

GRATITUDE FOR KATRINA VOLUNTEERS IN MISSISSIPPI

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the way the American people responded to the loss and suffering wrought by Hurricane Katrina was probably unprecedented and surely unforgettable. We in Mississippi, and our neighbors elsewhere along the gulf coast, will always remember the aid, the labor, the rescues, the prayers—everything our fellow citizens did to bring us through that terrible ordeal.

I wish it were possible to acknowledge every individual who came to assist us when we most needed them, but that honor roll is far too long for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Moreover, their names, I am sure, are inscribed in a more important book, and their lasting reward will be much greater than our praise.

I do want to take note of one particular group of volunteers from the State of North Carolina. On short notice, on September 2, 2005, more than 90 health care professionals left their homes and their jobs to come to Hancock County, where Katrina had left the towns of Waveland and Bay St. Louis in ruins. Because Hancock Regional Hospital was flooded, the Carolina volunteers created a field hospital that operated for 2 months and cared for more than 7,000 patients. During that time, more than 400 doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other health care professionals rotated through the facility, caring for local residents until Hancock Regional Hospital could again admit patients.

These men and women selflessly served the people of Mississippi during one of the worst disasters ever to confront our country. One of them, I should point out, is part of the Senate's extended family. Chris Ogden, an RN, is the daughter of our own Joy Ogden, manager of the Senate's Appointments Desk at the North Door of the Capitol.

To Chris, and to the more than 400 like her who brought hope and comfort to Hancock County, I offer the heartfelt gratitude of all the people of Mississippi.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JIM WILLIAMS

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a tremendous public servant for his good work in leading an important Federal Government program for the past several years. Jim Williams, who currently holds the position of Director of the US-VISIT Program at the Department of Homeland Security, will soon leave this position to become the Commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service at the General Services Administration.

There's little question that the Department's loss will be the Commission's gain. However, the good news is that one of our most accomplished, capable and experienced federal employees will continue serving his country.

In May 2003, Jim Williams took over as Director of the US-VISIT Program, a critical border-management program that collects point-of-entry and exit information on visitors entering and exiting the United States. The program uses biometric identifiers—digital finger scans and photographs—to make entering the United States easier for legitimate tourists, students, and business travelers, while making it more difficult for those who might do us harm to enter and stay in the United States illegally. Hundreds of thousands of visitors cross the Texas border each year, and the US-VISIT system has improved security without slowing down legal trade and tourism.

Mr. Williams' job was to develop a solid foundation of policies and practices that would guide the program for the foreseeable future. It was a critical moment for the program, and Mr. Williams skillfully seized this opportunity. In a little more than 2 years, Mr. Williams helped develop US-VISIT into a viable program. Mr. Williams built the team that developed and deployed the effort, which today is crucial to our immigration and border-management system.

Under Mr. Williams' leadership, US-VISIT has met its congressional deadlines on time and under budget and has helped establish the foundation of the U.S. Government's 21st century immigration and border-management system.

Jim Williams is a model public servant and leader. He has left a tremendous imprint on the US-VISIT Program and on the many people who work with him at US-VISIT and across the Government. Because of his leadership, US-VISIT has cultivated a talented team that will guide the program in the years ahead. They will continue to help overcome the challenges that face our Nation, and Mr. Williams will continue to provide the American people with the very best of Government service. We wish Mr. Williams well and thank him for his continued service to our country.●

RETIREMENT OF AIR FORCE CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT GERALD R. MURRAY

• Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray on the occasion of his retirement from the Air Force after 29 years of faithful and selfless service.

Chief Murray grew up in Boiling Springs, NC, and entered the Air Force in October 1977. His background includes various duties in aircraft maintenance, and as a command chief master sergeant at wing, numbered Air Force, and major command levels. He served this great Nation in assignments in the States of Texas, Florida, South Carolina, Washington, Hawaii, Washington, DC, and also served overseas in Turkey, Japan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia in support of operations Desert Storm and Southern Watch.

As the 14th Chief Master Sergeant appointed to the highest noncommis-

sioned officer position, Gerald R. Murray represents the highest enlisted level of leadership within the Air Force. He provided direction for the enlisted corps and represented their interests to the American public and to those in all levels of Government. He served as the personal adviser to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of the enlisted force.

Chief Murray served our country with great responsibility, dedication, loyalty, and integrity. I know my Senate colleagues join me in congratulating him on his retirement, and I am proud to publicly commend him on a truly remarkable and distinguished career. I wish him every success in the years to come.●

BILL AND ROSE MARY MOONEY BROOKS' 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I would like to recognize the 60th anniversary of Bill and Rose Mary Mooney Brooks on July 6, 2006. Their life together truly represents the American ideal. They met when Bill, an Army captain, took a weekend leave, with his fellow officer and best buddy Lewis Mooney. Lew introduced Bill to his younger sister Rose Mary that weekend in Philadelphia. Shortly after the war ended, they were married and Rose Mary and Bill returned to his home State where they made their home in Sioux Falls, SD. There they built a construction business and a family. Quite a family in fact, their first child and only daughter Barbara has shared my life for the last 37 years. Barbara was followed by six sons, Theodore, Robert, Ronald, Raymond, Richard, and Stephen.

During their years together, their business, Brooks Construction, and later Brooks Concrete, was always known for quality work but, most importantly, for integrity. Bill was also a founding officer of the South Dakota Air National Guard where he served until he retired as a lieutenant colonel. Then, as now, guard service required sacrifice. During the Korean war, Bill had to leave his new business and move his young family to Duluth, MN, where, once again, he served his country.

They were active members and leaders in their church where Rose Mary enjoyed singing in the choir. Her Irish sensibilities and intelligence gave her grace and wit in raising the children. They were strong supporters of whatever their seven children chose to participate. Whether it was a starring role on the football team, an all-day wrestling meet, a lead in a musical, or one line in a class play, Bill and Rose Mary were in the stands. Their children will tell you that they were and are wonderful parents.

There are many American ideals that apply to Bill and Rose Mary. Their love story truly captures the American dream and I am proud to be part of their family, and honored to offer my congratulations on their 60th anniversary.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF MOBRIDGE, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 100th anniversary of the founding of Mobridge, SD. Mobridge is a beautiful community located on the Missouri River, with friendly people and a strong local economy.

Long before the settlers arrived, the site of Mobridge was inhabited by mound dwellers. Following the mound dwellers were the Woodland Indians, who in turn were followed by the Mandan and Arikaras. The Sioux Indians arrived later, coming from the East. In the late 1800s settlers began moving onto the land that eventually became the site of Mobridge. General S.E. Olson owned the land on which the city was built. The idea that Mobridge should be the place where the Milwaukee Railroad met the Missouri River came to him while goose hunting. The name "Mobridge" came from the abbreviating of "Missouri Bridge." The Milwaukee Railroad reached Mobridge on September 9, 1906. A.H. Brown contributed materially to give Mobridge a convention center and marketplace. Monuments can still be found around the town, including the A.H. Brown Library, the Mascot Theatre, the Mobridge Wholesale building, and the Brown Palace Apartments.

Mobridge offers immense opportunities to those who enjoy the outdoors. With Lake Oahe near the city, Mobridge is able to hold national and regional fishing tournaments every year. The area also presents many good hunting opportunities, as well.

In Mobridge, there is a school, library, nursing home, three clinics, a beautiful nine-hole golf course, municipal airport, three parks, an outdoor swimming pool, the Mobridge Tribune, and 12 churches along with many other thriving businesses.

Each year Mobridge offers events such as parades, carnivals, and rodeos. The Lewis and Clark Renaissance Festival reenacts the visit of the famous explorers to the area, and local jazz bands can often be heard entertaining in the gazebos of parks.

The city will be celebrating this memorable occasion July 1st through the 4th with events such as a pancake breakfast, a school reunion, a dance, rodeo, parade, and fireworks along with other various activities. This celebration is an appropriate way to honor the past and a chance to look toward the future. I am pleased to recognize the achievements of Mobridge and to offer my congratulations to the residents of the community on this historic milestone.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF CROCKER, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city of Crocker, SD.

A cafe was the first business to open in Crocker in 1906. The cafe was soon followed by the Lambert Lumber Company and the Crocker State Bank. Eventually the town expanded to include a clothing store, pool hall, drug store, hardware farm machinery store, and a blacksmith. The first train ran through Crocker in 1907. Soon there were four trains a day, with a sleeper on one train en route to Minneapolis. The post office was established on February 6, 1907. The first Crocker school was moved into the town in 1908, on the corner of Vera Street and Third Avenue.

Today the Crocker Lutheran Church, which was founded in 1917, still remains a thriving place for its congregation.

I am proud to publicly honor Crocker on this memorable occasion. Small communities like Crocker are part of the backbone of our great State and help to preserve our agricultural roots and deep-seated character. After 125 years, Crocker still exemplifies what it means to be a great South Dakota community.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF MOUNT VERNON, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of Mount Vernon, SD.

Mount Vernon, originally named "Arlandton," is thought to be named by a Virginian or someone who had wanted to pay tribute to George Washington's estate. The town plat was recorded in 1882 around the same time period that John Pease established the Mount Vernon Gazette. Closely following this, a hardware store, livery stable, lumber yard, drug store, cigar manufactory, hotel, and various other firms were established. Mount Vernon's survival, like many South Dakota communities, was largely dependent on the newly constructed railroad.

The community endured a fair share of hardship during the early years. In 1888, a ferocious blizzard caused conditions so intense that people froze to death just a few feet from shelter. Then in 1889, a fire burned down 53 buildings in the fledgling town and caused damage to many more. However, the community spirit was resilient, and the residents rebuilt.

Mount Vernon currently holds an estimated population of 477 citizens. It is still home to many thriving businesses, as well as the high school's Mount Vernon Mustangs.

I am pleased to announce that Mount Vernon celebrated its 125th anniversary

with a community celebration on June 16 to 18. There were numerous events scheduled, including a petting zoo, tractor show, golf tournament, and parade. This celebration was a fitting way to recognize Mount Vernon's long and productive history.

Even 125 years after its founding, Mount Vernon continues to be a vital community and a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to publicly honor Mount Vernon on this memorable occasion.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF WEBSTER, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city of Webster, SD. Webster is a vibrant community and an asset to the State of South Dakota. It is the county seat of Day County.

Webster is an excellent destination for outdoorsmen. Hunters will find an abundance of ringneck pheasant, as well as many duck varieties, Canada geese, and doves. Anglers will enjoy the excellent fishing at nearby Waubay Lake and many other area glacial lakes. For the winter months, miles of snowmobiling trails run around the town and the rest of Day County. It truly is "a place for all seasons."

Webster also boasts a variety of man-made attractions. The Blue Dog Lake Fish Hatchery opened in 1982, and it is the only cool and warm water fish hatchery in South Dakota. The facility sits on scenic Blue Dog Lake, which has a variety of hiking trails and outdoor facilities. Webster is also home to the Day County Museum and the Museum of Wildlife, Science & Industry. Residents benefit from the services of six churches, a golf course, the Webster Reporter & Farmer, and a variety of other businesses.

Today, Webster is a credit to South Dakota and our way of life. The town has just constructed a new high school to help educate its next generation of young people and to ensure the vibrancy and vitality of the Webster community for years to come. The people of Webster will celebrate their town's 125th anniversary from July 27 through the 30. I am proud to publicly honor this community on this special occasion.●

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 150th anniversary of the founding of Sioux Falls, SD. Sioux Falls is the largest city in South Dakota and growing at a phenomenal rate. Sioux Falls is a progressive and diverse community with all the opportunities normally associated large metropolitan areas and the friendliness of a small town. I offer my congratulations to the people of Sioux Falls on this momentous occasion.