

Takasugi was undeterred in his efforts to make America a better place to live. He will be missed by all who knew him. We take comfort in knowing that future generations will benefit from his passion and dedication to justice.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO VA MEDICAL CENTER

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the San Francisco VA Medical Center, SFVAMC, on the occasion of its 75th anniversary. Since its official dedication on November 11, 1934, the SFVAMC has been honoring America's veterans by providing them with accessible, quality health care. Today the center provides state-of-the-art medical, neurological, surgical, and psychiatric care for the more than 310,000 veterans living in northern California.

Were it not for the leadership and persistence of Congresswoman Florence P. Kahn, the SFVAMC might never have come to be. Congresswoman Kahn was the first Jewish woman to serve in the U.S. Congress, and the fifth woman ever to serve in Congress. She was also the first woman to serve on the House Military Affairs Committee. In 1930, Congresswoman Kahn made an appeal to the Federal Board of Hospitalization—the precursor to the Veterans Administration—to build a veterans hospital in San Francisco. At the time, the only facility for veterans in California was in Los Angeles. Congresswoman Kahn recognized that veterans in the northern part of the state were in dire need of services, and worked tirelessly to garner support for building a medical center in San Francisco. I would like to acknowledge and honor the work of Congresswoman Kahn, as her efforts have ultimately improved the lives of countless American veterans.

Today the SFVAMC serves veterans in Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties. The center operates five community-based outpatient clinics that provide primary and mental health care. These clinics offer a variety of services, including those that place veterans in supportive housing, provide case management, and offer individual and vocational counseling.

In addition to providing direct care, the SFVAMC hosts some of the largest funded research programs in the Veterans Health Administration. The Center for Imaging of Neurodegenerative Diseases, for example, works to develop treatments to prevent the development and slow the progression of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, vascular dementia, post traumatic stress disorder, gulf war illness, depression, and other conditions associated with nerve loss in the brain.

Thanks to the Center for Imaging Neurodegenerative Diseases, the SFVAMC's three Medical Science Re-

search Enhancement Award Programs, and partners such as the Veterans Health Research Institute, the SFVAMC is at the forefront of medical research and is working to extend and improve the lives of veterans across the country.

I applaud the staff and volunteers at the SFVAMC for the tremendous service they have provided to our veterans since 1934, and offer my best wishes for many more successful years of delivering care and advancing medical research. Please join me in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the SFVAMC.●

REMEMBERING KENNETH BACON

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, as an accomplished journalist who served as spokesman for two Secretaries of Defense, Ken Bacon crafted a unique and forceful voice.

Then, as President of Refugees International, he lent that voice to those who needed it most.

When he died last month, the powerful and the destitute alike lost a trusted and beloved friend.

Ken Bacon was famously bespectacled, bow-tied, warm and whip-smart. He was someone who commanded your respect and won your affection in equal measure.

As a young intern, Bacon launched his journalistic career with a front-page Wall Street Journal story about a new car repair system that one mechanic had called "the greatest thing since girls." In the decades that followed, he went on to cover the Federal Reserve, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Pentagon. Bacon was also a talented editor who never stopped writing on a dazzlingly wide array of topics, from banking reform to a crack addict's rehabilitation. In the last months of his life, he also wrote movingly and pointedly about health care reform and his struggles with the melanoma that eventually took his life.

Bacon's conscientious work earned the admiration of those he reported on. Defense Secretary William Perry finally convinced him to work from the other side of the podium. Bacon was unfailingly well-prepared, using the same skills that made him a standout reporter to anticipate reporters' questions and offer satisfyingly detailed answers.

He excelled as a spokesman because he never lost his respect for his former colleagues or for the truth. When things got tough, he did not revert to hollow spin or talking points designed to misdirect. He was not interested in "gotcha games." Ken Bacon became a Pentagon spokesman because he believed he had an obligation to inform the public, and he took that duty seriously.

It was as Pentagon spokesman that Ken first encountered the problem that would become his defining passion and the capstone on his life's work. In 1999, he visited a refugee camp during a trip

to the Balkans with Defense Secretary William Cohen. What he saw changed the last decade of his life—not to mention the lives of the countless refugees he helped.

Ken Bacon was transformed by the plight of those who had lost their homes to war. When he left the Pentagon, he became President of Refugees International in 2001.

Beneath his intellectual demeanor, Ken Bacon always had a sweet side. He fought for people displaced from their homes by war, civil conflict, famine, and drought. This mission gave Bacon's life new meaning, and it gave the refugee community a very powerful champion.

Ken Bacon's stellar reputation, his influence in a city that depends on known commodities, and his Pentagon credentials proved to be enormously helpful in calling attention to the plight of the powerless—including the humanitarian advocates who struggled to be heard in official Washington. Bacon's name and his voice lent legitimacy to causes too easily overlooked by those accustomed to defining America's mission abroad based on a very narrow definition of our security and our interests. Ken understood that our shared humanity belonged at the very center of that conversation—and he used his unique talents and energy to ensure that it was.

He saw the impressive effort to care for European refugees in the former Yugoslavia, and he wanted to ensure that it became the rule worldwide—not the exception. Ken visited refugee camps in forgotten corners of the world, from Cambodia to Colombia. He wanted to make sure that no refugee—anywhere slipped through the cracks.

Ken Bacon was tireless. Essays, speeches, press conferences, advocacy he threw himself into his work and refugees everywhere benefitted.

Ken's newsroom training and strategic thinking often put him ahead of the curve. He sounded an early alarm about the genocide in Darfur. He was also a forceful champion for Iraqi refugees—first decrying our neglect, and then urging on our actions as the State Department's funding for Iraqi refugees increased tenfold between 2006 and 2008.

Our sympathies are with Darcy, Ken's wife of 43 years; with his daughters Sarah and Katherine, to whom he was absolutely devoted, and with his father, brother and two grandchildren. Ken Bacon gave voice to the voiceless. All who were fortunate enough to know him will miss him greatly. Many who never met him have benefitted from his work, and many more will continue to do so.

Recently, Ken and his wife Darcy raised the seed money for a new Refugees International center to address "the needs of the tens of millions expected to be displaced by climate change." The Ken and Darcy Bacon Center for the Study of Climate Displacement will undoubtedly be a valuable voice in raising attention to what

is poised to become a staggering refugee crisis in the years to come. We only wish that Ken were still with us to help us meet this new challenge.

In newsrooms and humanitarian organizations, in windswept tent cities forgotten by most but never forsaken by Ken, an exceptional, exemplary life is being retold, mourned, and celebrated.●

CONGRATULATING MARK DAVIS

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Mark Davis of Granby, CT, for his 25 years of service in television news on WTNH Channel 8 in Connecticut. Mark has been “on the air” throughout our State in a variety of capacities over the years, and we honor him today for his generous spirit and his impeccable commitment to impartial and informative journalism.

With more than 35 years of broadcasting experience, Mark has taken an evenhanded approach to the news that he delivers with the kind of “plain talk” that engages a broad audience across our State. Mark made his first splash in Connecticut with his acclaimed radio show “Dial Mark Davis” and later as the host of Connecticut’s first morning news show, “Good Morning Connecticut.” He has been awarded several Emmys throughout his career and each stands as a testament to his talent and hard work.

Mark has said one of his favorite quotes of all time comes from U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, who said that so much in life is more nuanced than it seems because it is “determined by the majority and subject to change.” This attitude captures, in many ways, what makes Mark’s reporting fresh and relevant: though we live in a world where constant and often polarized judgments are made, in the end, nearly everyone and everything is subject to change. Mark’s careful and nuanced presentation of the news reminds us of this important lesson.

Mark Davis is a fairminded and evenhanded journalist. That is one big reason why Connecticut citizens have named him the best television reporter in the State, according to Connecticut Magazine. Mark understands, as the best journalists do, that to be a journalist is to bear witness, and that is no easy task.

Mark has a special place in the hearts and minds of Connecticut citizens. He performs an essential service that is essential to our democratic and liberal society. I am proud to have worked with Mark over the years, to have shared many of the big moments of my career with him, and now to thank and honor him for his continued service to Connecticut.●

REMEMBERING DAVID A. BAKER

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to express my sympathy over the

loss of Newton, NH, Deputy Fire Chief David A. Baker. Following more than five decades of distinguished public service, Deputy Baker lost his battle with cancer.

Deputy Baker exemplified a life lived for others. His devotion to the greater Newton community could be seen following the crippling ice storm of December 2008. Despite suffering from severe pain caused by his yet to be discovered cancer, Deputy Baker was instrumental in coordinating efforts to help his community respond and recover from this major natural disaster.

Deputy Baker’s service can be neither overstated nor limited to his work with the Newton Fire Department. During the summer, Deputy Baker, who also owned a successful tree service business, would close his business to help fight wildfires across the United States and Canada in his capacity as a western wildland firefighter. Additionally, he served his State and country as a member of the National Guard in his younger days.

Deputy Baker was always eager to share his loves of fire service and forestry with others. He would often sacrifice his own time for the benefit of others. You could often find him helping students study for an exam or teaching a class on fire attack. Deputy Baker’s role as a mentor was something he held in high esteem, and by the number of firefighters and uniformed personnel who attended his funeral, it is clear that others also had a great deal of respect for what he accomplished.

New Hampshire is proud of citizens such as Deputy Chief David Baker, and his countless actions are worthy of this distinction. He will be missed dearly by all those who knew him, and his generosity will be missed by all.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring Newton, NH, Deputy Fire Chief David A. Baker.●

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, 8 years since one of the most devastating attacks in our Nation’s history, we still feel the pain and horror of that terrible day. We will never forget the nearly 3,000 lives lost on September 11, 2001, innocent victims of a heinous and cowardly terrorist attack on our country. We will be forever grateful to the countless first responders and fire fighters who courageously risked their lives to save so many.

In the wake of such a horrific tragedy, we came together to share our loss and seek a greater purpose. Our Nation was founded on the most enduring values of freedom, liberty, and opportunity that have made us resilient during even the greatest trials. We must continue to call on that great strength today, even as we continue to grieve for those we lost.

In West Virginia, we remember Dr. Paul Ambrose of Barboursville and Mary Lou Hague of Parkersburg. Their

lives were taken too soon and their families remain in our hearts and prayers forever. I know that not even time can lessen the emptiness and pain they must feel.

For them, and so many others—parents and children, brothers, sisters, and friends, loved ones who died so needlessly—we pledge to keep our people safe, make our country stronger than ever before, and honor their memories always.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a treaty which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS DELIVERED TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2009 RELATIVE TO HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION—PM29

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was which was ordered to lie on the table:

To the Congress of the United States:

When I spoke here last winter, this Nation was facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. We were losing an average of 700,000 jobs per month. Credit was frozen. And our financial system was on the verge of collapse.

As any American who is still looking for work or a way to pay their bills will tell you, we are by no means out of the woods. A full and vibrant recovery is many months away. And I will not let up until those Americans who seek jobs can find them; until those businesses that seek capital and credit can thrive; until all responsible homeowners can stay in their homes. That is our ultimate goal. But thanks to the bold and decisive action we have taken since January, I can stand here with confidence and say that we have pulled this economy back from the brink.

I want to thank the members of this body for your efforts and your support in these last several months, and especially those who have taken the difficult votes that have put us on a path to recovery. I also want to thank the American people for their patience and resolve during this trying time for our Nation.

But we did not come here just to clean up crises. We came to build a future. So tonight, I return to speak to