

construction grants totaling \$2 million have helped with renovations at several schools in the district including Ottumwa High School, Evans Middle School and Douma and James Elementary Schools. These projects have included new classrooms, new roofs, and new HVAC systems. These schools are the modern, state-of-the-art facilities that befit the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, they are the kind of schools that every child in America deserves.

The district also received eight fire safety grants totaling \$1,129,313 to make improvements at buildings throughout the district including Ottumwa High School, the alternative high school, Evans Middle School, Wildwood, Wilson, Agassiz, Horace Mann, James and Pickwick Elementary Schools. The improvements included emergency and exit lighting, new sprinkler systems, upgraded fire alarm systems, electrical work and other safety repairs. 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 Ottumwa Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Pat Curran, Cindy Kurtz-Hopkins, Carol Mitchell, Payson Moreland, Ron Oswalt, Doug Mathias and Jeff Strunk and former board members Cathy Angle, Ken Crosser, Bob Ketcham, Don Krieger, Andrea McDowell, Michael Neary, Steve Menke, Jerri Stroda, Bob Warren and Mark Zeller. I would also like to recognize superintendent Jon Sheldahl; former superintendents Joe Scalzo and Tom Rubel; business managers Dick Springsteen and John Donner; directors of operations Lowell Smith, Steve Propp, Darrell Reams and Danny Renfrew; and community programs director Kim Hellige.

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.

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

Ottumwa 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.●

WESTERN DUBUQUE COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. 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 Western Dubuque 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 Western Dubuque Community School District received two Harkin grants totaling \$1.5 million which it used to help with several projects in the district. A 2001 construction grant for \$500,000 was used to help build a new school in Epworth, an addition to the Cascade school to provide classrooms for preschool and kindergarten programs and for additions for career education to the district's two high schools. The district received a \$1 million grant in 2002 to help build pre-kindergarten classrooms in Farley and Peosta. These schools are the modern, state-of-the-art facilities that befit the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, they are the kind of school facilities that every child in America deserves.

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 Western Dubuque Community School District. In particular, I'd like to recognize the leadership of the current board of education—Robert McCabe, Jeanne Coppola, Barb Weber, Mark Knuth, Gary McAndrew and former board members June Branden-

burg, Tom Gassman, Dr. Tom Miner, John Howard, Nancy Ludwig and John Perrenoud. I would also like to recognize superintendent Jeff Corkery, former superintendents Harold Knutsen, Bev Goerdts and Wayne Drexler, director of buildings and grounds Bob Hingtgen, business manager Dave Wegeman and the members of the Kids First Committee, Cascade Area Resource for Education—CARE—and Bobcat Capital Support Foundation.

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.

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 Western Dubuque 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.●

TRIBUTE TO YWCA OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, on October 23, 2008, the YWCA of Northwest Georgia will hold a vigil on Marietta Square in my hometown to commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I wish to express my gratitude for the work of the YWCA of Northwest Georgia and its executive director Holly Comer as they bring awareness to this important issue and its impact on our community.

The YWCA of Northwest Georgia opened the doors to the first domestic violence shelter in Cobb County in 1978 in an effort to end domestic violence in our State, our communities, and our homes. A home should be a place of stability, comfort, and love. Domestic violence shatters this important foundation. The terrible tragedies that result from domestic violence destroy lives and insult the dignity of women, men, and children. I believe I represent all Georgians when I say thank you to the YWCA of Northwest Georgia for its hard work to combat domestic violence and help those who have been victimized.

I am grateful for the social service providers, advocates, counselors, and many others who provide care for the victims. I am also grateful to the law

enforcement personnel and others who work to bring offenders to justice. As we recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we are reminded of the important service these individuals provide.

Domestic violence has no place in our society, and I am strongly committed to addressing domestic violence and helping those who have been victimized. By working together with the YWCA of Northwest Georgia and its dedicated staff, we can build a Georgia where every home honors the value and dignity of its loved ones.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY

● Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, today I congratulate Georgian Court University, GCU, on its 100th anniversary. For the past century, GCU has been a leader in higher education, encouraging intellectual inquiry, ethical professionalism, and community involvement. I am proud to have this institution in New Jersey, and it is an honor to pay tribute to its achievements.

Georgian Court University was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1908 as a women's college, and it remains dedicated to the success of women today. The Women's College at GCU provides an environment conducive to academic achievement and offers a liberal arts education tailored to women's learning styles. In particular, GCU's Women in Leadership Development Program is one of the most powerful programs for young women today. By participating on university committees, making presentations, lobbying legislators, and networking with mentors, students develop the skills and tools needed by today's successful women leaders.

In the 1970s, Georgian Court University expanded its programs and opened its doors to men. Over the decades, GCU has added buildings and faculty to meet the growing student population, which stands at more than 3,000 today. In addition to the original GCU estate, which has been preserved and is on the National Register of Historic Places, the GCU landscape includes a new wellness center, residence hall, chapel, and science wing that were all added in the last several years.

With 29 undergraduate and eight graduate degree offerings, GCU continues to develop new academic programs. Their new nursing program, established just this year, will help stem nursing shortages in New Jersey. Their accelerated and executive MBA program allows executives to gain the information they need to advance their careers, and as one of only 50 NASA Educational Resource Centers, GCU ensures that teachers have the most up-to-date scientific information for their classrooms.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the service of Georgian Court University's faculty and students. Whether

sending teams of students and staff to install water systems in poverty-stricken areas of Honduras or helping local homeless populations in New Jersey, GCU is committed to making the world a better place.

Mr. President, the students, alumni, and staff of Georgian Court University have much to be proud of as they celebrate 100 years of academia. I applaud GCU for its many years of service, and I wish the university continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY MARK

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, former Oregon Governor Tom McCall once said, "Heroes are not statues framed against a red sky. They are people who say, 'This is my community and it is my responsibility to make it better'."

Today I pay tribute to a remarkable lady who truly earned the title of "hero," because few individuals have done more in the past several decades to make the community of Portland, OR, a better place than Mary Mark. Mary passed away recently, and last week I joined with over 600 other Oregonians in attending a tribute service that honored Mary's life and legacy.

I first met Mary some 13 years ago when I was just beginning my campaign for the Senate. I had heard from many friends of the sterling reputation of Mary and her husband Pete and their status as two of Oregon's most generous philanthropists, but since I was from east of the mountains, I had not had the opportunity to meet them. And, unfortunately, the purpose of our meeting was for me to do something I hate to do, but which is a necessary evil for running for office—and that's to ask people for money.

It didn't take me but a few minutes into the meeting to reach a few conclusions—conclusions that have been reinforced time and time again over the years. First, Mary and Pete were two of the warmest and most gracious people I had ever met. There is a tradition here on the floor of the U.S. Senate where members refer to each other as "gentleman" or "gentlelady." We yield to the "gentleman from Iowa," or we agree with the remarks of the "gentlelady from Maine." There are some who believe the terms are quaint and old-fashioned. I do not. I don't think that manners and kindness and courtesy ever go out of fashion. And I can't think of better words to describe Pete and Mary as a "gentleman" and a "gentlelady."

The second conclusion I reached is that Mary and Pete were two of the keenest observers of the political scene that I had ever met. I always looked forward to our meetings, because I knew that Mary was going to ask me some tough questions, and I knew she would share with me her very perceptive opinions. To be frank, in our business it is easy to find individuals who will tell me what they think I want to hear. Mary Mark always told me what I needed to hear.

It was also easy to see that as much as Mary loved her country and her community, the true great love of her life was her husband, and their wonderful children and grandchildren. Mary understood instinctively that our success as a society depends not on what happens in the conference tables of Washington, DC, but on what happens at kitchen tables in every community in Oregon. And when Sharon and I experienced a tragedy in our family, Mary and Pete reached out to us with kindness and compassion.

Mr. President, the Greek poet Sophocles once wrote, "One must wait until the evening to see how splendid the day has been." For her family, for the community of Portland, and for Mary's countless friends and admirers, the evening of Mary's life came much too soon. It is my hope, however, that we can find solace in the fact that in the evening of her time on earth, Mary Mark could look back at a life filled with family, a life filled with generosity, a life filled with service to others, a life filled with making a positive difference, and say that the day had indeed been splendid.

May God bless Mary Mark, and may we all carry on her legacy by loving our community and by loving our family.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 9:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1760. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the Healthy Start Initiative.

S. 3241. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1717 Orange Avenue in Fort Pierce, Florida, as the "CeeCee Ross Lyles Post Office Building".

H.R. 923. An act to provide for the investigation of certain unsolved civil rights crimes, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1199. An act to extend the grant program for drug-endangered children.

H.R. 5834. An act to amend the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 to promote respect for the fundamental human rights of the people of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6984. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

At 12:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H. R. 2638) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 20, 2008, and for other purposes, with an