home of Pee Wee Reese and the Louisville Slugger, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has certainly contributed more than its share to America's greatest pastime. I am pleased the legacy of G.J. Smith will be remembered as a part of the Bluegrass State's baseball history as well.

Mr. President, an article describing G.J. Smith's life of achievement recently appeared in the Whitley County-area publication the Times Tribune. I ask unanimous consent that said 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, Aug. 20, 2012]

G.J. SMITH: 1953-2012

FORMER WILDCAT, COACHING LEGEND
DEAD AT 59

(By Chris Parsons)

LONDON.—The Commonwealth of Kentucky lost one of its sports legends Friday when G.J. Smith, former Kentucky Wildcat and long time Laurel County coach and athletics director, died of a heart attack at the age of 59.

Smith was considered an ambassador of sports in Laurel County on many occasions