

I am proud to stand with my colleagues in the Senate to commemorate Armenia's independence and continue to support the Armenian people.

200TH EDITION OF THE FARMERS'
ALMANAC

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, since the first edition in 1818, the Farmers' Almanac has become an American institution, an informative and entertaining mix of weather, agriculture, humor, and common sense. With the 2017 issue now in print, it is a pleasure to recognize the 200th edition of this venerable publication and to celebrate Maine's remarkable Geiger family that makes it possible.

For its first 137 years, the Farmers' Almanac was published in Morristown, NJ. In 1955, Ray Geiger, who became the almanac's sixth editor in 1934, moved operations to Lewiston, ME, believing—quite correctly—that my State's New England heritage better reflected the publication's guiding ethic of sustainable, simple living.

Ray Geiger led the Farmers' Almanac for 60 years, its longest serving editor. Upon his passing in 1994, his son Peter took the reins after 15 years as associate editor. That same year, Sandi Duncan was named managing editor, the first woman almanac editor in American history.

Under this leadership team, circulation has grown from 86,000 in the 1930s to more than 4 million today. In addition, the almanac's timeless qualities have stepped into the age of technology with an engaging, interactive website and a Facebook page with more than 1 million followers.

Readers enjoy the Farmers' Almanac for its humorous essays, trivia, and advice on everything from gardening to relationships, but the long-range weather forecasts remain its hallmark. The time-tested, highly secret mathematical and astronomical formula produces 16-month forecasts for seven different U.S. climate zones with a significant record of accuracy. In fact, the CEO of a major airline recently confirmed that Farmers' Almanac forecasts are factored into his company's winter contingency planning.

From the first edition to today, Farmers' Almanac editors have worn the honorary title of Philom—for Philomath, a lover of learning. That is an apt title for readers as well as editors, as every edition of the almanac is a mini-encyclopedia of American history, natural science, and a host of other disciplines.

It is a particularly apt title for Peter Geiger, a great champion of education who founded the Adopt-A-School movement in Maine in 1988 and who launched a successful program with Maine elementary and middle schools to encourage and develop young writers. His company provides college scholarships to Maine students, and Peter serves as a member and former chairman of our State's board of edu-

cation. In 1991, he was named the 618th of President George H. W. Bush's 1,000 Points of Light.

The Geiger family and their company advance the Maine business tradition of service to others by supporting a wide range of civic and charitable endeavors, from the arts to health care to homeless youth. The New Beginnings Ann Geiger Center in Lewiston, ME, named in honor of Peter's mother, provides vital education and skills-development opportunities for homeless and neglected youth. Ray Geiger Elementary School in that same city recognizes the family's many contributions.

The special 200th edition of the Farmers' Almanac includes a celebratory section of vintage articles that take readers through nearly two centuries of American lore, from how to quiet a fussy baby with molasses and feathers to the art of kissing and maintaining household tranquility. Just as important, it stands as proof that hard work, an entrepreneurial spirit, and a commitment to giving back are the key ingredients of success. I congratulate the Geiger family and the Farmers' Almanac for this milestone achievement and wish them all the best in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SUSAN S. KELLY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay special tribute to an exceptional Federal civil servant of the United States of America, Dr. Susan S. Kelly, the director of the Transition to Veterans Program Office, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Dr. Kelly is retiring from the Federal Government on September 30, 2016, after 33 years of distinguished service to our Nation. Many of us on Capitol Hill have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Dr. Kelly on a wide variety of defense issues and programs, and it is my privilege and honor to recognize her many accomplishments.

Dr. Kelly has an extensive history of helping organizations successfully transform, and I want to focus on her exceptional work since she took over as the director of the Transition to Veterans Program Office in June 2012. She has been instrumental in the ambitious effort to revitalize the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program, which ensures that servicemembers transitioning to civilian life are provided with the information and training needed to effectively pursue their civilian career goals. In implementing the sweeping redesign of the Transition Assistance Program, she has helped the military move away from viewing transition as an end-of-career activity, instead making postmilitary preparation a careerlong process that servicemembers plan for throughout their military life cycle. She has also helped to transform the Department's views on transition, emphasized the essential skills that make the all-volunteer force an attractive

pathway to employment, and strengthened a talent pipeline that returns career-ready servicemembers to communities across America. It was the first redesign and comprehensive review of the Transition Assistance Program in the 20-plus years since it became law.

At every turn, Dr. Kelly sought to ensure that the Transition Assistance Program is not only effective but also efficient. Dr. Kelly implemented a stronger oversight of program budgetary processes and sought to use smarter, more efficient processes in redesigning the Transition Assistance Program. Dr. Kelly has also led several changes to prevent unnecessary redundancy within the Department, including relying on existing assets for certified financial planners, educational counselors, and resiliency trainers. In addition to eliminating redundancies, this has fostered collaboration with other Department of Defense agencies and, for this work, was recognized in 2015 as a finalist in the management excellence category for the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal, which honors stars of the Federal Government's workforce.

Dr. Kelly's work on behalf of the Transition to Veterans Program Office, the Department of Defense, and, most importantly, our Nation's servicemembers demonstrates her dedication to the cause of changing the culture within the Department to better help our Nation's veterans succeed. With Dr. Kelly's guidance, this dramatic and sweeping transformation of the Transition Assistance Program has been implemented throughout the Department of Defense, enabling the Department to ensure that today's veterans are better equipped than ever to handle an ever-changing labor market every bit as well as they were able to handle the ever-changing challenges of the battlefield.

As Dr. Kelly concludes her 33-year career as a public servant and leader in a highly demanding department, she is to be recognized this day as a most distinguished American for her exemplary leadership, commitment, managerial talent, and vision.

On behalf of the Congress and the United States of America, I thank Dr. Susan S. Kelly and her entire family for the commitment, sacrifices, and contributions they have made throughout her honorable service. Congratulations on completing an outstanding and successful career.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING BRIAN SCOTT
GAMROTH

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, Wyoming has lost a true giant. On September 18, 2016, Brian Scott Gamroth lost his life in a tragic motorcycle accident. It is hard to think of a more familiar and friendly voice in Wyoming than Brian Scott's. For the past 23

years, the Casper community woke up and went to work with the smiling voice of Brian Scott filling the airwaves on the K2 Morning Show. While his voice has been silenced, his impact on Wyoming will live on.

Brian didn't stop at just reporting about the community, he lived it and loved it every day. If there was a charitable event in Casper or anywhere in Wyoming, Brian was either emceeding it or letting everyone in the Cowboy State know how they can help. Through his talents as an entertainer, master of ceremonies, and a community leader, Brian has raised millions of dollars for local and State charities.

Brian's love for Wyoming was only eclipsed by his love for his family. He is survived by his wife, Tracy, and three sons: Josh and his wife, Heidi; Kyle and his wife, Whitney; and Corey. Brian cherished his four grandchildren, Lucy, Sarah, Reagan, and Owen.

Brian Scott Gamroth was a friend to everyone. He has changed many lives for the better, and Wyoming will feel his loss for a long time. Bobbi and I are blessed to have called him our friend. We will miss him dearly.●

TRIBUTE TO TOM PAYNE

● Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, earlier this year, I got the news that my good friend, Dean Tom Payne, had announced that he would be retiring from the MU College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources and vice chancellor for Agriculture. Needless to say, I had mixed emotions.

I am happy that Tom will get to spend more time with his beautiful wife, Alice, and his children, Joanna and Jacob, and Jacob's wife, Jennifer. Of course, I am also happy that Caroline and Jack, his grandchildren, will get to see him more.

However, his retirement also made me think that someone will have big shoes to fill because Dean Payne has set high standards throughout the years and exceeded them.

Dean Thomas L. Payne has served as vice chancellor for Agriculture and dean of the MU College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources since January 1, 1999. Back then he knew that the College of Agriculture at the University of Missouri in Columbia was a leader in agriculture research and education. Today under Dean Payne's leadership, the MU College of Agriculture is at the forefront.

Dean Payne was born in Bakersfield, CA. He received his B.A. in zoology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and his M.S. in entomology and Ph.D. in entomology and physiological psychology from the University of California, Riverside.

Payne took his talents to Texas A&M University's departments of entomology and forest science. He started his track record in leadership, academics, and research.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture selected him to serve as the research

coordinator for the Southern Pine Beetle Program.

He became a professor and head of entomology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

In the midnineties, Tom was appointed as associate vice president for agricultural administration and associate dean for research at the Ohio State University's College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences. He was also the director of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center.

He then moved to the University of Missouri, Columbia and further solidified his leadership in research and academics. In addition to serving as vice chancellor and dean of the MU College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, he also became the director of the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station. The Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station is a network of centers conducting research in agriculture, animal science, natural resources, and forestry.

Of course, Dean Payne is an over-achiever. He is the author and co-author of more than 130 publications and is founding coeditor of the *Journal of Insect Behavior*. He is a recipient of numerous awards including the Alexander von Humboldt Prize and Missouri Future Farmers of America Association Distinguished Service Award. If all that wasn't enough, Dean Payne has been a member of the World Agricultural Forum's Board of Advisors, Danforth Plan Sciences Center's Board of Advisors, Agriculture Future of America's Board of Directors, and a board member of the Entomological Foundation.

There are few people who are able to figure out what they love to do and make such a successful career out of doing just that. However, Dean Tom Payne is one such person who has had a career doing what he loves, but in addition, have a tremendous impact on students, peers, and all those that know him.

Dean Payne has had a career preparing, showing, teaching, and leading students and faculty. I am confident that there are many individuals who would credit Dean Payne for their interest in agriculture, especially agriculture research. He has always had a passion for what he does—and not matter what, he always has his wit and humor.

I have seen his wit and humor bring tears and laughter. I have also seen individuals nervous as they waited to hear Dean Payne speak, wondering what zingers he might say. I can promise you, he knows how to hold his audience's attention—students or career professionals.

My friend, Dean Tom Payne, has always provided insight and leadership at each institution he worked, committee seat he held, and board on which he served. I know that at the College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, at the University of Missouri

in Columbia, Dean Payne has left his mark on the student population, research programs, and faculty members. Student enrollment in the college increased by 44 percent. Student participation in study abroad programs increased 50 percent. He contributed to making the Bond Life Sciences Center a reality. Plant and animal sciences continued to enhance its programmatic strength, so it is now ranked among the 15 best programs in the world. And he oversaw the hiring of more than half of the college's current faculty.

Again I say, Dean Payne has left big shoes to fill.

In his retirement, I am confident Dean Payne will play more golf, but I am not certain it will improve his game. He might even do some more hunting and fishing. I hope he will continue to be a resource for those in agriculture, especially agriculture research and education.

Missourians wish Dean Tom Payne all the best in his retirement.●

REMEMBERING DALE FREEMAN

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Lawrence County Judge Dale Freeman of Portia, AR, who passed away on Saturday, September 17, 2016.

Judge Freeman was a Lawrence County native who loved his neighbors and community with evident passion. Dale graduated from Southern Baptist College and worked at Burlington Northern Railroad, where he retired after 36 years of service. He also had a desire for public service and went on to become mayor of Portia, AR, and eventually was elected judge of Lawrence County in 2010.

Judge Freeman once told a reporter, "the only job I ever wanted was to be the judge in Lawrence County." When the people of Lawrence County gave him that opportunity, he made the most of it. He was a tireless advocate for citizens and was known to put in long hours conducting the business of the county. His ultimate goal was to leave the county better than when he took office, and based on the results, it is fair to say that he achieved that aim.

Judge Freeman was injured in a car accident in August of this year and was being treated at a hospital in Little Rock. While he had been making progress toward a recovery, unfortunately, his health rapidly declined, and he passed away as a result of his injuries. He is survived by his wife, Mary, daughters, Tonya, Candi, and Michelle, and son, Jeff.

I deeply admire Judge Freeman's dedication to serving his lifelong home of Lawrence County. I know his leadership, dedication, and commitment to the community will be missed by many. I join with them in praying for comfort for Judge Freeman's family, friends, and loved ones. Today we honor him as his community grieves his loss and reflects on his life and service.●