

himself dedicated AEDC, declaring that, "Never again will the United States ride the coat tails of other countries in the progress and development of the aeronautical art."

In the 50 years since, the world's largest and most complex collection of flight simulation test facilities has made good on that promise, AEDC's wind tunnels, jet and rocket altitude test cells, space chambers and ballistic ranges have played a vital role in the development and sustainment of every American high performance aircraft, missile and space system in use today. Twenty-seven of the center's 58 test facilities are unique in the United States. Fourteen can be found nowhere else in the world. But what makes AEDC special can't be measured simply in nuts and bolts. It also lies in the unsurpassed quality of the engineers, scientists, technicians, craftsmen and support personnel who work there.

Thanks in part to the tireless efforts of these dedicated men and women, the Cold War that President Truman and General Arnold prepared for has been won. But now, America faces an uncertain world of emerging threats, requiring the development of an advanced American space and missile defense, and a new generation of manned and unmanned aircraft. As it has since its inception, AEDC will lead the way in the U.S. Air Force's efforts to protect American liberty by remaining the world's preeminent aerospace power.

I salute the hard work of the men and women of AEDC, both past and present, and look forward to AEDC's next 50 years as America's premier flight simulation test facility.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES FRANCIS  
FITE

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 23, 2001*

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to recognize and honor the life of Mr. Charles Francis Fite of Fair Oaks, California. I was blessed to have known Charlie for a number of years, and am truly grateful to have counted him a friend. Charlie Fite passed away on May 10, 2001, at the age of 89—leaving behind his loving wife of nearly 70 years, Hazel, two children, five grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Born in Paris, Arkansas, Charles Fite's life is a shining example of the American dream. As a young man, Mr. Fite toiled in the coalmines of northwestern Arkansas and contributed to the war effort as a master electrician in the naval shipyards of Long Beach. Later, Mr. Fite immersed himself in the world of finance and banking. Mr. Fite was instrumental in the founding of the world's first fast food franchise, Dairy Queen, where he served as president.

After retiring from Dairy Queen, he and Hazel moved to the Sacramento area in 1969. In 1970, he and his son Bruce entered into real estate development along with grandson, Chet Fite. In 1980, he founded HCF, Inc., and continued real estate development with his daughter, Barbara, and grandson, Greg Hardcastle.

Charlie's work has left an indelible mark on the Sacramento area and has been instrumental in the region's development and positive growth. The business enterprises and projects for which Charlie is responsible are too numerous to name, but one of his more recognizable projects is the Sacramento Sportsplex on Highway 50.

Charlie Fite's accomplishments are many and great, but his life could never be defined by business acumen alone. Instead, Charlie will be remembered most for his honesty, integrity, and generosity. He will be revered and honored not for what he made for himself but for what he selflessly gave to others. Charles Fite was not simply a boss, he was a mentor; he was not just a father, he was a dad. His motto always was, "It's not a good deal unless it's a good deal for everybody." Charlie was a man of great inspiration, and he had an innate ability to lift those up who were around him.

Charles was also a man of deep Christian faith. He helped found Warehouse Christian Ministries and served on the board of Capital Christian Center. Charlie Fite both professed and lived his Christian faith. He was a compassionate and a wise friend whose life will be cherished and remembered by generations yet unborn. He will be profoundly missed, but he certainly will not be forgotten.

May you rest in peace, Charlie.

HISTORY OF THE WEST PALM  
BEACH VETERANS ADMINISTRATION  
MEDICAL CENTER

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 23, 2001*

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, the West Palm Beach Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Florida was inspired by the life, military service and death of Pfc. John Mica. Army Corpsman Mica was born on April 3, 1915 in Binghamton, NY, served as a private in the U.S. Army from 1943–44, and died July 16, 1972 in a crowded veterans hospital in Miami, Florida.

Because of the circumstances of John Mica's death in that veterans facility, which was strained to capacity, his son Daniel A. Mica made construction of a new South Florida veterans hospital one of his goals when elected to the U.S. Congress. From 1978 to 1988, Congressman Daniel Mica, a member of the House Veterans Committee, cited the need for additional veterans medical facilities in Florida at every meeting of that Congressional panel over the decade of his service.

Congressman Daniel Mica, on February 8, 1983 during the 98th Congress, introduced H.R. 1348, "A bill to construct a new Veterans Administration hospital in the State of Florida." Construction of the Palm Beach County Veterans' Hospital was completed in 1994.

This history has been submitted into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD by Congressman JOHN L. MICA in memory of his father, Pfc. John Mica, and also in recognition of his brother Daniel's contribution to the veterans of the State of Florida.

MINI OLYMPICS A CREDIT TO  
MOUNT CARMEL AREA

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 23, 2001*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the participants and volunteers in the Mount Carmel Mini Olympics for People with Special Needs, which has grown in each of its seven years. This year's Mini Olympics will be held on June 2.

Last year, I had the opportunity to witness first-hand the dedication of the athletes and the generosity of the many volunteers who make this event possible.

A group of friends initiated the Mini Olympics to allow local special needs athletes the opportunity to participate that might not otherwise be possible due to the travel distance, lodging expenses and commitment of time that are sometimes necessary for the state or national Special Olympics. Building on that success, the Mini Olympics have become an annual event. The number of participants has grown from 44 at the beginning to 184 last year.

Led by Chairman Ron Tanney, the Mount Carmel Mini Olympics for People with Special Needs Committee organizes this inspiring event with the help of many volunteers and community donors too numerous to list them all here.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives this extraordinary event and the people who make the Mini Olympics possible, and I wish them all the best as they continue with their many endeavors.

I would now like to insert for the record an editorial from the Shamokin News-Item commending the volunteers and participants in last year's Mini-Olympics, words which I am sure will apply equally well this year.

TWO 'CLASS' EVENTS THAT MAKE US PROUD  
[Shamokin News-Item Editorial, June 6,  
2000]

Two annual events, both held this past weekend, show the class of area volunteers and the generosity of our area's residents.

The two events, of course, are the Mount Carmel Mini-Olympics for People with Special Needs and the Relay for Life sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

Seldom do we witness the level of unselfishness and the concern for fellow human beings that is so apparent at these two programs.

This was the sixth annual Mini-Olympics and the program keeps getting better every year. Thanks to a cadre of dedicated volunteers who plan the day out of love, those who help out at the events and the generous businesses, individuals, organizations and government officials who support it, the Mini-Olympics is a high point in the lives of the participants and their families. Indeed, the lives of all who are in the stadium are enriched because of the Mini-Olympics. It is truly a celebration of life.

So too is the annual Relay for Life, in which people throughout the region join

forces to fight a terrible killer and give moral support to those who fought their own personal fights and to the families of those whose personal battles are over. The camaraderie and unity of purpose exhibited by

Relay teams should serve as an inspiration for those of us who make the mistake of trying to "go it alone" in tough times.

When cynics claim that this area is "dying," we need only point to the Mini-

Olympics and the Relay for Life, events which affirm our love for life and our commitment to each other. These are events that should make us proud to be residents of the Shamokin-Mount Carmel area.