

## NATIONAL LITERACY DAY

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 21st anniversary of National Literacy Day, designated on July 2, 1985, by President Ronald Reagan.

In 1986, Caryl Mackin-Wagner, the executive director for Focus on Literacy Inc., worked with Congress to establish recognition by a Senate resolution of a National Literacy Day, which Congress has honored each year since.

Caryl Mackin-Wagner established Focus on Literacy, Inc., to bring a greater awareness to the problem of illiteracy in our Nation and to promote effective ways to address this problem while improving the reading skills of children and adults in America.

Developing one's reading and writing skills is a necessary tool to succeeding in this world today. It is extremely important that Americans continue to advance in order to bring about a more successful nation as a whole. We must not ignore the fact that there are many individuals who are not well educated and who are not contributing to society in ways that they could. What is cause for concern is that with inadequate education, people don't reach their full potential and contribute all that they can to our Nation. On Sunday, July 2, Congress will recognize the significance of improving the literacy of individuals, which further contributes to the growth of our society.

Each year, Congress honors National Literacy Day to celebrate literary accomplishments, which have contributed to developing a better and more educated society. As Caryl Mackin-Wagner has said, "Illiterate individuals are our untapped resource for they possess underutilized talents and abilities."

Through hard work and a commitment to helping others, Focus on Literacy, Inc. has made remarkable strides in the battle for literacy and I am proud to salute its efforts on National Literacy Day.

## 2005 SLOAN AWARD WINNERS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the 2005 winners of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility, which recognizes companies that have successfully used flexibility to meet both business and employee goals. The Sloan Awards are presented by the When Work Works initiative, which is a project of the Families and Work Institute in partnership with the Center for Workforce Preparation, an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Twiga Foundation. The When Work Works initiative is sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

I would like to draw your attention to the Sloan Awards because I think these companies are to be commended for their excellence in providing workplace flexibility practices which ben-

efit both employees and employers. Achieving greater flexibility in the workplace—to maximize productivity while attracting the highest quality employees—is one of the key challenges facing American companies in the 21st century.

During the inaugural phase of the Sloan Awards in 2004-05, businesses in the following eight cities were eligible for recognition: Brooklyn, NY; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Detroit, MI; Durham, NC; Long Beach, CA; Providence, RI; and Salt Lake City, UT. The Chamber of Commerce in each city hosted an interactive business forum to share research on workplace flexibility as an important component of workplace effectiveness. In these same communities, businesses applied for, and winners were selected for, the Sloan Awards through a process that included employees' views as well as employer practices.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the inaugural winners of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. These businesses are to be commended for their excellence in providing workplace flexibility.

In Long Beach, CA, the winners are Dun & Bradstreet, PeacePartners, Inc., and Ward's Furniture.

In Chicago, IL, the winner is Accenture.

In Detroit, MI, the winners are Accenture, Amerisure Mutual Insurance Company, Brogan & Partners Convergence Marketing, Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, Plexus Systems LLC, and Rossetti.

In Brooklyn, NY, the winner is Urban Monster.

In Durham, NC, the winners are the Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau and Durham Family Court.

In Providence, RI, the winners are Atrion Networking Corporation, Citizens Financial Group, Inc., KPMG, LLP, North Star Marketing, Quality Partners of Rhode Island, Rhode Island Housing, Rhode Island Legal Services, Inc., and Sojourner House, Inc.

In Dallas, TX, the winners are Accenture, CareerLink Companies, Center for Housing Resources, Inc., Community Council of Greater Dallas, Lee Hecht Harrison, McQueary Henry Bowles Troy, LLP, Medical City Hospital, Texas Instruments, and TravisWolff & Company, LLP.

In Salt Lake City, UT, the winners are ARUP Laboratories, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, McKinnon-Mulherin, Inc., and Radius Engineering Inc.

2005 was the inaugural year for these awards. Building on the success of the first year, Phase II of the When Work Works initiative will extend the number of participating communities to 17 in 2006 and 24 in 2007. Again, I congratulate the 2005 winners and look forward to the expansion of this exciting initiative.

## COMMENDING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESCUE TEAMS

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the efforts and extraordinary dedication of the volunteer firefighters and emergency rescue teams throughout New Mexico who have been working tirelessly to assist in fighting fires and meeting the needs of citizens throughout the State as they cope with the worst fire season in decades.

It has already been an incredibly difficult fire season for the people of the Southwest. New Mexico is suffering a drought of historic proportions. The State spent the winter preparing for a summer fire season they hoped wouldn't happen. Unfortunately, the worst fears of the State are quickly becoming a reality. By the end of June, more than 100,000 acres of land will have burned and the State will have already faced more than 20 named fires and countless unnamed fires of varying size and intensity. Hundreds of people have been evacuated, property lost, and communities changed forever. Bear Paw, Rivera Mesa, Energen, Martinez, Skates, Bear, Eicks, Wilson, and Malpais, are the names of just a few of the large fires that the State has already faced this year.

Throughout this time I have been deeply impressed by the work of Federal, State, Tribal, and local fire fighters. But the work of these professionals would be impossible without the commitment of the volunteer firefighters and rescue teams who have unfailingly answered the call to service. These volunteers exemplify the best spirit of New Mexico. They have courageously worked the fire lines, offered their support and a shoulder to cry on, provided a bed and warm meal to evacuees, and helped to corral and move pets and livestock out of harm's way. They do all this while some of their own families and homes face the same fire danger. While I am not surprised at the selflessness of my fellow New Mexicans, I am forever grateful to these volunteers.

The work of these volunteer firefighters and rescue teams has been essential in meeting the challenges of a very active fire season. Throughout New Mexico volunteer firefighters and rescue teams have responded at all times of the day and night. Some have worked for many days in a row to ensure that all the needs of their community were met and the necessary resources were in place. Their bravery and selflessness has been an example to all New Mexicans, and I strongly commend them for their work.

I know that I am joined today by every New Mexican in saying thank you to our volunteer firefighters and rescue teams and in the hope for their continued safety in the face of the fire dangers they face.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## HANDS-OFF TELEPHONE BAND TEAM

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an exceptional group of students with disabilities in southern California from Hesperia Junior High School. Kattie Greene, Emilee Landon, David Perez, and Eric Coldwell have achieved outstanding success in science and problem solving.

These students formed the Hands-Off Telephone Band Team. Together, they developed an apparatus that allows a cellular telephone to be mounted to a wrist or arm—creating an effective and simple assistive technology device that enables some individuals with disabilities to independently use a cellular phone.

The Hands-Off Telephone Band Team's ingenious creation was chosen as one of eight projects from nationwide to be judged by the renowned Christopher Columbus Foundation, which, along with the National Science Foundation, strive to improve America's middle school students' literacy in mathematics and science. Despite facing formidable competition, the Hands-Off Telephone Band Team's project was deservedly selected as the Gold Medal Award Winning Team. Kattie, Emilee, David, and Eric's commitment to excellence, coupled with their mastery of the scientific process, enabled them to return to Hesperia Junior High School as heroes of the community.

I commend these students not only for their success in this prestigious competition but also because they are the first team comprised of students with disabilities to win this national competition. Each of these incredible young people utilized their abilities and coordinated their efforts to succeed. Eighth grade instructor Barbara Jacobs deserves commendation on her successful mentorship of these young students.

I applaud the dedication of the Hands-Off Telephone Band Team from Hesperia Junior High School. Their success has provided an example of determination to us all.●

## TRIBUTE TO PETE WHEELER

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, it is my honor today to pay tribute to a man who has passionately spent his career in service to the United States and past members of its Armed Forces. Mr. Pete Wheeler has served with the Georgia Department of Veteran Services since 1949 and as chairman of the National Veterans Day Committee since 1954. From the beginning of his work, he has served as a dedicated advocate and friend to veterans and their families. For his nearly 60 years of service, Commissioner Wheeler will be honored by the Veterans Council of the Golden Isles as "Veteran of the Century."

Pete was born in Albany, GA, in 1922. At the age of 20, he enlisted in the

Army as an infantry soldier just a year prior to his 1943 graduation from the University of Georgia. He married Geraldine Odenweller, and the couple raised three children: Chip, Jane Watkins, and Frances Jones. Pete and Geraldine are now the proud grandparents of six grandchildren.

After his graduation from John Marshall Law School in 1948 and his admission to the Georgia State Bar in 1949, Mr. Wheeler began his career with the Georgia Department of Veterans Services. He was appointed the Georgia chairman of the National Veterans Day Committee in 1954 and has served in the office for over 50 years. Commissioner Wheeler has worked on a wide spectrum of Veterans Affairs panels, associations and programs, but in addition to his civilian services, he retired in 1978 as a brigadier general from the Georgia Army National Guard.

Among State directors and commissioners, Pete is known as the "Dean of Veterans" because of his influential leadership in State and national veterans affairs. He served as president of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs from 1964 to 1965. Two years later, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Mr. Wheeler to the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission. His national work has continued since then to include serving as chairman of the 1994 World War II Memorial Advisory Board commissioned by President Clinton and President Bush.

In addition to Mr. Wheeler's national influence in veterans affairs, Georgia is especially proud of Mr. Wheeler's work as State chairman. During his tenure, Mr. Wheeler worked tirelessly to assist veterans and their families throughout Georgia. He was instrumental in the development of innovative programs such as the "State Supermarket of Veterans Benefits", a one-stop information service on veterans' benefits, and the "Georgia Veterans Bulletin," a quarterly publication dedicated to keeping veterans and their families informed of law changes, benefits, and special events. Commissioner Wheeler also worked to found the Annual Service Officer School, an event which brings together veterans' benefit counselors and leaders from the State and National veterans groups and offices for veterans issues. Under Mr. Wheeler's leadership, Georgia is still the only State to provide free nursing home and domiciliary care to its eligible veterans. To honor past veterans, he has also helped to establish two veterans cemeteries, including the Georgia National Cemetery in Cherokee County.

Pete Wheeler has lived by his statement that "there is little that cannot be accomplished if one doesn't care who gets the credit." Considering his invaluable contributions to veterans and veterans affairs, it is no wonder that others are quick to pay tribute to Pete for much of what has been accomplished for Georgia veterans.

These tributes among many others, illustrate the tremendous impact of

Pete Wheeler's work in veterans affairs. His enduring dedication to his fellow veterans has shown through his nearly 60 years of service to the community, the State of Georgia, and the Nation. I am very proud to join the Georgia Department of Veterans' Services and the Veterans' Council of the Golden Isles in honoring Pete Wheeler as one of the century's finest examples of service to our Nation's veterans.●

## 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF LARIMORE, NORTH DAKOTA

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a community in North Dakota that will be celebrating its 125th anniversary. On July 13-16, the residents of Larimore will gather to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Founded in 1881 by Anthony Clark and named for Newell Green Larimore, Larimore is located just north of Grand Forks. Many of Clark's descendants still live in Larimore and are part of the tight knit community. Larimore's post office was established on October 31, 1881, with Lyman P. Goodhume as its postmaster.

Today, Larimore continues to thrive with a bustling downtown area that has a grocery store, a flower shop, and an appliance store. During the summer, citizens of Larimore head out to the Larimore Dam for swimming, boating, camping, and fishing. In the winter, the Men's Club of Larimore and the American Legion hold an annual ice fishing derby.

An annual highlight is the celebration of Larimore Days. Each year Larimore holds festivities that are meant to bring the community, family, and friends together. Larimore celebrates with parades, school reunions, and family events. This year, the 125th anniversary of the town will be held in conjunction with the Larimore Days celebrations.

Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating Larimore, ND, and its residents on their first 125 years and in wishing them well through the next century. By honoring Larimore and all the other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the great pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as Larimore that have helped to shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.

Larimore has a proud past and a bright future.●

## 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEWBURG, NORTH DAKOTA

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a community in North Dakota that will be celebrating its 100th anniversary. On July 8-9, the residents of Newburg will gather to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Newburg is a vibrant community in northern North Dakota. Newburg was