

2007, the volunteers of the Afton flotilla were ready to work with emergency response teams and helped catalog the countless amount of debris examined during the investigation. Even after the disaster was over, the flotilla monitored boater safety once the river was finally reopened.

Even more than responding to disasters, the Afton flotilla works to prevent disasters on the water, making sure that river navigation tools are in working order and patrolling during regattas and other events. There is no way for us to know just how many lives were saved over the past 75 years through the hard work of the Afton flotilla volunteers.

I join all of my fellow Minnesotans in applauding the Afton flotilla's momentous anniversary and the dedication of its volunteer members over the past 75 years. I would also like to thank all of the auxiliary volunteers in Minnesota and across the country who keep our communities and waterways safe.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROBERT F. NORTON, USA, RETIRED

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to honor COL Robert F. Norton, USA, Retired, on the occasion of his retirement as deputy director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA.

After serving in the Army Reserve for several years while he worked as a schoolteacher, Colonel Norton volunteered for full-time Active Duty with the Army in 1978. He served in various assignments on the Army headquarters staff and the office of the Secretary of the Army, specializing in Reserve manpower and personnel policy matters. He served two tours in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, first as a personnel policy officer and then as senior military assistant to the Assistant Secretary.

Colonel Norton retired from the Army in 1995. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the Army War College, and the Kennedy School of Government senior officials in national security course at Harvard University.

After his retirement, Colonel Norton continued his service as a defense contractor for 2 years, including time in Bosnia and other locations, but he found his true calling when he joined MOAA's government relations staff in 1997, specializing in National Guard, Reserve, and veterans benefits issues.

In his nearly 19 years with MOAA, Colonel Norton testified before Congress more than 30 times and played a major role in a wide array of legislative accomplishments. Foremost among these was the post-9/11 GI Bill, where Colonel Norton's efforts played a pivotal role in ensuring this legislation included provisions for the Guard and

Reserve, as well as transferability of benefits to family members.

Colonel Norton also played a key role in winning legislation extending military health coverage to members of the Guard and Reserve and their families and authorizing early retirement credit for Guard and Reserve members called up for combat zone service.

Colonel Norton's 38 years of service to our country and to those who serve and have served in uniform, as well as their families and survivors, is in keeping with the highest standards of excellence and is worthy of special recognition as he and his spouse, Colleen, embark on the next phase of their lives.●

REMEMBERING FRANK LEVINGSTON

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Frank Levingston of Lake Charles, LA. Known affectionately as Uncle Frank, Levingston was the Nation's oldest living World War II veteran until his passing last week.

Levingston was born on November 13, 1905, to Frank and Ida Levingston in Cotton Valley, LA. He was one of seven children. Along with his younger siblings, Levingston helped to maintain approximately 200 acres of land, which remains in his family today.

When the United States entered World War II after the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, Levingston enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942, where he dutifully served as a private and automobile serviceman during World War II and participated in the Allied invasion of Italy. After his honorable discharge from the Army in 1945, he became a union worker specializing in cement finishing. In 1981 Levingston moved to Lake Charles, LA, which he called home for the rest of his life.

As the oldest living World War II veteran, Levingston saw many changes and much growth during his lifetime, including the Great Depression, the Jim Crow era, and the civil rights movement. In November 2015, he was invited by Austin, TX, Honor Flight to travel to Washington, DC, to visit the White House and lay a wreath at the National World War II Monument in remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Frank Levingston entered eternal rest on May 3, 2016. It is a privilege to join with the Senate to honor Frank Levingston's life, his accomplishments, and his commitment to serve his country.●

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF GREGORY CHAMPAGNE

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Gregory Champagne, sheriff of St. Charles Parish, LA.

Born and raised in St. Charles Parish, LA, Champagne attended Hahnville High School and graduated from Nicholls State University in 1979

with a B.A. in government. Champagne went on to earn a J.D. from the Louisiana State University Law Center in 1982, after which he served as the assistant district attorney in St. Charles Parish for nearly 14 years. In 1995, Champagne was elected to serve as sheriff of St. Charles Parish. He was re-elected in 1999 with overwhelming support and has won the subsequent four elections, making him the second sheriff in St. Charles Parish history to win six terms.

In 2003, Sheriff Champagne was selected Louisiana Sheriff of the Year by the Louisiana Crime Victim's Coalition. Champagne was also elected by his peers to serve as president of the Louisiana Sheriff's Association from 2007 to 2008. Currently, he serves as the first vice president of the executive committee for the National Sheriff's Association, NSA, which represents 3,080 sheriffs across the United States. Sheriff Champagne additionally chairs the NSA's legal affairs committee and sits on the congressional affairs committee, global affairs committee, and homeland security committee. Most recently, Champagne joined the U.S. Department of Justice's National Commission on Forensic Science, using his decades of experience and expertise to advise the Justice Department on fighting crime and keeping our communities safer.

Champagne has been married for over 30 years to Alice Landry Champagne and is an active member of the St. Charles Parish community. Champagne is a longtime member of the Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus Council 2409, and the Holy Family Catholic Church. Sheriff Champagne has also served as a mentor with the St. Charles Parish Public School District for over 10 years. In his downtime, the Sheriff enjoys playing music and is known for being an accomplished trumpet player and a member of multiple bands.

Today I would like to honor Sheriff Champagne for his remarkable career and to thank him for his endless commitment to serving the community of St. Charles Parish.●

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET N. LAURANT

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Ms. Margaret N. Laurant, of Slidell, LA.

Ms. Laurant was born in Bonfouca, LA, in 1926 to Jean and Elmonia Narcisse, both of whom were direct descendants of original French settlers of Bofouca. Ms. Laurant is the last remaining of her nine siblings and currently serves as the matriarch of the Narcisse family. As a young child, Ms. Laurant dealt with racism firsthand. She recalls attending a small segregated one-room school called the Golden Key. Later she attended middle school at the St. Tammany Parish Training School for Negroes, where each day she walked to school as she was unable to ride a school bus with her