

charisma, his wit, his way with people, and his resources to help others pursue their goals through education.

For several years, Bennie taught night classes at Alabama's Southern Union Junior College and Auburn University, as well as GED classes at the local jail. Later, he established The Bennie Adkins Foundation, which to date has provided about 50 educational scholarships to noncommissioned Special Forces officers.

Bennie's dedication to the service of his country and to his fellow Americans never waned. For many years he traveled extensively, in what he described as his fourth career, "trying to instill patriotism in our young people." And according to President Obama in 2014, "the first thing you need to know is when Bennie and I met in the Oval Office, he asked if he could sign back up. His lovely wife was not amused."

I know that for Bennie's family and his community, this is a loss impossible to describe or to measure. My wife Louise joins me in sending our sincerest condolences to Bennie's daughter Mary Ann Adkins Blake (David), to his sons Michael Adkins (Christine), and Keith Adkins (Jaime), and to his many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

To paraphrase his Medal of Honor citation, Bennie Adkins' extraordinary life reflects great credit upon himself, his family, and his country. May he rest in peace, and may God bless the United States of America.

REMEMBERING GENERAL
CHARLES ELWOOD "CHUCK"
YEAGER

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an American hero and one of West Virginia's native sons who was larger than life and an inspiration for generations of Americans—General Charles Elwood "Chuck" Yeager. Chuck bravely served our Nation as a pilot for more than 30 years in the U.S. Air Force during World War II and Vietnam. When he became the first pilot to break the sound barrier he challenged each of us to test the limits of what is possible. I am grateful to have known this legendary West Virginian and to call him my dear friend.

Chuck truly embodied what it means to be from the Mountain State. Born in 1923 in rural Lincoln County, Chuck grew up the way many of us do in West Virginia—hunting and fishing and learning early to be respectful of nature and our fellow man. Like his father, A. Hal Yeager, who was a gaswell driller, Chuck showed an aptitude for mechanics, and by the time he was a teenager, he was able to assemble a car engine on his own. His work ethic and natural talent would serve him well throughout the rest of his remarkable life.

In 1941, Chuck enlisted in the Army Air Forces right out of high school and trained as a mechanic before heading to flight school. In 1944, he experienced

a harrowing encounter when his plane was shot down over German-occupied France. He and another American travelled on foot through mountainous terrain and snow toward neutral Spain. As they stopped to rest, the Nazis opened fire, wounding the man traveling with Chuck. Chuck carried him into Spain, where they met British forces. Despite the treacherous journey he had just endured, to everyone's astonishment, Chuck was determined to fly again. He climbed his way through the ranks, pursuing a return to combat duty, which was eventually granted. For his service, Chuck received the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Air Medal. He also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award, from President Ronald Reagan in 1985. There are so few Veterans left from the World War II era, and it is our responsibility and our privilege to recognize the service of these noble heroes.

In 1957, Chuck became an air squadron commander and then commander of the Aerospace Research Pilot School at Edwards in 1961. He also commanded a fighter wing and flew combat missions during the Vietnam war. He retired as an Air Force brigadier general in 1975, and in an honorary gesture, he was promoted to the rank of major general in 2005.

We all of course know the story of the day Chuck became the first pilot to break the sound barrier. On October 14, 1947, Chuck flew an orange Bell X-1 aircraft at nearly 700 mph and made history. Flying F-15 planes, he broke the sound barrier again on the 50th and 55th anniversaries of his pioneering flight, and he was a passenger on an F-15 plane in another breaking of the sound barrier to commemorate the 65th anniversary.

I knew Chuck very well and he was a dear friend to me and Gayle. As Governor, I was fortunate to host Chuck at least once a year for the One Shot Deer Hunt, which gives proceeds to helping the hungry. He told me so many incredible stories of his service, including all the intricate details of his legendary flight. I recall him telling me that the only reason he got to fly the Bell X-1 that day was because the previous pilot they asked wanted too much money. They offered Chuck an extra 60 dollars a month, and he jumped at the chance. Not only is the story true about Chuck pushing through with a broken rib, but he wasn't even supposed to break the sound barrier that day. He thought if he didn't go for it that first day, he wouldn't get another chance. Chuck truly had nerves of steel.

Long after his record-breaking flight, Chuck remained in our hearts as a symbol of patriotism and bravery. His life is full of tales of his bravery, his stoicism in the face of danger, and his determination to perform his duty no matter the cost.

The legacy Chuck leaves is such an important part of our heritage as West Virginians. Our little State has mined the coal that forged the steel that built the tanks and ships that keep our country the strongest in the world. It is an honor to remember Chuck as part of our military service heritage and our way of life that sinks deep into the roots of West Virginia's rich culture. I encourage all Americans to learn what they can about this legendary West Virginian.

Gayle and I are praying for Chuck's wife Victoria, daughters, Susan and Sharon, son, Don, and all who loved and admired him.

RECOGNIZING OREGON'S FIRST
FEMALE EAGLE SCOUTS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am proud to be able to recognize Oregon's first female Eagle Scouts, the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouts of America, or BSA. Evelyn Becker, Juliana Cimral, and Anya Kramer have demonstrated remarkable leadership, skill, and perseverance to earn this important distinction and have done it through an unprecedented pandemic.

For more than 100 years, the Eagle Scout rank has represented a tremendous accomplishment that is recognized in Oregon and across the country. To earn Scouting's highest honor, a Scout must demonstrate mastery of numerous skills and obtain a merit badge for each one, earn a position of responsibility within their troop, and complete a service project that will directly benefit their community. Until recently, girls and young women were not allowed to join BSA, but that finally changed for the better in February of 2019. Evelyn, Juliana, and Anya, Oregon's first three female Eagle Scouts, received their rank in October and will join others in receiving their official Eagle title in February 2021.

We can see examples of their skills and dedication to improving their community in the Eagle service projects they tackled. Juliana, a senior at Jesuit High School, employed her knowledge of and interest in bees and the importance these pollinators play in the food supply chain to build 25 bee houses that have increased the pollination and production of nearby gardens. Evelyn, a sophomore at Scappoose High School, built a fence to separate her local school from a busy highway and a bioswale to prevent children from falling into the water and to help improve the safety of her community. Anya, a freshman at Western Oregon University, spent months building a partnership between the West Linn Food Pantry and Period.org so that women in need would have access to feminine hygiene products, an often overlooked essential.

It has been exciting to see the BSA finally welcoming the other half of the population into their ranks. Each of these three women watched their brothers succeed in Boy Scouts while

growing up. When finally given the chance, they continued that family tradition of achievement. I am excited to see what new heights these outstanding Eagle Scouts and community leaders will reach. Many more will come after them, and our communities will be better for it.

Oregonians always take pride in serving our State and this great country, and these three Eagle Scouts are a great example of that. Today I say congratulations to the first women from Oregon to earn the rank of Eagle Scout, and I wish them many more years of success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CARMINE CANN, SR.

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, it is a great privilege of mine to rise and honor a pillar of strength in my home State of West Virginia, Carmine Cann, Sr., as we celebrate his 90th birthday on July 27, 2020.

Carmine has been like family to me for much of my life, and if there is anything to know about Carmine, it is that family is everything. It is one of the countless things I have always admired most about him, in addition to his unwavering devotion to our home State and his unparalleled knowledge of business and the law. Throughout my own life and career, I have always kept Carmine in the back of my mind—remembering to stay strong for my State and my family.

A native of Clarksburg, Carmine practiced law with his father upon graduating from West Virginia University College of Law. In 1954, their firm merged with another and became Young, Morgan and Cann, where he practiced until joining Flaherty's Clarksburg office in 2017.

Carmine served in the West Virginia Legislature for 8 years as a member of the House of Delegates. Throughout government circles, he was widely known for his keen political awareness. The Charleston Gazette dubbed him "Mighty Mouse" for his accomplishments in and behind the scenes. After choosing not to run for reelection, Carmine served the West Virginia Coal Association and West Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association as a governmental relations consultant for over 25 years.

Some of his awards and honors include St. Mary's Irish Legend in 2011, Italian American Man of the Year by the West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival in 2005, and recipient of the Distinguished West Virginian Award in 1995.

Among his many roles in the community, Carmine is also well known as a founding member of the Italian Heritage Festival's Board of Directors. The Italian Heritage Festival is such a special event for me and for people not only in West Virginia but for people from across the country. The Italian

immigrants who came to this country didn't know where they were going, couldn't speak the language, and were unfamiliar with Appalachian culture. All they knew is that they had to work hard and were determined to provide a good life for their families. That is what the Festival represents, and those are the ideals that Carmine upheld. His lovely wife Florence, their 7 children, 25 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, and their entire family, 73 people altogether, have all been active in this beloved festival. After Florence's passing, Carmine endowed the Florence Chico Cann Children's Creative Arts Program as well as the Children's Chorus. Carmine is committed to the beautiful North Central region of our State, and I know I join countless West Virginians in thanking him for his service to his community for so many years.

Carmine will tell you that much of his success is rooted in faith, and he is forever thankful for the blessings that his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has provided. He is never one to accept acclaim very well, instead deferring all praise and thanks to the Almighty. He is a shining beacon of his faith, family, community, and State.

Carmine's expertise has been sought-after by Senators, Congressmen, Governors, budding community leaders, and his friends and family. He has never been one to shy away from a friendly debate with those who have opposing views. Carmine has the greatest respect for all opinions—people from all walks of life. He is first and foremost an outstanding person, a gentleman in the old sense, and a true broker of compromise in a world so in need of that leadership and trust.

Carmine, despite that we aren't able to have a birthday party in your honor this year, I know this will still be a memorable occasion for you to reflect on your many accomplishments and experiences, while you enjoy the well wishes from your loved ones. You have provided so much happiness and wisdom to the lives of those around you, myself included. It is my wish that the memory of this special day remains with you just as your guidance and influence will remain in all the lives you have touched. I know that Florence, a true angel, is smiling down on you. Gayle and I are thinking fondly about you on this special day, and we sincerely appreciate your many years of loyal friendship.●

TRIBUTE TO COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR PHILIP R. CANTRELL

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, it is an honor to rise today to recognize the unwavering service of a true West Virginian, CSM Phillip R. Cantrell, as he retires from Active military service and transitions to a new chapter of public service. Phillip Cantrell is simply the best of the best. He is humble, competent, compassionate, and a warrior scholar. He has served in the

toughest of environments, leading generations of men and women while having an immeasurable and positive influence on them. I know this because I was fortunate to have Phillip on my staff for a year as a congressional fellow and am fortunate to call him my friend.

Command Sergeant Major Cantrell is retiring from his final assignment, where he served as the senior enlisted leader of the West Virginia National Guard, a duty that he assumed in 2018 where he advised the Adjutant General on all matters pertaining to the nearly 6,400 enlisted soldiers and airmen of the West Virginia National Guard. Before this assignment with the West Virginia National Guard, Phillip served in the toughest and most elite Active Army units, in combat and in peace. Phillip is the Soldier's Soldier, having trained a generation of leaders as a drill sergeant, led infantry units in combat as a first sergeant and command sergeant major, and paid reverence to our Nation's veterans as the command sergeant major of the Old Guard.

Growing up in Logan County, Phillip enlisted in the Active Army Infantry in May of 1988 as soon as he graduated high school. He attending infantryman training at Fort Benning, GA, and would add many qualifications along the way, including Master Jumpmaster, Air Assault, Combat Infantry, and Drill Sergeant Badges. He married his wife Sherry in June 1989, and they have been together through numerous deployments, traveling the world together to serve their country and State.

Anyone who has served in the military knows that the noncommissioned officer is the backbone of the Army. Throughout his career, Phillip has done the heavy lifting and served at every level of noncommissioned officer leadership, to include team and squad leaders, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, operations sergeant major and battalion and brigade command sergeant major.

Command Sergeant Major Cantrell served in the 82nd Airborne Division from 1988 to 1996, participating in Operation Just Cause and Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm before being reassigned to Fort Leonard Wood to serve as a drill sergeant. Upon his completion of drill sergeant duty, he returned to the 82nd Airborne Division and Fort Bragg, where he was deployed on a peacekeeping mission to Kosovo with the 3/504th Infantry Regiment.

In 2005, while first sergeant of D Company, 2/505th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Command Sergeant Major Cantrell was deployed in support of Hurricane Katrina relief efforts and subsequently deployed two companies to Iraq in 2006 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was deployed to Iraq in one of the most dangerous locations during 2006–2007, the time period known as the surge, when troop deployments were unexpectedly extended from 12 months to 15 months.