

Sysco Food Services of Virginia. His entrepreneurial skills were only outshone by his philanthropic skills as Mr. Showker kindly used his great success in business to give back to his community through his various charitable projects.

More than anything, Zane Showker was an exceptionally kind and generous gentleman who cared greatly for the Shenandoah Valley. As Governor, I was proud to appoint Zane to the JMU Board of Visitors, where he served with distinction. His work at JMU and throughout the Valley had a truly positive effect on the lives of countless Virginians. Like so many others, I will always have fond memories of his warm personality and hospitality at his wonderful home, Breezy Hill.

Today, my thoughts and prayers go out to the Showker family during this difficult time.●

RECOGNIZING RAYMON THACKER

● Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I am pleased today to recognize Mr. Raymon Thacker for his community service and leadership. Mr. Thacker is in his 70th consecutive year of service as a member of the Scottsville Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Thacker is a founding member of the Department, and has selflessly given much of his time and hard work to see to it that the Department continues to run smoothly and effectively.

The Scottsville Volunteer Fire Department serves about 15,000 residents within southern Albemarle, Fluvanna, Buckingham, and Nelson Counties. Mr. Thacker has worked tirelessly to make sure everyone in the area remains safe and secure.

The Scottsville region surely appreciates the talents and efforts that Mr. Raymon Thacker has displayed as a member of the Scottsville Volunteer Fire Department. I congratulate him on his community service and wish him well in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. JOHN HICKS

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. John Hicks, a veteran administrator of the University of Alabama System who, after a quarter-century of service, will retire on August 31, 2004. John has made tremendous contributions to the institution through his dedication to educational excellence, and I am pleased to congratulate him today.

John has served as a member of the University of Alabama management team since 1979, most recently as executive assistant to the chancellor and secretary of the board of trustees of the University of Alabama. Recognized nationally for his accomplishments in higher education administration, John has made countless contributions to the university.

John has been an integral part of the university's efforts to recruit senior leadership, resulting in the selection of

10 campus presidents and four chancellors. Additionally, John's responsibilities at the university include oversight of the activities and meetings of the board of trustees as well as leadership in strategic planning and crisis management issues.

As ambassador of the University of Alabama system in the U.S. and abroad, John has represented the Board and its entities in activities of the Association of Governing Boards of American Colleges and Universities, the American Council on Education, the College and University Personnel Association, the Japan-America Society of Alabama, and the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. In addition to his responsibilities with the university system, John still finds time to actively participate in the community by serving on the Alabama Shakespeare Festival Theatre Authority and boards of the Alabama School of Math and Science, the Kentucky Festival, and A Women's Place, a shelter for women and children in Tuscaloosa, AL. He is a member of the 2004 class of Leadership Alabama and Christ Episcopal Church.

John received a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial economics/administration and finance from Purdue University and a Master of Arts from the Eastern Michigan University. John and his wife Kirsten Boyd Hicks are the parents of three grown children and have two grandchildren.

John has served the University of Alabama community with dedication and a sincere commitment to make the university a better place. The university will, indeed, miss him, but I am certain he will maintain his presence and leadership within the Tuscaloosa community. Today, I want to congratulate John on the occasion of his retirement and wish him and his family the very best.●

JESSICA LONG

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, in a few weeks we are going to be cheering on our champion athletes at the Olympics in Athens, Greece. I rise today to tell America the unique and inspiring story of a 12-year-old Marylander and record-breaking swimmer named Jessica Long.

Jessica was born in Russia and adopted with her brother Joshua as an infant. Though Jessica has faced health difficulties and worn prosthetic legs since she was a little girl, she has always been on the move. She began swimming seriously several years ago, pushing off the wall of the pool with her knees, and using her upper body for the majority of her swimming strength. She has since set 11 National and 2 Pan American records for disabled swimmers. Jessica is now going to compete in the 50-, 100-, and 400-meter freestyle events at the Paralympics Games in Athens.

Jessica also finds time to just have fun and be a kid. She has been a cheer-

leader, plays with Barbies and music boxes, and has dreams of being a model or designer. I am confident that Jessica will accomplish her goals, whatever they may be.

Jessica Long is a testament to triumph over adversity. She is strong in both body and spirit. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting her spirit and wishing her the best of luck at the Athens Paralympics.●

COMMEMORATING VALMONT IRRIGATION'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I am pleased and proud to congratulate a leading Nebraska company that this year is celebrating its 50th anniversary as the world's preeminent mechanized irrigation manufacturer. Valmont Industries' development of the center pivot technology has revolutionized agricultural production, not just in the United States, but around the world. At the same time, this technology uses far less water than other traditional means of irrigation such as flood and drip, and preserves water quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution because it lessens the use of pesticides and fertilizers. Valmont's products allow us to grow significantly more crops and produce greater crop revenue, all while protecting our vital natural resources.

I am sure my colleagues are familiar with the center pivot. When you fly across the country and see huge circles in the middle of farmland, those are created by the center pivots manufactured in my home town of McCook and Valley, where they were first developed. In fact, the brand name is popularly known as Valley pivots.

You can also see Valley center pivots and linear and corner machines at work in over 100 countries. All told, the company maintains irrigation manufacturing and distribution facilities in five states and six countries on six continents.

I worked with Valmont officials during my tenure as Governor, and I continue to work with Mogens Bay, chairman and chief executive officer for Valmont; Bob Meaney, senior vice president; and Tom Spears, president of the Irrigation Division; as well as the company's Washington representatives at Bob Lawrence & Associates. In addition, I am also quite familiar with other Valmont products, since it is also the world's foremost manufacturer of engineered poles for electrical transmission, lighting, traffic signs and signals, and wireless communications.

Today, a half century after Bob Daugherty improved and marketed the first center pivot, Valmont has produced an estimated 145,000 center pivots, linear, and corner machines, which successfully irrigate more than 14 million crop acres, and can effectively promote the growth of virtually any crop.

I congratulate Valmont and its dedicated workers for their half century of innovation and initiative as well as for

their success in helping to feed the world while protecting our environment. These are truly remarkable legacies.●

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS H. WARDLEIGH

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I pay tribute to Mr. Thomas H. Wardleigh, Alaskan aviation legend, who left us for new horizons on July 7, 2004, following a long battle with cancer.

A World War II Navy veteran, Tom moved to Alaska in 1951 and continued his aviation career as a mechanic with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, keeping its fleet of Grumman aircraft in operation for decades. He completed his federal service at the Federal Aviation Administration. He then devoted the rest of his life to promoting safety enhancements for Alaskan aviation. In 1984 he became chairman of the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation and produced more than 1,000 weekly episodes of a TV show called "Hangar Flying" which was broadcast all over Alaska. Because of the value of the instruction, the national organization, Aircraft Owner and Pilots Association, recently gave a grant to the University of Alaska Archives to transfer all of the programs to DVD so that future aviators will be able to learn from his timeless wisdom.

Tom Wardleigh logged over 33,000 flight hours in numerous types of aircraft. He was in great demand as an advanced flight instructor, and was one of the few multiengine sea plane instructors. Many, many Alaskan pilots were Tom's students over the years.

Although he was a tenacious fighter, Wardleigh was soft spoken, friendly, and always a gentleman, perhaps some reasons he was such a successful advocate for aviation safety enhancement, whether in education or technology. He was most recently instrumental in the development of the FAA Capstone Project which has been credited as a significant factor in lowering the accident rate in rural Alaska. While his work was primarily in Alaska, Tom participated in forums and projects all over the United States as well as in other countries whose aviation leaders often came to Alaska to personally seek Tom's advice on developing their safety programs.

The list of commendations Tom had received over the years is long, and includes AOPA's Laurence P. Sharples' national award in 1994 for his lifetime of service. Last year, FAA Administrator Marion Blakey personally recognized Tom with one of the agency's most significant honors in U.S. civil aviation, the Distinguished Service Award—this in addition to having previously bestowed on him the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic and the Wright Brothers' Master Pilot Awards.

While Tom Wardleigh may have taken his last flight, pilots and passengers alike will fondly remember

this special aviator as they turn onto Wardleigh Drive at the Anchorage Ted Stevens International Airport.●

NEW JERSEY STATE SOCIETY BIDS FAREWELL TO JOHN AND HELEN PANNULLO

● Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I am pleased to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of John and Helen Pannullo in strengthening the New Jersey State Society. This valuable organization has played a major role in the professional and social lives of so many present and former New Jersey residents who live and work in the National Capital area. Unfortunately, their colleagues and many friends must bid them a fond farewell as they finally retire and move from this area.

John is a former association executive who has represented a number of associations in New Jersey and Washington, DC. Helen is retiring after 31 years of Federal Government service during which she held a variety of management positions in the information technology field and served on the board of Executive Women in Government.

In 1997 John assumed the Presidency of the New Jersey State Society, and Helen became its secretary. Under their expert leadership, the NJSS had a period of unprecedented growth and activity. They created an annual membership directory and quarterly newsletter. They also initiated the participation of the NJSS in 10 to 12 high-profile events each year, including New Jersey Day at the National Cathedral, the Battle of the Beltway to raise funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and the National Book Fest on the Mall. One of the highlights of this period was the 2001 New Jersey inaugural gala attended by more than one thousand NJSS members and their guests.

During their tenure the income of the society has increased ten fold, and the membership has gone from fewer than 100 to nearly 900.

I am sincerely grateful for John and Helen's dedication to the New Jersey State Society and their noteworthy accomplishments on behalf of the citizens, businesses, labor organizations and educational institutions in our State. While we will miss them, I wish them every success and much happiness in this new chapter of their very successful and productive lives.●

TRIBUTE TO THE TOWN OF CHATOM, ALABAMA

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize the town of Chatom in my home state of Alabama. On October 4, 2004, the Town of Chatom will celebrate its 100th birthday. Named the county seat of Washington County in 1907, the town later became the home of the county's first high school. Washington County Hos-

pital and Nursing Home, where an uncle of mine was ably cared for, was founded there in 1952. In 1956, Chatom citizens founded the beautiful Washington County Public Library. Chatom became a regional leader in aviation when Roy Wilcox Airport was established there in 1963. In 1995, the town extended its appeal to additional tourists and golf enthusiasts by opening an eighteen hole golf course. Reflecting the hospitable environment of the town, residents established the Chatom Community Center in 2000. Lake Ellis opened that same year, providing increased avenues for fellowship and leisure to both residents and visitors. Currently, the Town of Chatom encompasses a population of 1,205.

I firmly believe that it is out of the small towns and rural communities of America that there arises the rich values that shape our State and Nation. People know and care for one another. They go to church. They encourage the children of the community. They stand up for truth, justice and common sense. That is the way they were raised and that raising forms the basis for a fierce sense of independence, a respect for the ownership of property, and a love of democracy, where people from the heart of America rule. They love and respect America, they understand the exceptional character of our country, obey her laws, and send their sons and daughters to defend her just national interests. Without the people of Chatom and millions like them, we would cease to bear the stamp, "American".

Chatom has been a commercial and educational center for southwest Alabama for many years. In fact, I recently found a diploma of another uncle, Harry A. Powe, Jr., who came down from Black Creek outside Silas to graduate from Chatom High School in the 1920s.

The rich history and character of Chatom are proof of the leadership potential of Americans intent upon the pursuit of the American dream and the promotion of American ideals. Since its founding on October 4, 1904, the Town of Chatom has been a leader of Washington County, due not only to its expanding educational and economical opportunities but also to the hard work and good hearts of its people. As Chatom prepares to celebrate its centennial, we should pause to look forward to the future achievements of its citizens. I congratulate and commend Chatom for its accomplishments and continued growth. I thank the residents of Chatom for their examples of American ideals and southern hospitality.●

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF JEREMY TODD BOWLING

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute and congratulate Jeremy Todd Bowling of Manchester, KY on being awarded the Kentucky Farm Bureau