

"I've never sold an inch of land. I just don't want to do that," he said.

If the Howrigan clan has a leader and role model, Harold, at 81, fills the bill. His square face is topped by a puff of white hair, his ruddy complexion crinkled by the weather. It's a face that would look equally at home in a Tipperary pub, a testament to his purely Irish ancestry.

Like many of the Howrigan men, he seems gruff and a bit standoffish at first meeting. Howrigans have the "quiet gene," says his niece Kate Baldwin.

Over the kitchen table in the farmhouse he shares with his wife, Anne, or on a tour of the land they farm with their three sons, he expands. The gruffness melts into stories of childhood on the farm. He shows a visitor field after hillside field, not saying much, apparently for the pure pleasure of looking at the land and the results of a lifetime's work.

Land was "a treasure," he said, to the Irish farmers who immigrated to Fairfield from a country where land ownership was all but impossible for them. That fierce allegiance to one's own acres also runs in the Howrigan line.

Even in the hardscrabble days of the Depression, his father treated the land well—planting trees, combing stones from the rocky fields, preventing erosion. "He never cut a live maple," he said.

Harold and his sons use the latest technology in their sugarhouse, but they collect sap the way Harold's father did, with hanging buckets and sled-top tanks pulled by five teams of horses.

Horses don't require new roads to be cut and are easier on the land. "There's no substitute for horses gathering sap. They're nicer to work with, they come to you and stop. A tractor won't do that," he said.

With the other farmers of Fairfield, the Howrigans have created a town perhaps more pastoral than any other in Vermont. From many of Howrigan's hillsides, the view of corn and hayfields and grazing heifers seems to have changed not at all in a hundred years.

But does he value his land for its worth in bushels of corn alone? Or does he find it beautiful, as well?

"I think it is beautiful, and I work to keep it that way," he said, looking back toward the home farm. "I treasure it for its value as working land and for its beauty, too."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. H. WESLEY TOWERS, JR.

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. H. Wesley Towers Jr. upon his retirement as State Veterinarian after 37 years of dedicated service. He is a man with a kind heart, diverse interests and great abilities. Wesley embodies the best of Delaware.

"Doc," as he was fondly known, was born on August 15, 1942 in Wilmington, DE. He spent much of his youth with his grandfather, the farm manager on E.E. du Pont's Greenville, DE, estate, "Dogwood." He loved the country, the farm work, and the animals. When the local veterinarian came to tend the livestock, Doc knew what he wanted to be.

Doc graduated high school in 1960 from P.S. Dupont, and went on to study animal and poultry science at the University of Delaware, graduating

with honors and distinction in 1964. He spent the next four years at the University of Pennsylvania veterinary school, graduating in 1968, and went on to become Delaware's vet almost by chance.

After veterinary school, Doc took a job in Kent County as an apprentice to the State veterinarian. At the same time, Harrington and Georgetown race-tracks offered him a temporary night job overseeing racehorses. Several weeks later, the track vet had a stroke, leaving him unable to resume race work. The temporary job became a full-time, second job for Doc. The following year in 1969, the State vet retired and Doc was appointed in his place.

Doc has the Nation's fourth largest poultry industry to protect, a rabies epidemic to police, and race courses to regulate. Containing and excluding contagious and infectious animal and poultry diseases is his priority, with public enemy No. 1 being avian flu, a virulent respiratory ailment that devastates poultry. Doc and his team work hard at their jobs to ensure that any outbreaks of avian flu are contained.

During his time as State vet, Doc has received the Department of Agriculture's Employee of the Year award, the University of Delaware's Worrilow Award for service to agriculture and Delaware's coveted Award for Excellence and Commitment to State Service. At the University of Delaware, Doc is a part of the Agricultural Alumni Association, the Alumni Association board, the Career Planning and Placement advisory committee, the phone-athons, and the "Alumni in the Classroom" program.

Doc spends much of his free time championing causes in which he believes. He testifies in SPCA cases, including revelations over local "puppy mills." He is involved with the racing commissions, the State Fair Board and the Tri-State Bird Rescue group. In addition, Doc enjoys gardening, traveling, hunting, cooking and taking trips to the beach.

Doc is married to his college sweetheart, Sarah. The two met in a chemistry laboratory at the University of Delaware, and were married on June 25, 1966. They have two children, Laura and David, and four grandchildren, Mark, Annie, Matthew and Davey. Sarah describes her husband over almost forty years as a patient, kind and loving man who loves to be around people. He is fortunate to wake up every morning and go to a job that he loves.

After retirement, Doc plans to spend his time pursuing his hobbies, volunteering, and most importantly, continuing to raise his beloved Delaware blue hens. I rise today to honor Doc and to thank him for the friendship that we share. Through his tireless efforts, Doc has made a profound difference in the lives of thousands and enhanced the quality of life for an entire State. Upon his retirement, he will leave behind a legacy of commitment

to public service for both his children and grandchildren and for the generations that will follow. I congratulate him on a truly remarkable and distinguished career. I wish him and his family only the very best in all that lies ahead for each of them.●

THE VALUE OF RURAL HEALTH CARE

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will take a few minutes to pay tribute to a group of people whose tireless, dedicated service to those in need too often goes unnoticed—North Dakota's and our Nation's health care providers. As I travel around North Dakota, I frequently stop in to visit hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes. I am continually impressed by the quality, compassionate care that I see being provided by doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, and other medical staff, as well as by the administrative and support staff.

Rural America depends on its small town hospitals, its tertiary hospitals, on physicians and nurses, nursing homes, those who provide emergency ambulance services, and many others to provide a seamless system of care. There are a range of challenges facing rural health systems, from difficulty recruiting and retaining staff and inadequate reimbursement to rising costs and reams of paperwork to fill out. Despite these challenges, our health care providers do an admirable job remaining focused on providing quality care.

Our hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics are also important engines driving North Dakota's economy. Health services account for 8 percent of North Dakota's gross State product. And health care providers are often among the largest employers in a rural community, representing about 15 percent of direct and secondary employment.

In short, a strong health care system is an important part of our rural infrastructure, and the people who make up that system have my deep respect and thanks. Over the years, we have determined that rural electric service, rural telephone service, an interstate highway system through rural areas, and rural mail delivery, to name a few services, make us a better, more unified nation. The same is true of rural health care, and I will continue fighting for policies that reflect rural health care as a strong national priority.●

COMMENDING HOME DEPOT

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the Home Depot for the support, employment, and assistance it provides to the men and women of our active duty Armed Forces, Reserves and National Guard and their families.

Beginning with its founding by Bernie Marcus and Arthur Blank and continuing under CEO and President Bob Nardelli, the Home Depot has always been a great corporate citizen. Nothing

exemplifies the company's commitment more than its support of our veterans and their families.

In the years 2003 and 2004 combined the Home Depot hired 25,000 veterans, and was recognized by G. I. Jobs magazine as America's No. 1 military-friendly employer. In 2004, the company launched Operation Career Front with the departments of Defense, Labor, and Veterans Affairs to provide career opportunities to military personnel and their spouses.

Since the tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, our Nation has depended on our military Reserves and National Guard in waging the war on terror, and no American company has been a bigger supporter of the Reserves and Guard than the Home Depot. In March of 2003 the company enhanced its military leave policy to provide active duty associates with full pay and an extension of their health benefits.

In April 2003 the Home Depot launched Project Homefront, donating more than 1 million hours of volunteer service and \$1 million to help repair the homes of deployed military families. In September of 2004 the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves presented the Home Depot with its Freedom Award.

In June of this year the company established a program for returning veterans to provide associates with the critical resources needed for a smooth transition back to work.

For all these reasons and so many more, Home Depot was recognized this year by the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation and the Partnership for Public Service with awards for leadership and distinguished service to America's veterans.

I am very proud to recognize CEO Bob Nardelli and the men and women of Home Depot for their leadership in employing and assisting America's active duty and veteran military personnel and their families.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WALTON

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Mr. John Walton, 58, an Arkansas native and Wal-Mart heir who on June 28, was killed when his aircraft crashed on landing outside of Jackson, WY.

John lived a varied and interesting life. John was born on October 8, 1946, the second oldest son of Sam and Helen Walton of Bentonville, AR. He attended high school in Bentonville and began his undergraduate studies at the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH.

As a young college student during the Vietnam era, John enlisted in the Army and volunteered for combat as a medic with the Green Berets. During his time in Vietnam, he was often in firefights with the enemy and performed heroically as a part of his special operations unit. He was awarded the Silver Star for saving the lives of several members of his unit while under enemy fire.

After returning from Vietnam, John pursued a variety of interests, including working as a crop duster in the 1970s and building boats in the 1980s. He had a passion for all things mechanical and was an avid motorcyclist and pilot.

More recently, John took a great interest in education. He took \$67 million of Walton Foundation money and founded the Children's Scholarship Fund. Scholarships from the fund have benefitted 67,000 children. He, along with his family, also made the largest contribution to a public college when they gave a \$300 million gift to the University of Arkansas.

Our condolences and prayers go out to John's wife Christy of Jackson Hole, WY; to his son, Luke, and to his mother Helen; as well as to his siblings Rob, Jim, and Alice.

John's life exhibited his commitment to his country in so many ways. He defended his country on the battlefields of Vietnam and he invested in his country by funding a better education for thousands of children. I am sure the entire Senate will join with me to honor the life of John Walton.●

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF GARY L. NEALE

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I call to the attention of my colleagues the retirement of a pillar of the energy industry for many years in my home State of Indiana, Mr. Gary L. Neale. On June 30, 2005, Mr. Neale stepped down from his post of chief executive officer of NiSource Inc.

Prior to bringing his talents and dedicated work ethic to Northwest Indiana, Mr. Neale earned both his B.A. and M.B.A. from the University of Washington. In addition to this impressive education, he also took time to broaden his experiences by serving his country as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Mr. Neale remains not only an astute student but also a valued teacher contributing articles to Business Week, Harvard Business Review, and Public Utilities Fortnightly.

Supplementing his impressive academic and military careers, Mr. Neale became a consistent force in the energy industry in Indiana and nationally. Before joining NiSource in 1989, Mr. Neale was chairman, president and executive officer of Planmetrics Inc., an energy industry management consulting firm, for 17 years. Additionally, he held management positions at Wells Fargo Bank and Kaiser Industries.

Mr. Neale has displayed tremendous leadership in multiple capacities. He has served as chairman of both the American Gas Association and the North American Electric Reliability Council. He was appointed to the U.S. Department of Energy's National Petroleum Council and also the Department's Electricity Advisory Board. Mr. Neale graciously accepted the appointment of the Governor of Indiana to serve on our State's Economic Development Council, Energy Policy Forum

and Clean Air Advisory Committee. He headed the Northwest Indiana Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Board and the Lake Area United Way Campaign. Mr. Neale also sits on the boards of directors of Associated Electric & Gas Insurance Services Limited, AEGIS, Modine Manufacturing Company, Chicago Bridge and Iron Company, and Valparaiso University.

As he begins this new chapter in his life, I simply wanted to highlight a few of Mr. Neale's extensive accomplishments. I am pleased to have this opportunity to join his wife Sandy, two children, five grandchildren, and many friends and colleagues in congratulating him on a fine career.●

TRIBUTE TO JACKSON T. STEPHENS

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a legendary Arkansan. Jackson "Jack" Stephens was a businessman, financier, and philanthropist whose work has touched the lives of countless individuals in and outside of Arkansas, and his contributions to the state will live on for generations to come.

Described by Scott Ford, CEO of Alltel Corporation, as "the most brilliant businessperson that the state has ever produced," Jack Stephens has many accomplishments and accolades to his credit. Jack grew up on a farm in Grant County, AR. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, and soon thereafter he joined his brother Witt's investment firm, which became the financial vehicle for his success over the years. Jack's good business instincts and fabled work ethic led Stephens, Inc. to the forefront of Arkansas business. The financial clout that the Stephens brothers were able to amass allowed Jack to play an essential role in the development of some of Arkansas' most successful businesses, including Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods, and Alltel Corporation. The Stephens name is virtually inseparable from economic development in Arkansas over the last half century, and rightfully so.

Jack Stephens was also a philanthropist who truly believed in the values of charity and community service. His love for the people of Arkansas led him to invest not only in for-profit ventures to contribute to our State's economic well-being but also in many nonprofit causes for the benefit of the people of Arkansas. He helped build the distinguished Jackson T. Stephens Spine and Neurosciences Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Jack's support of the arts, health and education also made a notable difference in lives of so many Arkansans.

Perhaps one of the best known causes that Jack promoted was related to one of his lifetime passions: golf. In 1991 Jack was chosen to be chairman of the Augusta National Golf Club, home of the Masters tournament, where he served until 1997. It is here that Jack