

he passed away, to be buried in his staff sergeant uniform; his family complied with that.

Although Emma and Henry were not educated in the true sense of the word by having gone to colleges and universities, their love of education was so strong that all eight of the SALAZAR children have college educations, and some such as KEN, of course, have gone on to graduate from law school and other such things.

KEN SALAZAR farmed for more than 30 years; and he and his lovely wife Hope—who is such a nice, strong person—owned a number of businesses in Colorado. As I recall, I think one of them was a Dairy Queen and I think maybe a couple radio stations.

I had the good fortune of traveling to South America with Hope and KEN, and it was a remarkable trip—Bolivia, Peru, Machu Picchu. It was a wonderful trip, something I will always remember.

But later, after having practiced water and environmental law to protect the health of Coloradans and the beauty of that State—and anyone who has ever been to Colorado knows it is one of the great national treasures we have in our country. It is a beautiful State. But I think what I have learned about the Salazars, and KEN especially, is that if you look at their family, you learn a lot about them. They are a great American family.

When KEN decided to run for the Colorado State attorney general's office, his father Henry was with him all the time. In fact, he had a pickup truck, and he traveled the State with his son. All 64 counties in Colorado they visited. Senator SALAZAR did not do that just once, he has done it many times.

Henry Salazar was not alive long enough to see KEN elected to the Senate, but I can say with certainty that as proud as he was of his son already, his pride would overflow for the Senator who is going to become now a member of President Obama's Cabinet.

That election in 2004 was dramatic. All over the country, we Democrats were hoping to pick up seats. We lost just about everything, except Illinois and Colorado. Two great Senators, two great Americans were elected that year as Democrats: Barack Obama and KEN SALAZAR.

KEN's mother Emma, who is now almost 88 years old, is surely just as proud as her husband Henry was of her son, who will now serve this country as a Cabinet Secretary.

Senator SALAZAR's election, as I have indicated, was one of the few bright spots of 2004, a year that saw us defeated in the Presidential election and all the close congressional races.

Expectations were high for the new Senator from Colorado, and KEN SALAZAR met and exceeded every one of the expectations. While in the Senate, Senator SALAZAR has been a champion for a new defense and foreign policy that keeps us safe, restores our authority in the world, and honors the coura-

geous service of our men and women in uniform. He has helped lead the fight for affordable health care, and to help broaden the State Children's Health Insurance Program. He serves on the Senate Energy Committee, Finance Committee, and Agriculture Committee, and these are tremendous assignments that he received as a young Senator.

He has done so well as a Senator in so many different capacities: as an advocate for clean, affordable, and renewable energy and for protecting our environment and natural resources.

Coloradans have rightly come to love KEN SALAZAR. He is now going to bring this remarkable experience and wisdom, as he leaves the Senate, upon confirmation, to begin a new adventure as President Obama's Secretary of the Interior.

All of us feel his time in the Senate is far too short, but I know his upcoming service to our Nation will in no way take away from the legacy he has left in the Senate. After having served as a Cabinet officer, it will be enhanced. His new role will enhance that.

Senator SALAZAR has a keen understanding of life and of the environmental concerns and needs of Western States such as Colorado and Nevada. He will be a great advocate for the people of both our States and the whole West and our country.

Barack Obama's Cabinet selections have been one of his most approved adventures in Government in a long time: Republicans, Democrats, Independents. I think his appointments to the Cabinet have been so significant. None has been more significant than KEN SALAZAR. To take this great Senator and convince him to be a Cabinet officer says it all. It shows how remarkable both Obama and SALAZAR are; classmates who came here together in 2004.

The most important attribute I have found about KEN SALAZAR, this relatively new Senator, was his ability to be a peacemaker, to reach out and bring us together. He was new here when we were going through the battle dealing with the nuclear option. But he stepped right in, understood what our Constitution was all about, why it was so important that matter be settled, and he was one of the leading advocates of working that out, which he did.

Immigration, a difficult issue. Who, of course, was the leader on that? KEN SALAZAR. Because he wanted a program that was comprehensive and fair to all sides.

As everyone knows, we had a situation with Senator LIEBERMAN that was a unique situation, and it needed to be resolved. Who did that? KEN SALAZAR. KEN SALAZAR wrote in hand the resolution. He is the one who talked to Democrats and Republicans, recognizing we were headed in the right direction.

So he is a peacemaker, not bound by labels but only by his own integrity.

Much of that integrity and moral grounding comes from his faith, which I have heard him discuss in personal conversations with me, downstairs every Wednesday with our Prayer Breakfast, and other places.

I have seen tears well up in his eyes as he talks about the beautiful mountains that surround his home in southern Colorado.

KEN tells the story of those mountains being named by a young priest who was dying. He wakes up delirious, with death close at hand, and looks out at those beautiful mountains, 14,000 foot mountain peaks, to see the Sun coming through those mountains. To the priest, they looked like the blood of Christ, and they were named "Sangre de Cristo," the Blood of Christ, Mountains.

Senator SALAZAR, your abiding faith, your moral grounding, your lifelong love of our country, and your family are treasures that I will never forget, and that will serve you well in years to come. Your colleagues are proud of you, proud of your accomplishments, grateful for your service, and excited for the problems you will solve and the progress you will make for all Americans.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR KEN SALAZAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wanted to come out and join my good friend, the majority leader, in congratulating the Senator from Colorado upon his selection as Secretary of the Interior, but I must say I am kind of sorry to see it.

The first thing I said to Senator SALAZAR is, say it isn't so. I hated to see him leave the Senate. Even though he has been here a relatively short time, he has made an enormous number of friends, I think an incredible contribution to the institution and, of course, to his State as well. I think his passion for the issues the Interior Department deals with overcame what I would have hoped he would have concluded in the end was the right decision, which was to say no to the new President and stay in the Senate.

We hate to see him leave. We think he has been an extraordinarily outstanding and fine Member of this body. I wanted to join with the majority leader and say how much we appreciate his service and how much all of us look forward to continuing to work with him in the coming years in his new and important responsibility as Secretary of the Interior.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate shall now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Chair recognizes for the last time the senior Senator from Colorado.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I thank the Chair, the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island. I thank my great friend the majority leader, Senator REID, for his inspiration and for his leadership of this body and his love for this Nation. I think our journey together in many ways has been a similar journey because if you think about a man from Searchlight, NV, raised in the house where he was raised, raised in the circumstances in which he was raised, working in the mines and being essentially part of the poorest part of Nevada, and yet today he is serving in the Senate as majority leader, that is a pathway that illustrates the opportunity and promise of America.

For his support and his leadership, I will be forever grateful, and for the support from his family, Landra and Rory and all of his children as well. I admire him and admire them. I appreciate the comments that were so heartfelt from him, and I appreciate the comments as well from Senator MCCONNELL.

I thank my colleagues who are here this morning. I know almost everybody took off last night, so the Chamber is not exactly full this morning, but I see both Democrats and Republicans who came to hear me say the last few words I will say from this desk in the U.S. Senate.

Let me start out first by giving tribute to my family. My wonderful wife Hope, and my daughter Melinda, who is at Stanford, my daughter Andrea and my granddaughter who are in Denver today watching us on the Senate floor, they truly are the bedrock of my life. Without them I would not be here, and without them I would not have traveled the 64 counties of my great State of Colorado probably 20 times in the last 10 years because they were always there at my side since they were little, holding up balloons and walking parades and doing all the rest of the things it takes to become part of an elected office in such a large geographic area of Colorado. So today I say thank you, and I love you all very much.

I wish to pay tribute as well to my father Henry. As Senator REID described his history, it is a very true history. He was born into poverty and lived through a lot of sacrifice but always remembered the two most important things in his life, as my brother Congressman SALAZAR often says: No. 1, family; and No. 2, love for country. I think those two values guided him to

achieve what he still at the end of his life considered to be his greatest success, and that is that all eight of his children—all eight of his children—became first generation college graduates. So of my father Henry who taught me so many things about life, I will always be forever proud.

Within his family, as well as within my mother's family, if you look at the genealogy, which I will insert for the RECORD, we started back with Juan de Salazar who was born in 1520 and Juan de Salazar born in 1555, who became one of the original founders of the City of Sante Fe—the City of Holy Faith—NM, and then Jose Bernardo de Salazar. It goes on to the point where I am a 12th generation son of the southwest of New Mexico and Colorado. It is a history I am very proud of. It is a history that I hope is not forgotten. It is a history that for a long time was essentially shoved beneath the dust and was not given the illumination of its reality. I hope in some small part my role here in the Senate has been to give credence as well as to celebrate that history that makes us such a wonderful and diverse America. So I appreciate everything I received from my father's side. Yes, he was a proud soldier in World War II. He was a tough master as we grew up. He made us understand the importance of hard work. He had a strong sense of pride, a strong sense of community and giving back, and a strong sense of love for his family.

My mother Emma likewise in so many ways was a strong spiritual person whom I still today call Saint Emma. I call her Saint Emma because nothing can even shake her from her roots. She is who she is. She has a great faith. She is not afraid to live or die. I remember many times in my life, including the death of my oldest brother Leandro, my mother was the one who held the family together after a tragic accident on our ranch back in 1992. To her selfless—completely selfless—love which she has taught the world and has taught my family, I thank her from the bottom of my heart.

I often have asked my mother: Is there a single person in the world you do not like, or is there a single person in the world you hate? My mother will think about it for a minute, and she will say no. She says: I love everybody. Just as she loves everybody, everybody loves her. So I thank her for her faith and all that she has taught us.

To my brothers and sisters—there are seven of us still left. My oldest brother Leandro, who passed away, taught us a lot about history and about the culture of our community. I remember his days working with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers and then coming back to the ranch and farming and working with us for so long. He is and always will be my hero. I miss him.

To all the rest of my brothers and to my sisters, they have all been the bedrock also of my successes. Today, here

on the floor of the Senate, as I give my farewell address, I have the honor of being joined by Congressman JOHN SALAZAR, who is a Congressman for the Third Congressional District which covers about 65 percent of the State of Colorado. Congressman SALAZAR, in his own way, is a personification of many things that my family stands for. If you look at his history and his profile, he is a farmer, he is a soldier and veteran, he is a businessman. He knows issues such as water. He knows and has taught me so much. As he and I have grown up together, being here in Washington with him has been one of the highlights of my entire life.

I wish to also thank all of my colleagues here, and I will say just a few specific words about them in a few minutes.

In early February, the Senate selects a Member to perform its oldest non-legislative tradition, the reader of George Washington's Farewell Address on the floor of the Senate. In 2006, Senator HARRY REID, the majority leader, gave me the honor of doing that reading. I think Washington's famous words are important for us to remember at this time of transformation in America. In his farewell to public life in 1796, Washington warned us of the dangers of partisanship, of geographic sectionalism, and the politics of division. Washington said:

We are one Nation. With slight shades of differences you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

Washington's Farewell Address is a message to be reborn today. In this moment, in this time, with the inauguration next Tuesday, with this body in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, there is a new hope, with a growing sense that we are all in this together, and we are again becoming the one Nation the first President of the United States of America imagined.

Our next President, Barack Obama, embodies this historic change. He is asking us not to think of ourselves first as red States and blue States but as Americans first, with obligations of service to one another. We can solve our problems, no matter how difficult they are. We can reach the horizon of human possibilities no matter how difficult it might seem, but in order to do that, we must all work together. It is in this spirit of collaboration—of Nation before party, of compromise, of results-driven government—that Americans believe we can get it done this time.

I owe a debt of gratitude to all of you in this Chamber who have guided me in our work over the last several years. I wish to comment specifically just on four or five areas I am very proud of that we have worked on together in the Senate.