

I look at these young people from Mississippi, Senator, we have overcome so much. [Applause] And we thank you, and we thank all of you, and we thank God. May we pray:

Be with us dear Father, as we take on the challenges of life, not just as government but as business, as private sector and nonprofit sector, as religious leaders, as community leaders, as volunteers, as fathers and mothers, as brothers and sisters, as mothers and sons, and fathers and daughters, bind us together, heal our wounds, calm our spirits and make us always mindful that you came into the world to say you would make all things new, but that you would be with us always. So as we go through many dangers, toils, and snares by your amazing grace, make us always mindful that your presence is in the midst of us. That each of us, because of you, know that we too are your children and that our Father loves us, forgives us, saves us by the mercy that we must share with each other and with the world in which we live. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you, Ambassador Young. And as we conclude this, the 63rd Annual National Prayer Breakfast—depart with these words of God from the Book of Numbers: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.” Amen.

RECOGNIZING THE FIFTH AMERICAN PRISONER OF WAR FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION TO JAPAN

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to honor veterans from America’s “greatest generation” who were held captive as prisoners of war, POWs, by Japan during World War II and to recognize seven veterans—including three from California—who recently participated in a historic trip to Japan to promote reconciliation and remembrance.

At the invitation of the Japanese Government, the veterans were joined by their family members to become the 5th delegation of American POWs to visit Japan as part of the official Japanese-American POW Friendship Program that began in 2010.

These brave men fought in the historic first battles of World War II and endured years of hardship as POWs. This year, as we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, I want to recognize them and honor their service and sacrifice.

Anthony Costa, 95, from Concord, CA, was a private first class in the famed 4th Marine Regiment, also known as the China Marines, which arrived in the Philippines days before the Japanese invasion. He fought to defend the island of Corregidor in the Philippines from December 1941 to May 1942 before he was captured by the Japanese. As a POW, Private Costa was force-marched through Manila and taken to the Cabanatuan prison camp, where thousands of POWs died from starvation, dehydration and abuse. He was then moved to Japan to work as a slave dockworker in the freight yards in and around Osaka before being liberated in September 1945. He was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

William Sanchez, 96, from Monterey Park, CA, was an Army sergeant with

the 59th Coast Artillery assigned to the island of Corregidor in the Philippines where he helped defend the harbor against the Japanese invasion. In May 1942, Sergeant Sanchez and the rest of his division were captured and paraded through the streets of Manila to Bilibid Prison. He was later transported to Japan in the hold of a Japanese hell ship, where he endured a 33-day oceanic journey plagued by dysentery, malaria and malnutrition before reaching Camp Omori. At the POW camp, he was forced to work as a slave laborer and dockworker at the railway yards in Tokyo prior to his liberation in August 1945.

Jack Schwartz, 100, from Hanford, CA, was a Navy lieutenant junior grade serving on Guam when the Japanese Navy attacked the island on December 8, 1941. When Guam fell to the Japanese, Lieutenant Schwartz was taken to a POW camp in Japan where he was repeatedly beaten, starved and provided insufficient clothing to endure the harsh winters. He was sent to several POW camps before being moved to Camp Rokuroshi, which was hidden in the Japanese Alps. After being liberated on September 8, 1945, he remained in the Navy and retired after a distinguished career in 1962.

My constituents were joined on their trip by Daniel Crowley, 92, of Connecticut, an Army Air Corps infantryman who participated in the defense of Bataan and Corregidor; Oral Nichols, 93, of New Mexico, who served as a civilian medic in the historic defense of Wake Island; Warren Jorgenson, 93, of Nebraska, a marine who defended Corregidor; and Darrell Stark, 91, of Connecticut, who served as an Army infantryman on the Bataan Peninsula.

This trip was part of a reconciliation process that, while undoubtedly painful, is critical to help provide closure to POWs and their families and continue building stronger relations between the U.S. and Japan. It is important that this reconciliation program continue so that this history is remembered and the families can continue to heal.

REMEMBERING PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS HEIDI FRIEDMAN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I have the solemn duty of memorializing U.S. Navy PO2 Heidi Jo Friedman, a New Hampshire native who was tragically killed on April 12 at the age of 33. Petty Officer Friedman was serving aboard the aircraft carrier USS *George H. W. Bush* as an engineman, having transferred from Navy Operation Support Center Manchester in January. She entered the Navy in 2002, and previously served on the guided-missile destroyer USS *Ross* and in the Navy Reserve with Amphibious Construction Battalion Two Detachment 101.

Heidi was born on June 28, 1981 to her father Robert, a retired Navy chief petty officer, and her mother Shari

Murray. She graduated from Ledyard High School, in Ledyard, CT, and enjoyed volunteering as a mentor to children and with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Foundation. Heidi was also a lifetime Girl Scout with a passion for rugby and traveling. To those who knew her, Heidi was a loving and caring friend—someone who touched people in a positive way. I know there are many who feel her absence deeply.

Petty Officer Friedman is survived by her mother Shari L. Murray, her father and stepmother Robert B. and Laurie E. Friedman, her grandmother Arlene Canin, her brother Michael L. and wife Erin Friedman, three step-sisters: Jaime and wife Rochelle, Kara and Maria and fiancée Chris; three stepbrothers, Cito and fiancée Lyne, Quique and wife Amanda and Nolan; two nephews, Alexander and Ashton; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring the life and service of PO2 Heidi Jo Friedman.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING SALLY WAGNER

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, too often we forget or take for granted just how important teachers are. I try not to do that because I married one. But the positive impact teachers have on our youth and on society is incalculable. Today, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge one outstanding teacher who is retiring after a distinguished 40-year career—the last 34 years of which have been spent at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, ERHS, in Greenbelt, MD—Ms. Sally S. Wagner. Ms. Wagner is the chair of the Instrumental Music Department at ERHS. In 2005, a Washington Post article took note of Ms. Wagner’s extraordinary achievements as an educator noting, “The school [ERHS] has several legendary teachers, including band director Sally Wagner . . . and a 750-student musical juggernaut with so many ensembles and bands that one can barely keep count.”

For the past several years, we have been properly involved in an effort to improve so-called STEM education in this country. That acronym stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Bolstering STEM education is important for economic competitiveness, national security, and keeping America at the forefront of the technological changes that will make life better for all of humanity. But too many schools, grappling with budget cuts, have scaled back or even eliminated their arts and music curricula. Fortunately, there is burgeoning awareness of the importance of these courses, too. And now people are talking about STEAM, where the “A”