

to care for her three children. The community—like many still, unfortunately, in Alaska—didn't have hospitals or clinics. They didn't have medicine. The Federal Government basically turned a blind eye to the havoc that this disease was wreaking over all of Alaska, particularly in our small villages.

What the community did have was each other. They had food, and they had the bounty of the land. They had elders to help teach the young people in the village the true meaning of subsistence living.

James's mother, Emma, hunted and fished to feed the family, and she and James's uncle taught James how to be a conservationist, only taking enough fish and wild game to survive and ensuring enough was left for other villagers—lessons he has passed on to the younger generations of Alaskans, year after year.

James met his wife Nancy 50 years ago. She lived in another village. He met her when he was out trapping for food. He said:

I walked 52 miles and found my wife at the end of my trapline. It was my best catch [ever].

James's accomplishments are legion. He spent 22 years in the Alaska National Guard, like so many Alaskan Natives who serve at higher rates in the U.S. military than any other ethnic group in the country. He has served on the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Fish and Game Advisory Council, and the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

James travels all around our great State, attending different meetings and testifying at the Board of Fish and Game. He has dedicated his life to fish and wildlife conservation so he can set an example for Alaskans today and future generations, including his own family.

He has 5 children, 15 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. He is so committed to keeping the culture and tradition alive that none of his kids or great grandkids are allowed into his house unless they are able to speak Yupik, the traditional language of his people.

For all his work to help continue a vital tradition of subsistence and conservation in Alaska, James was awarded the conservationist of the year award by the Fish and Wildlife Service this past summer, which he accepted at this year's Alaska Federation of Natives Convention.

For his work, James is our Alaskan of the Week.

Thank you, James, for all you have done for the great State of Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO ALEX SCHENCK

Mr. President, I wish to say a few words about one of the members of my staff, who happens to be on the floor with me right now. Alex Schenck, unfortunately for me, is leaving my office on January 5 to pursue another opportunity in Washington, DC.

Alex has been in my office since 2015. He has been a legislative correspondent and rose to be a legislative aide where he oversaw issues related to my work on both the Environment and Public Works Committee and the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. Most notably and importantly for this body and, I believe, for the entire country, Alex was the key member of my staff who drafted S. 756, the Save Our Seas Act, the SOS Act, an important bipartisan piece of legislation we worked on with Senator WHITEHOUSE and others. It passed the Senate last year.

This legislation, which is awaiting movement in the House, will address a very important issue not only for Alaska but for the entire country, which is the epidemic of marine debris affecting our oceans, our shorelines, inland waterways, coasts across the globe, fish and wildlife habitat, and the health and sustainability of our fisheries.

What Alex was able to do in terms of this bill is very impressive. He brought together an impressive coalition of industry and conservation groups to support the bill. In addition to working on that important legislation—which we are hopeful will move in the House and get signed by the President—Alex ran point on hearings that I chaired at the Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard.

He has a bachelor of science degree from High Point University in North Carolina and a master's degree in applied political science from American University. He is an avid outdoorsman, as you can probably tell. He is a good-natured and extremely hard-working member of my team.

He will be sorely missed. We wish him the very best.

Thank you, Alex.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO KELLY FLYNN

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the distinct honor of recognizing Montana Representative Kelly

Flynn of Broadwater County for his service to the State of Montana. Kelly is currently serving his fourth term in the Montana State Legislature. He continues to serve with an unyielding commitment to his constituents and the well-being of the State, while also fighting cancer. This past November, Kelly made the motion to adjourn the legislative special session, concluding, "Cancer may take my body but it will never take my heart and soul."

Kelly's heart and soul are Montana through and through. Kelly is a rancher and outfitter who serves as chairman of the Montana House of Representatives Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Committee. He has also served on the Governor's Council for Private Lands and Public Wildlife and the Montana Board of Outfitters and is currently serving as a member of the Broadwater County Farm Bureau. Montana has benefited greatly from his decades of service.

Kelly has been a friend of mine for years. His work ethic is exceptional, and he is the best master of ceremonies in Broadwater County. His commitment to others represents the heart and soul of Montana. •

TRIBUTE TO JUNE RYCHALSKI

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the distinct honor of recognizing June Rychalski for her service with the Montana Department of Military Affairs. She has served Montana with grace, diligence, a positive attitude, and genuine care for the people of the Treasure State.

During her 35 years of service, June has been secretary to the senior Army adviser, administrative assistant to the adjutant general, and next month will complete her career with the Montana Veterans Affairs Division. June demonstrated compassion and professionalism on a daily basis. Her ability to help a grieving family member navigate the challenges of veteran burial honors or steer a distressed veteran in the right direction to attain benefits is highly commendable. Her presence in the Montana Department of Military Affairs will be missed, but the mentorship she provided agency personnel over the years will ensure that her legacy endures. To her coworkers, June was regarded as their greatest advocate.

When June retires, she plans to do what she has always done: continue to take good care of others. At age 83, June's example is inspiring. Her work ethic, compassion, and commitment to excellence represent the best of Montana values.

Thank you, June, for your service. I wish you the best in retirement and appreciate all you have done for our State. •

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA JOHNSON

• Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the career of Barbara