

and front-desk person. She kept getting calls from people on the north side of Des Moines who wanted me to do something to stop prostitution in the area. Donna went to bat for them, and that is how she got her start in community casework and making connections with local law enforcement. She had a knack for bringing people and agencies together and helping them to get things done. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship not only with neighborhood groups in Des Moines but with law enforcement officials all across Iowa.

Mr. President, there is an old expression that we make a living by what we make, but we make a life by what we give. For 20 years in my office, Donna gave her all for the people of Iowa. She touched countless lives. And she made a life to be proud of.

I can offer no higher praise for Donna—or anyone else, for that matter—than that she was a good, decent, and caring human being. I valued her friendship, her counsel, and her incredibly hard work. I think I speak for all of us in the Harkin Senate family in saying that we love Donna very much, and we are deeply grateful that she was a part of our lives.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK G. HECK

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I want to honor Mr. Patrick G. Heck, who is retiring this month following 23 years of dedicated Federal service. Pat has served the Finance Committee and all Americans extremely well during his eight years as tax counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, and as chief tax counsel for the past 4 years.

As a college freshman, Pat began his congressional career as a file clerk for his Congressman. Throughout his distinguished public service career, Pat's tireless dedication has earned the respect of his peers, family, and community. Pat commands the respect of both Democratic and Republican staff throughout the Senate. Pat is a graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center, with an LL.M. in taxation. He received his J.D. from the University of Toledo College of Law, and is a graduate of American University, with degrees in political science and economics.

Prior to joining the Finance Committee staff, Pat served as assistant counsel on the Select Revenue Subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means. While there, Pat was responsible for leading hearings on intercompany transfer pricing, Internal Revenue Service collection and enforcement. Before that, he was an attorney with the Internal Revenue Service's Office of Chief Counsel.

I know the members of the Senate Finance Committee join me in gratitude for Pat's sage advice on tax policy matters. His efforts have helped to shape the legislative agenda for tax administration and tax reform. He cares deeply about these issues and the effect

they have on hard-working Americans. With his ever-meticulous style, Pat has helped me to delve into the important issue of the "tax gap," energy tax incentives, tax cuts for individuals and small businesses, and taxpayer rights.

Pat also helped me develop the idea of extending the time period during which Americans could make tax-exempt contributions to help victims of the tsunami disaster in 2005. This change helped facilitate a floodgate of tax-exempt contributions for these victims.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Pat Heck for his many years of outstanding service and in wishing him well for the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—WHITEWATER FOOTBALL TEAM

• Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, they often say that the third time is the charm, and now the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater knows why. After UW-Whitewater's football team came so close to winning the NCAA Division III National Football Championship 2 years in a row, this year they triumphed, winning the big game and becoming Division III's reigning champions. Their fantastic season marked the first Division III football championship in UW-Whitewater's history.

The hard work of the Warhawk football team culminated in a 31-21 victory over two-time defending champion Mount Union College in the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl on December 15, 2007, in Salem, VA. The Warhawks bolted to an early 17-0 lead and beat back the comeback attempt of Mount Union, which had come into the game having won 37 contests in a row.

I commend Coach Lance Liepold for his dedication and hard work throughout his rookie season as head coach. I also congratulate Justin Beaver on being named the championship game's Most Outstanding Player, and the winner of the Gagliardi Trophy as the best player in Division III.

The continuing success of University of Wisconsin-Whitewater football has made the people of Wisconsin, and alumni throughout the country, very proud.●

IN HONOR OF G. RAYMOND "RAY" EMPSON

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, it is with great respect that I recognize G. Raymond "Ray" Empson, who for the past 11 years has served as president of the national nonprofit organization, Keep America Beautiful, Inc., and has announced his well-deserved retirement effective December 31 of this year.

Keep America Beautiful, the organization that many remember as the originator of the famous "Crying Indian" public service advertisement in

1971, has been an important part of the fabric of American communities since 1953. Rooted in a nonpartisan and "hands-on" approach to improving communities and the environment, KAB forms public-private partnerships that engage everyone in improving not just the physical beauty of their hometowns, but their economic vitality and civic engagement, as well. I am proud that the state of Connecticut is home to the organization's national headquarters in Stamford.

During Ray Empson's tenure, Keep America Beautiful has grown to over 570 local affiliate organizations in communities from coast to coast. Through his leadership, and expansion of the signature event, The Great American Cleanup, KAB and its affiliates have removed millions of tons of litter from the American landscape; planted millions of trees that improve our communities; conserved our natural resources by recycling tons of raw material; improved hiking, biking and nature trails; and most importantly, educated millions of Americans of all ages in sustainable behaviors that prevent litter and reduce waste.

Given all these accomplishments, I can't help but think of Ray Empson's retirement in bittersweet terms. While I am certainly happy for him and wish him all the best, I can't help but think what a loss it will be for the country when he steps down. I am certain, however, that his commitment to the environment and his dedication to improving the quality of life in America's communities will serve as a strong example to all those who know him and have worked with him and will guide the future leadership of KAB.

Thank you G. Raymond Empson. America is a better place because of you.●

TRIBUTE TO REEDSPORT'S FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, during this holiday season, my thoughts are with the countless nonprofit organizations in my State of Oregon that provide assistance to those in need. Ever since the days of the pioneers, when folks from miles around would gather for community "barn raisings," the spirit of neighbor helping neighbor has been an important part of the Oregon story.

I rise today to pay tribute to the Family Resource Center in the south coast community of Reedsport, which, over the past decade, has gained a reputation as one of Oregon's most innovative and successful community organizations. Jointly supported by Lower Umpqua Hospital and the Reedsport School District, the Family Resource Center resulted from a community brainstorming meeting to identify ways to help Reedsport area families better access services. A decade after that session, the Family Resource Center averages 550 contacts a month and serves as a model of how entities can

work cooperatively for the betterment of the community, and how an entire community can get information and services in a nonstigmatizing environment.

Through a series of generous grants and donations, the Family Resource Center has been able to supply a tremendous number of services, including acting as an outreach office and an information clearinghouse for many government and nonprofit agencies; providing space for an alternative school and an infant care center; offering a "connections" program that matches up people in need of household furniture and appliances with those who have those items to give away; spearheading a school supply drive; providing mental health counseling and drug and alcohol evaluation; offering Red Cross babysitting courses and Oregon Child Care Basics workshops; offering victims' services, including women's support and sexual assault support groups, offering legal aid and paralegal services, and the list goes on and on.

Mr. President, the late Oregon Governor Tom McCall once said, "Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky. They are individuals who say, 'This is my community and it is my responsibility to make it better.'" I am confident that all those who—through their time, talents, and treasure—have helped to write the remarkable 10 year history of the Family Resource Center are true heroes because they have truly made Reedsport a better place in which to live, work, and raise a family.●

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE PARASKEVAIDES

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor and pay tribute to George Paraskevaides, a world-renowned titan of industry, a much-beloved humanitarian, and a most esteemed philanthropist.

Throughout his exceptional life, George Paraskevaides, in word and deed, exemplified the ageless precepts of ancient Greece: excellence, education, civic engagement, and a love for mankind. And, at every turn, George not only lived up to those ideals—he lived them out in a way that was an example and inspiration to all.

Although an Athenian by birth, George moved his family to Cyprus where he pursued his studies and obtained a formal education in architecture, and where he would form with Stelios Joannou what would become the legendary contracting and civil engineering firm of Joannou & Paraskevaides—or J&P. And today, J&P is one of the largest development companies in the world, employing more than 16,000 people and engaged in projects for airports, hotels, highways, homes, and sports arenas to name just a few. Underpinning J&P's success is its hallmark attention to quality and its reputation for completing projects on time and on budget.

Through the years, however, in true Greek fashion, George was never content with building on his own success alone, and, time and again, demonstrated a generosity of spirit that was undeniably an ennobling force worldwide. His philanthropy was legendary. To cite just a few examples, he contributed to the Children's Heart Fund Hospital in Minneapolis, the Surgical and Transplant Foundation, and the Cyprus Heart Association. He funded countless scholarships for less fortunate Cypriots and founded the Cyprus Kidney Foundation. Perhaps his most historic gesture occurred during World War II when, at the request of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, George Paraskevaides assisted in building an airport runway for U.S. Allies to use—an act which to this day is remembered for its decisive courage and lasting impact.

It should, therefore, come as no surprise that George Paraskevaides has been recognized globally for his immeasurable concern for his fellow man. The prestigious honors include the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II, the Saint Marcus Medal from the Vatican, the St. Paul's Medal by the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of North and South America, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, AHEPA, Philanthropic Award, and many, many others too numerous to mention. For 91 years, Greece, Cyprus, and the world were all blessed by the presence and good works of George Paraskevaides, and how profoundly fitting it was that Cyprus held a State funeral in his honor earlier this month.

Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos characterized George best when he described him as "a model of humanism, dignity, and kindness. His name became synonymous with the ideals of philanthropy and selfless love towards our fellow man."●

TRIBUTE TO CARROLL COLLEGE

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I congratulate and honor the football players at Carroll College, in Helena, MT, who this past Saturday became the National Champions of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The Fighting Saints defeated the University of Sioux Falls 17-to-9 on a cold, rainy day in Savannah, TN.

Folks in my home State are getting used to celebrating championships this time of year. Carroll's historic victory this past Sunday marks the fifth time in 6 years that they have been crowned National Champions.

I want to extend my congratulations to coach Mike Van Diest and his entire staff, cheerleading coach Pam Jones and her squad, athletic director Bruce Parker, Carroll College president Tom Trebon, and the entire Carroll community for bringing home the national title.

But I mostly want to applaud the young men who make up this remark-

able team. Years from now they may forget the early morning and late night practices. They may forget the summer training in the Montana heat and other sacrifices they have made. But they will never forget the muddy day in December of 2007 when they raised up that trophy.

As a former teacher and referee I know firsthand how important interscholastic competition can be. It takes the dedication and determination of the young men and women who make a team. It takes the support of the community and the alumni. And it takes patient and talented coaches to lead.

Mr. President, I also know how outstanding an institution Carroll is. I have always been impressed by the accomplishments of both the students and the faculty and as the father of an alumna, I will always have a special place in my heart for Carroll.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL JEFFERSON JOSEPH DEBLANC

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge COL Jefferson Joseph DeBlanc, Sr., for his dedicated service to Louisiana and the United States of America. I would like to take some time to make a few remarks on his accomplishments.

In 1940, Colonel DeBlanc left school in order to pursue a career in the military. After joining the Marine flight program, he enlisted in the Naval Reserve where he received elimination flight training. He continued his illustrious military career in the Marines, achieving the rank of captain on June 1, 1943, and transferred to the Marine Aircraft Group 11 overseas.

In November 1944, he returned overseas for his second tour of duty. He joined the Marine Fighting Squadron 422 in the Marshall Islands and remained stationed there until May 1945, joining Squadron 212 in order to fight in the Okinawa campaign. In his two tours of duty in the Pacific at Guadalcanal and Okinawa, he shot down nine enemy aircraft. On December 6, 1946, President Truman awarded him the Nation's highest decoration for valor and bravery, the Congressional Medal of Honor "for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty." Colonel DeBlanc received this medal for shooting down five enemy Zeros in the Solomons. He went on to be decorated with more than 10 medals, including the Purple Heart, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and multiple Gold Stars.

Colonel DeBlanc later received a master's degree in education. He worked with the St. Martin's Parish School Board and taught physics at Mt. Carmel in New Iberia. After his retirement from the Marine Corps Reserve in 1972, he served as a member in multiple organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Medal of Honor Society.