

The waterfalls for which Sioux Falls is named have long been an attractive feature. Burial mounds have been found near the site dating as far back as 500 B.C. The area was settled by Europeans in the 1850s, when two groups made claims to land around the falls. Fort Dakota was established in 1865, and shortly thereafter the town began to blossom. The railroads arrived in the 1880s, and over the course of the decade the population leapt from 2,164 to 10,167. Other major events for the area include the opening of the John Morrell plant in 1909, establishment of an airbase in 1942, and the conclusion of construction of the interstate highways in the early 1960s.

Modern Sioux Falls boasts a wide variety of educational, cultural, artistic, and recreational opportunities. The city has offerings from both public and private universities, including Augustana University and the University of Sioux Falls, as well as many specialized and technical schools for those seeking to further their educational goals. The city is served by the Argus Leader newspaper. The Old Courthouse Museum and the Pettigrew Museum are major attractions, as is the historic downtown area generally. The Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science, the Great Plains Zoo, and St. Joseph's Cathedral are only a small sample of the interesting places and activities in Sioux Falls.

Sioux Falls is celebrating its sesquicentennial with a variety of events over the summer, such as "150 Candles!", a musical tribute to the history of Sioux Falls; historic building tours; a sesquicentennial gala ball; a performance by He Sapa Dancers and Lakota Drum Group; a commemorative Sioux Falls Canaries baseball game and fireworks display; and a parade ending at Falls Park with a community picnic to follow. These activities will serve as a reminder of the shared history of the community and bring the close-knit people of Sioux Falls even closer together.

This anniversary is a significant milestone for Sioux Falls. After 150 years, the city is stronger than ever. I am pleased to publicly honor the achievements of this wonderful South Dakota community as they reach this juncture. As the slogan of the community celebration states, the citizens of Sioux Falls are "Honoring the Past, Shaping the Future."●

CENTENNIAL OF THE FOUNDING OF ORTLEY, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the centennial of the founding of the community of Ortley, SD.

Ortley is situated in the southwestern corner of Roberts County. Ortley was established on the Sisseton Wahpeton Indian Reservation when C.E. Anderson purchased the land in 1906. The town was originally named Anderson Townsite. However, the name

was later changed to Ortley to correspond with the name of the township in which it is located. The town was incorporated in 1907, and the first elected trustees were C.E. Anderson, Paul Halvorson, and D.L. Branum.

One year after the land was purchased, Ortley experienced an immense building boom. In 1907, a railway company established a depot and stockyard in the town. A labor yard, meat market, hotel, bank, hardware store, and general stores were also constructed. In the area in which Ortley is located the principal industries have been farming, raising livestock, and dairying.

Small towns like Ortley add to the character of our wonderful State. I am pleased to announce that Ortley will be celebrating its centennial on July 1, 2006. There are numerous events scheduled, including a car and motorcycle show, parade, softball game, and barbeque.

A hundred years after its founding, Ortley continues to be a vital community and a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to honor the achievements of Ortley on this memorable occasion. ●

CENTENNIAL OF THE FOUNDING OF STRATFORD, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the centennial of the founding of the city of Stratford, SD. A latecomer in inclusion into Brown County, Stratford sprung up rapidly in just weeks.

Stratford was founded 100 years ago on the Minneapolis and St. Louis railways. Stratford was a convenient commuter system to many of its neighboring cities at the time. In just 5 years, Stratford reached its peak population of 600.

Stratford is one of South Dakota's classic small towns. It has been the home of industry and farm-related businesses, and its meat market is known for its homemade sausages, hams, and liverwurst. The Taylor Honey Company, which processes about a million pounds of honey annually, was established in 1955 and is still a booming business. The community created Stratford's volunteer fire protection in 1911, and the post office and Badger Hole, a cafe and bar, are open to this day.

A hundred years after its founding, Stratford continues to be a vital community and a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to honor the achievements of Stratford on this memorable occasion. ●

CENTENNIAL OF THE FOUNDING OF WECOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the centennial of the founding of the town of Wecota, SD. The town, with its five streets and five avenues, is a place of great charm and character.

Wecota became a town when the Minneapolis and St. Louis railroad was completed. Although small, Wecota has had a rich history. The first building to be established in the community was a small schoolhouse. A year later, the town's post office was organized, which stayed in operation for 75 years. Of the original buildings that were built, a depot, school, bank, and elevators remain to this day.

The town has subsisted through many hardships. In 1919, a fire destroyed two grocery stores and the meat market. Then in 1926 a destructive hailstorm damaged most of the community's crops. After the hailstorm, many of Wecota's residents began to drift to other towns, though a core of dedicated residents still occupies the town.

The name "Wecota" is derived from an Indian word meaning "friendship," and the town holds true to its name. A hundred years after its founding, Wecota continues to be a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to honor the achievements of Wecota on this memorable occasion. ●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF TEA, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 100th anniversary of the founding of Tea, SD. Tea is enriched with a vibrant history reaching back to the growth of the railroads and continuing to the present, with Tea now being the fastest growing city in the State.

Tea's unusual name was discovered when the community was asked to submit 10 town names to the Postal Service but only 9 could be decided upon. A recess was called during a town meeting at which tea was served. Someone suggested the name "Tea" be added to the list. Shortly after, this tight-knit community was informed that their new name would be Tea. Tea was officially incorporated in 1906.

Tea's first bank was opened in 1900 in the place that is now O'Toole's bar. Unfortunately, the bank went broke in 1922 prior to the Depression. Despite the failure of the bank, Tea developed beautifully with its own post office, schoolhouse, cafes, general store, and lumberyard. Woodman Hall was the center of the town's social activities, hosting everything from roller skating to school plays. More recently, a new high school was opened in August 2005 and is a point of pride for the community. Tea is currently served by the Tea-Harrisburg Champion newspaper.

I congratulate Tea in achieving 100 wonderful years. During the week of June 10, the community gathered to celebrate with a Wild West Show, the coronation of Ma and Pa Teapot and Ecumenical church service. This celebration tied the community together even tighter, as they commemorated their history and looked to their future.

One century after its inception, Tea continues to be a valuable addition to the State of South Dakota and source of pride for all those who live there.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF PLANKINTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city of Plankinton, SD. As the county seat of Aurora County, this progressive community has been a center of commercial and civic activity since its inception.

This vibrant community was laid out by General Lawler of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company, after he purchased the land from the founding settler, Ira Wooden. The town was named "Merrill" initially but was later changed to Plankinton after a wealthy Milwaukee meat packer. The original town plat was eight blocks north of the railway and three to the south. In August of 1880, the first building was erected: a one-story frame building about 12 feet by 20 feet in size, which became a saloon. A post office and bank were constructed shortly thereafter.

Now Plankinton is home to three churches; a thriving business community, including the South Dakota Mail weekly newspaper; and excellent hunting and fishing. The new high school building is a point of regional pride, having been built following a tragic fire at the former building. Home to the South Dakota State Training School for many years, that campus awaits possible redevelopment.

I am pleased to announce that Plankinton will be celebrating its 125th anniversary with a community celebration on June 23 to June 25. There are numerous events scheduled including a golf tournament, time capsule opening, demolition derby, and a parade. This celebration is a fitting way to recognize Plankinton's long and productive history.

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

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF HARTFORD, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the town of Hartford, SD. Home to over 2,000 residents, Hartford is a vibrant and flourishing town.

The area was originally known as Oaksville, after an early settler, I.E. Oakes. However, in 1879, the Oaksville train depot was renamed "Hartford" by two travelers from Hartford, CT. The settlement took shape in 1881, when a post office was established. Stores, hotels, grain warehouses, and other businesses soon followed. In 1896, the citi-

zens of Hartford petitioned the county commissioners to hold an election to incorporate the area as the "Town of Hartford." After holding an election, the town was divided into three districts and trustees were elected.

Hartford's city motto, "Hartford on the Right Road," captures the progressive nature of the community. The city is located just west of Sioux Falls, in Minnehaha County, and has a volunteer fire department, law enforcement, churches, and many civic organizations. In addition to the many businesses already located in Hartford, the Hartford Area Development Corporation is working to bring even more commerce and industry to the area. The community is served by the Hartford Area News weekly newspaper. In downtown Hartford, the Hartford Area Veterans Memorial honors all the men and women of Hartford who have served our country in a war.

Hartford celebrated its 125th anniversary with a Quasiquicentennial Jamboree Celebration from June 1 to June 4. There were carnivals, parades, softball tournaments, golf tournaments, and even paintball and XBOX tournaments. The celebration reflected the enthusiasm the residents of Hartford have toward commemorating the history of their wonderful community.

More than a century after its founding, Hartford continues to be a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to honor the achievements of Hartford on this memorable occasion.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF HOWARD, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 125th anniversary of the founding of Howard, SD. Howard is a progressive community, offering many opportunities to a variety of people, and is also the county seat of Miner County.

The city of Howard is the first municipality to own and operate their own wind turbines to supply electricity to the entire city. In recent years, it has become a regional economic development leader through efforts such as the Miner County Community Revitalization and the new Rural Learning Center. These are examples of the innovative and progressive ideas abounding in Howard. Though agriculture is the primary driver of Howard's economy, the community has found many ways to diversify. In particular, Howard has developed an excellent local technology infrastructure, helping to attract new businesses. The community is served by the Miner County Pioneer newspaper.

In addition to this healthy business climate, Howard boasts some of the world's best hunting and fishing. In the third week in October, sportsmen come from around the globe to hunt pheasant in this hotspot. Howard is also near Lake Thompson, the largest natural lake in South Dakota, and home to excellent walleye fishing.

Howard is celebrating its 125th anniversary with a variety of events. The festivities start with an all-school reunion, including students, alumni, and faculty at Howard or St. Agatha schools. Other events include a road race, parade, children's games, baseball, music, and fireworks. The events will be held on July 1st through the 4th.

Even 125 years after its founding, Howard remains a vital community and a great asset to the wonderful State of South Dakota. I am pleased to honor this lively city on such a memorable occasion, and offer my congratulations on this historic milestone.●

TRIBUTE TO ALABAMA'S VESTAVIA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to make some remarks today about Alabama's State champion and national finalist in the "We the People" competition. Vestavia Hills High School placed fourth in the national We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution national finals, held in Washington, DC. This impressive competition, headed by the Center for Civic Education, engaged young people in the fundamental ideals and values of American constitutional government.

Members of this remarkable team from Vestavia Hills included Grace Anthony, Georgiy Bolshinskiy, Barrett Bowdre, Courtney Bragg, Jeannette Dooley, Daniel Driscoll, Claire Foster, Sarah Graffeo, Lauren Howard, Sarah McKibben, Patrick Mulligan, John Nicholson, Tiffany Parrish, Hanna Perry, John Phillips, Joseph Siegelman, Mary Kendal Spires, William Edward Stevenson, Emily Unnasch, Amy Watson, Ryan Woodford, and Ansley Zarra.

I congratulate Amy Maddox, the teacher who led this fine team. Teachers shape the future, and I appreciate Ms. Maddox's investment in these students. As a former educator and the father of three children, I have a great admiration for educators, and I am grateful that educators like Ms. Maddox are making a difference.

I thank U.S. District Judge Karon Bowdre for her involvement and support of the Vestavia Hills High School team. Judge Bowdre is a person of great intellectual and academic ability who understands and reveres our Constitution. I am very proud that she has given of her talents to this worthy project.

I thank Janice Cowin, the executive director of the Alabama Center for Law and Civic Education.

I applaud the efforts of students, teachers, and community leaders who made this accomplishment possible. Vestavia Hills High School is an exceptional school and has represented Alabama well. I encourage these students to continue pursuing a deep understanding of the Constitution and our Government. It is important that we raise up quality leaders who will serve our country in years to come.●