

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Hampton-Dumont Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Highland Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Highland Community School District received a 2000 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which was used to help build an addition to the middle school. This addition is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. The district also has received two fire safety grants totaling \$46,400 to install heat detectors, emergency lighting and make other repairs throughout the district. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Highland Community School District. In particular, I'd like to rec-

ognize the leadership of the board of education—Mike Roberts, Cindy Michel, Robert Schneider, Ed Ossman, Kevin Engel, Bruce Temple and Becky Hanson and former board members Teresa Greiner, Sandra Duwa, Denny Klein, Vaughn Davisson, Craig Slay and Rodney Cole. I would also like to recognize superintendent Chris Armstrong and former superintendent Carol Montz.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

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WASHINGTON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and schoolboard members in the Washington Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

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The Washington Community School District received a 2005 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which was used to upgrade all the facilities in the district including an addition to Stewart Elementary School. The district also received \$200,000 in fire safety grants since 2003 for a fire alarm system at the high school and repairs at Lincoln, Stewart and Washington schools. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Washington Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Tim Orris, Patty Roe, Heidi Vittetoe, Deb Stanton, Eric Turner, Ron Goodwin, and Cathy Rich and former board members Jim Gorham and Vickie Reighard. I would also like to recognize superintendent Dave Schmitt.

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RECOGNIZING AMERICAN LEGION POST 75

● Mr. KOHL. Madam President, on July 19, 2008, American Legion Post 75 in Fond du Lac, WI, named its building in honor of James Megellas. James Megellas is one of Fond du Lac's favorite sons and this is indeed a fitting honor. I congratulate Post 75 and want to take a moment to honor James Megellas' service to our country.

Mr. Megellas was a student at Ripon College in Ripon, WI, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. Upon his graduation in 1942, he accepted an ROTC commission as a second lieutenant in the infantry and shortly thereafter faced

combat in the mountains near Venafro, Italy. In 1943 he took part in Operation Shingle. In early 1944 he was part of an amphibious assault at Anzio. Heavy losses prevented his unit from taking part in D-day in Normandy. Instead, they parachuted into Holland under Operation Market Garden, the airborne invasion of the Netherlands. Under heavy gunfire, memorialized in the film "A Bridge Too Far", he took part in the famous crossing of the Waal River.

In December of 1944, his unit was rushed into the Battle of the Bulge. In January 1945, as his platoon advanced toward Herresbach, Belgium, against heavy snow and freezing cold, they surprised some 200 German troops who were advancing out of town. Megellas's platoon dealt them a serious blow. In an act of incredible bravery, Megellas ran toward a German Mark V tank as it was taking aim toward his platoon. He disabled the tank with a single grenade then, climbing atop, dropped another into the tank saving many of his men.

In 1946 he led his company down 5th Avenue in New York in the Victory Parade. His awards have appropriately been many, including Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts and the Distinguished Service Cross. He has been honored by the Government of Holland with the Military Order of Willhelm Orange Lanyard.

This son of Fond du Lac served his country with honor and bravery. I commend him and congratulate American Legion Post 75 for bestowing this honor on one of Wisconsin's finest.●

SPENCER, WEST VIRGINIA, CELEBRATION

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, today I honor the town of Spencer, WV, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Spencer is a town with a long, rich history that is proudly considered by some as West Virginia's largest small city. It is located centrally in West Virginia and is filled with lots of character and many wonderful people. And I am proud stand here today to brag about this town's fine citizens and share their story.

Even from the earliest days, the people of Spencer have been tough, resourceful, and committed to making good lives for their families. The history of the great town of Spencer began in 1812 when the first settlers, Samuel Tanner and Jonathan Wolfe, sought shelter for their families in a large cave. The area was so beautiful that others decided to make it their home as well. As more settlers gathered, the town evolved. The town's name was changed from Tanner's Cross Road to Cassville and then to New California when a settler stopped by on his way to California.

In 1858, the town was officially chartered by the Virginia General Assembly and renamed Spencer, reportedly in honor of Judge Spencer Roane. Today

we celebrate that official charter and recognize all those who made Spencer what it is today, and those who will help fulfill its future promise.

Spencer currently has a population of nearly 2,300. These residents have really made their home a warm, special place to live and visit. And they're proud of the events and activities that help define their beloved town and honor its history. Presently, Spencer hosts a variety of outdoor events that draw hundreds of people each year. The Black Walnut Festival is filled with exciting attractions—from baking contests and car shows, to grand parades and golf tournaments. The Tour de Lake brings mountain bike racers from all over the State to compete at the scenic Charles Fork Lake. These events, coupled only with the warmth of its people, make Spencer a place people want to visit time and again.

Spencer is an extraordinary town that embodies the greatness and uniqueness of rural America. Its long history and diverse attractions and its terrific, one-of-a-kind people represent the very best of our Mountain State. I hope I have given my colleagues and the rest of our nation just a glimpse of our little town of Spencer—which is big and great in so many ways.●

HONORING WILBUR YACHTS

● Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, growing and maintaining a successful small business is often challenging, but in the end, many find that the rewards are beyond measure. Even more difficult can be forming a successful and environmentally conscientious business, but with the extra trials come even greater benefits. I wish to honor a small business from my home State of Maine that has risen to the top and has been recognized for its unsurpassed efforts in sustaining an environmentally friendly business. For 35 years, Wilbur Yachts of Southwest Harbor has helped to set the standard in the field of custom motorboat construction, and for the last several years, the firm has become an unparalleled leader in helping to challenge Maine's marine industry to protect the State's pristine environment.

In 1973, Lee Wilbur left the field of education to become a boat builder. Over the next 28 years, because of Mr. Wilbur's stalwart resolve and unrelenting desire to effect positive change, he transformed Wilbur Yachts into a company that is widely respected both in Maine and nationwide for its high-quality boats and commitment to environmental excellence. For years, Mr. Wilbur collaborated with other boat makers, building vessels for a diverse array of clients ranging from the Smithsonian Institution to pop singer Billy Joel. In 2001, Mr. Wilbur and his wife Heidi sold the business to their daughter Ingrid and her husband John Kachmar, who have embraced the long-standing tradition of providing unrivaled products while remaining

globally aware. Under their leadership, the company has soared to even newer heights.

This year, Wilbur Yachts celebrated its 35th anniversary, hosting owners of boats which the firm has built for a traditional Marine lobster bake. Coming from every corner of the globe, the owners of this impressive international fleet are a testament to the exceptional nature of Wilbur's yachts. Over the years, the firm's remarkable crafts have been lauded by the likes of Power Cruising, Power & Motoryacht, and Motorboating magazines.

Just as impressive as the company's proud history and enduring commitment to excellence is Wilbur Yachts' dedication to protecting the environment in which it works. The State of Maine recently awarded Wilbur Yachts the gold certification in its Maine Clean Boatyards and Marinas Program. The program identifies and highlights companies that meet or exceed Federal and State environmental standards in five specific areas of evaluation, including waste disposal and storage, and boat sewage and pump-outs. This honor is truly unparalleled, as to date no other boatyard has been acknowledged with this designation, the program's highest level of recognition. While Wilbur Yachts had previously held the silver certification, the most recent evaluation by an independent panel gave the company perfect ratings in all five groups.

Second-generation owners Ingrid and John Kachmar have led Wilbur Yachts to improve safety and reduce environmental impact while simultaneously cultivating a company where, according to its motto, "Maine Tradition Meets Modern Technology." I applaud both the company's owners and its employees for all of their efforts in producing yachts in an environmentally responsible manner and wish them the best of luck for the future.●

TRIBUTE TO CANYON LAKE ALL-STAR LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I honor the Canyon Lake All-Star Little League team on becoming the first team from South Dakota to qualify and play in the Little League World Series in Williamsport, PA.

The Canyon Lake All-Star Little League team's journey to the World Series was one filled with great excitement and execution. After a turbulent first three innings in the qualifying game, Canyon Lake scored three runs in the bottom of the fourth capturing the lead. They continued their rally into the fifth inning where they scored another four runs defeating the Coon Rapids Little League team with a final score of 7-1.

Canyon Lake was led by manager Doug Simons and assistant managers Jeff Minnick and Steve Nolan. Of course, this historic season would be impossible without the players themselves. The athletes of the 2007-2008