

He still remains devoted to non-violence and equality for all.

In 1986, JOHN was elected to serve as the U.S. Representative for Georgia's Fifth Congressional District, where he continues to serve his constituency and do remarkable work for the State of Georgia.

He has been a loyal colleague and friend, and an invaluable member of the Georgia Congressional Delegation. JOHN LEWIS's unwavering ethical and moral principles have garnered admiration and respect from his colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I am honored to have known him.

Today, let us honor Mr. LEWIS, who stood boldly against those who resisted racial equality. JOHN's legacy will be remembered as one of great importance in American history.

Like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks, JOHN continues to inspire those of us around him to fight for what we believe in.

I hope we can all learn from the remarkable life of Congressman JOHN ROBERT LEWIS of Georgia.

THE ARMY'S 238TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, tomorrow—June 14—marks the Army's 238th birthday. For 238 years, the Nation has entrusted the Army with preserving its peace and freedom, and defending its democracy. Since its beginnings as the Continental Army during our Revolutionary War, to its instrumental role in the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has always served America admirably and I have every confidence that it will continue in this proud mission.

The United States Army existed before there even was a United States to speak of. The Continental Army was established on June 14, 1775. It was composed of rebellious colonists who had little or no experience in soldiering. Despite these humble beginnings, General George Washington led the Continental Army and against overwhelming odds they defeated the more seasoned and well-equipped British ground forces. Following the end of the Revolutionary War, the Continental Army was disbanded but that action was followed by the official creation of the U.S. Army on June 3, 1784. Since then, our Army has become the model against which all other nations' armies are measured.

The Army's birthday coincides with Flag Day, a holiday that commemorates our Nation's adoption of the U.S. flag. I believe this is fitting as our Nation's flag would not exist were it not for the bravery and sacrifice of our Army; and since its adoption, the Army has always carried our Nation's flag into battle.

With the withdrawal of our military forces in Iraq and the drawdown of those forces in Afghanistan, I am concerned that our soldiers who have recently entered—or are about to enter—civilian life will not be provided with

the tools to adapt to their new lives. Veteran unemployment, post-traumatic stress, and active duty military/veteran suicides continue to be serious issues and they must be addressed. If a soldier is able to excel on the battlefield, then I see no reason why that same soldier should not be able to excel in the classroom, in a hospital, or in the boardroom. We have to provide our servicemen and women with the tools to help them achieve these goals. Doing so is not a hand-out, but rather a "hand up" that strengthens our Nation, since it redounds to the benefit of all Americans. Ultimately, we have to continue to give these men and women a stake in their own country.

Since 1775, American soldiers have been the strength and sinew of our Nation. Our soldiers are driven by the ideals of the Warrior Ethos and commit themselves to succeed in any mission our Nation asks of them. Our soldiers believe that our Constitution and the freedom it guarantees are worth fighting for. They sacrifice their personal comfort and safety to answer a higher calling: service in the cause of freedom, both here at home for Americans, but also abroad for foreign peoples.

I am awed by our servicemen and women's ability to adapt and succeed in a mission that at various stages has called upon them to be scholars, teachers, policemen, farmers, bankers, engineers, social workers, and, of course, warriors—often all at the same time. Above all, I am perpetually thankful for their willingness to serve, and have the greatest of faith in their ability to face the difficult and dangerous missions that lie ahead. These patriots have always been the strength of the Nation. The unwavering dedication to duty, to our country, and to all Americans is embodied in the Army motto, which is inscribed on top of the Department of the Army's official emblem "This we'll defend." For 238 years, our Army has lived by these words, protecting us so that our society may be free. Let us remember our Army soldiers for this achievement today, and wish them a happy 238th birthday.

FLAG DAY

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, as do all West Virginians, I feel a special surge of emotion every time I see the American flag. After all, Old Glory is the most enduring symbol of our country, representing the unity of our people and the cause of liberty and justice for all.

But the Star Spangled Banner is also the most recognized symbol of freedom wherever it flies in the world, a powerful inspiration to people everywhere who are "yearning to breathe free," as it is inscribed on the Statue of Liberty.

Every day, Americans all across this great land pledge their allegiance to the flag of the United States. We salute it; we fight for it; we cherish it; we honor it.

But one day a year, we pay special honor to our flag. We set aside every

June 14th as Flag Day, commemorating the date in 1777 when the Continental Congress officially made the Stars and Stripes the symbol of America.

Tomorrow, my office is planning special events in West Virginia commemorating Flag Day. Members of my staff will be presenting American flags to selected organizations all across the State that have requested flags:

To veterans in Logan at the "Spirit of the Doughboy" statue, which honors the victorious American soldiers of World War One.

To the Veterans Museum of Mid-Ohio Valley in Parkersburg, which pays tribute to West Virginians who have fought to preserve this country's freedom.

To Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, in conjunction with its Team River Runner program which includes kayaking programs for wounded warriors and their families.

To American Legion Post 33, in Sutton, honoring them for conducting memorial services for veterans in Braxton County.

To the City Council of Wardensville, to be displayed at the Wardensville Town Office.

To the "Here and There" Transit of Philippi, as part of the dedication of its new operations facilities.

And to the West Virginia Northern Community College in Wheeling, which only last month opened its Applied Technology Center to veterans and other students.

Flag Day has a special significance to West Virginia. Our State was born out of the fiery conflict of the Civil War, and next week we will celebrate our 150th birthday.

In that terrible war, West Virginians had a choice of two flags. We chose to follow the Stars and Stripes and in doing so, West Virginia became the 35th star on that Grand Old Flag.

So as we prepare for our State's 150th birthday celebration, I urge all West Virginians to join me in celebrating Flag Day—by displaying the flag that from the first days of America came to symbolize a "new constellation" of hope and freedom and from the first days of West Virginia came to represent an allegiance to our remarkable Constitution.

In doing so, we honor not only our flag, but also the ideals on which America was founded as well as the generations of Americans who have defended those ideals in battle, always ensuring at the end of the fight that "our flag was still there."

The Star Spangled Banner is a symbol of their sacrifice and our faith.

Not long after Congress officially adopted the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States, George Washington said, "We take the stars from Heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

But a little poem I learned as a child from my Uncle Jimmy perfectly captures how I feel about the American flag even now:

It's only some stripes of red and white.
It's only some stars on a field of blue.
It's only a little cotton flag.
Does it mean anything to you?
Oh yes it does,
For beneath its folds
Our people are safe at land and sea.
It stands for a land where God is still king,
And His truth and His freedoms are free.
So let us love it well
And keep it pure as our banner of liberty.

This "little cotton flag" is displayed proudly in our homes, in our schools, in our businesses, over the Capitol and the White House, in parades and ballparks, on the field of battle, and on the graves of the heroes who fought in those battles.

It has flown from the tops of mountains, from the 9/11 rubble of Ground Zero, over the scarred wall of the Pentagon and from the surface of the moon—not once, not twice, but six times.

May our beautiful flag ever wave, and may God ever bless the country for which it stands.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING SCOTT BLACKMUN

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I would like to congratulate Mr. Scott Blackmun of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USOC, on recently being named Sports Business Journal's 2013 Sports Executive of the Year. Scott has shown real leadership as the chief executive officer of the United States Olympic Committee, a position in which he has served for the past 3 years. He has represented Colorado with distinction on that committee, and he fully deserves this recognition for his work and commitment to international athletic excellence.

Scott has revamped the U.S. Olympic Committee since his appointment in 2010, bringing results both on and off the field of competition. Under his leadership, the USOC has been able to partner with several new sponsors, negotiate a revenue-sharing agreement with the International Olympic Committee, and oversee a U.S. Olympic team that won the most Gold Medals at the 2012 London Olympic Games. Scott also served the USOC capably in multiple previous capacities a decade ago.

A hard worker of high integrity, Scott previously served as chief operating officer of Anschutz Entertainment Group, a major presenter of sports and entertainment events. An accomplished attorney, Scott's skill and work ethic have made him an invaluable asset in the Colorado legal community. I know Scott personally, having worked with him in the past, and I know him to be a diligent yet passionate advocate for clients and causes alike.

It is a privilege to recognize and commend the accomplishments and career of Scott Blackmun. This award is a testament to his commitment to the USOC and to his country. We are proud to be able to say that he is a Coloradoan, and I want to extend my sincere congratulations to Scott, his wife Ann, and their three children.●

GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, Saturday, June 15, 2013, marks the completion of the Great Allegheny Passage. This 150-mile trail provides an uninterrupted, nonmotorized passageway for travelers to hike or bike from Cumberland, MD, to Pittsburgh, PA. The Great Allegheny Passage connects to the C&O Canal Towpath, which leads from Washington, DC, to Cumberland, MD, creating an uninterrupted route between our Nation's Capital and the Forks of the Ohio.

President Theodore Roosevelt once stated, "Conservation means development as much as it does protection." The Great Allegheny Passage is an excellent example of an area that Americans have worked to conserve in such a way. The development of the passage has greatly improved the trail, while preserving its natural beauty for all to enjoy.

The Great Allegheny Passage is a wonderful place for Americans of all ages to engage in our rich cultural history, enjoy the varied natural history of great river valleys, and experience a range from rural to urban communities.

The Great Allegheny Passage significantly benefits the surrounding communities in many ways. Trails increase the quality of life in a community. The proximity to rivers, trails, and greenways is an important factor when people and businesses are deciding where to live or invest in new properties. Employees who work near such areas will reduce their commuting costs by walking or biking to work.

The Great Allegheny Passage increases tourism to the surrounding areas. Americans realize that using such a trail is an environmentally responsible way to spend their time. The trail attracts people to the area, which greatly benefits the local communities. Trail users create a demand for more lodging, restaurants, and sporting equipment stores. New jobs will be created as entrepreneurs continue to bring tourism and service based businesses to the area.

The Great Allegheny Passage is truly a unique path through a significant corridor. I encourage Pennsylvanians and all Americans to enjoy the natural beauty of America by visiting the Great Allegheny Passage, now, and for years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MIHAELA GHITA

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Mihaela Ghita, a

graduating senior at Manchester High School West in Manchester, NH. There is much to celebrate about Mihaela's academic achievements, but one of her most notable accomplishments is that she has never missed a day of school since the day she entered first grade.

Mihaela is an active member of West's school community. She competes in throwing events for the school's track and field team and is also a member of West's gymnastics squad. In addition, Mihaela has gone above and beyond academic requirements by completing an extended learning opportunity, volunteering to read with and tutor the school's special needs students. She is also an active volunteer in the greater Manchester community.

Mihaela's dedication to her education and her commitment to being present to learn every day is truly admirable. As a former public school teacher and parent, I understand and appreciate how unusual and unique it is for a student to attend every day of school for an academic year, but it is truly impressive that she has never missed a day at any point in her studies. The maturity and sense of dedication that Mihaela has demonstrated will serve her well in whatever field she chooses. I am confident that Mihaela will achieve success in her future pursuits.

High school graduation is a special time in a student's life, and I am pleased to rise today to recognize Mihaela's unique attendance accomplishment. However, I would also like to extend my sincerest congratulations to Mihaela and all of her classmates who will be joining her on Saturday, June 15, 2013, for their graduation ceremony. While the students may be heading in different directions, they will always share the common bond of being graduates of Manchester High School West. Once again, I would like to recognize Mihaela Ghita on achieving her exemplary attendance record. I know that her family, her friends, and the entire West community join me in congratulating her and celebrating her many accomplishments.●

TRIBUTE TO RALPH MCGARY

• Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I would like to speak today about an individual in my home State—a gentleman from Carlsbad named Ralph McGary. Because as we work for solutions to our Nation's challenges, I hope that we will always remember one basic thing. There are human beings behind these debates. There are stories of struggle and hardship and of inspiration. What we do here in Washington, DC, has real impact on real lives. What happens here matters in profound ways to millions of Americans, matters to fellow citizens like Ralph McGary, who have sacrificed and worked hard, and who depend on a government that will be there for them in return.