

Beach, Jay Merryman, Dick Hessenius, Paul Gassman, Anne Paullus and Dean Stucky and former board members Betsy Macke, Floyd Jury, Jack Lashier, Bob Downey, Kent Loney, Dick Russell, Adrienne Macmillan, Anne Bacon, Linda Borsch, Sally Hansen, Don McKibben, JoAnn Miller, Wayne Sawtelle, Doug Betts, Bob Christenson and Steve Ford. I would also like to recognize superintendent Dr. Marvin Wade; former superintendents Dr. Stephen Williams, Dr. Richard Doyle and Dr. Harrison Cass, Jr.; principals Bonnie Lowry, Brad Clement, Ralph Bryant, Sarah Johnson, Tom Renze, Mick Jurgensen, Bea Niblock, Vicki Vopava, Amy Williams and Tim Holmgren; former principals Jerry Stephens, Pat Kremer, Mary Giese and; finance director Kevin Posekany; former finance directors Larry Pfantz and Dan Gillen; director of buildings and grounds Rick Simpson and architect Dave Schulze from TSP Group.

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 Marshalltown 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.●

MOUNT VERNON 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 Mount Vernon 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 Mount Vernon Community School District received a 2004 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which it used to help build a new 93,000 square foot high school. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received a fire safety grant in 2005, totaling \$25,000, which was used to upgrade existing smoke and fire protection systems at the Middle School.

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 Mount Vernon Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Tom Wieseler, vice president Bob Penn, John Cochrane, Deb Herrmann, Paul Morf, Ann Stoner and Jeff Walberg, and former members, Dean Borg, Todd Tripp, Janet Griffith and Rebecca Brandt. I would also like to recognize superintendent Jeff Schwiebert and business manager Matt Burke.

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WEST HARRISON 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 West Harrison 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 West Harrison Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$125,000 which it used to help build two new preschool rooms. Since the addition of the preschool program the students are more ready for Kindergarten and there has been an improvement in test scores from children who went through the preschool. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility 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 West Harrison Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education, president Jason Sherer, Kandi Forbes, Tammy Neill, Zack Olinger and Jerri Lynn Sheppard, and former members, president Walter Utman, president Roger Jenson, Mike Carritt, Dale Davis and Sue Maule. I would also like to recognize superintendent Richard Gerking, principal Doug Barry, and principal Mike Bunde.

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100TH ANNIVERSARY OF GENERAL MOTORS

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have the distinct honor of rising today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of a true Michigan success story, the founding of General Motors Corporation. It was 100 years ago this month that a man named Billy Durant who, after years in the horse-drawn carriage business, founded General Motors in Flint, MI. Durant had taken the helm at a small motor car company called Buick, and, in September 1908, incorporated it into General Motors. Under his stewardship, Buick became the best-selling brand in the world, affording Durant the opportunity to buy a number of other small companies including Oldsmobile, Cadillac, and the company that would eventually be known as Pontiac. Later he started Chevrolet and brought it into General Motors as well.

Over the century that followed its incorporation, GM would become the largest company in the world, driven by the goal articulated by Alfred Sloan, president of GM in the 1920s and 1930s, to build "a car for every purse and purpose." In that pursuit, the company time and again originated innovations that continue to benefit consumers to this day, ranging from the closed-body car, 1910, to the electric starter, 1912, to mass-produced automatic transmissions, 1940, to pollution controls, 1963, to airbags, 1973, to the catalytic converter, 1974.

But the intertwined nature of the company with this nation's economic growth extends far beyond innovative technological contributions and even beyond balance sheets and metrics for economic growth.

You can ask just about anyone, "What's the heartbeat of America?" And years after that slogan last passed across our television screens, people still know the answer is Chevrolet. And of course many Americans heeded the good advice to "See the USA in your Chevrolet." Cadillac has become a ubiquitous synonym for quality. The Pontiac GTO defined an era of muscle cars. The legendary "409" block engine became an American icon.

During the Second World War, GM provided more than \$12 billion of goods to support the Allied effort, more than any other company. The company also played critical roles in the navigation system that sent Americans to the moon for the first time, and designed and built the lunar rover, which was used by astronauts to travel around the Moon in subsequent trips.

Today, GM employs more than 250,000 people, and in 2007 sold nearly 9.37 million cars and trucks. And its next century is filled with promise. As the GM marketing team has noted, in 2008 we are in the middle of an American revolution.

The company that helped to make Michigan the arsenal of Democracy is working on fuel cells that can make help break our democracy's dependence on foreign oil. The company that invented the electric starter is going to be a leader in bringing a plug-in hybrid, the Volt, to consumers. The company that brought consumers the first automatic transmission is striving to bring consumers the first zero-emissions commute.

I offer my congratulations to the entire GM family on 100 remarkable years, and wish them all the best in keeping the pedal to the metal for 100 more.●

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH 125TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, it is with great joy that today I recognize the 125th anniversary of Liberty Baptist Church located in the northwest Arkansas town of Dutch Mills in Washington County along the historic Butterfield Stagecoach Route.

According to its members, Liberty Baptist was built in 1883 by the founding families—Kimbrough, Bryant, Douthit, Fields, Greer, Grisham, Holman, Hodges, McCarty, and Seay—of what was then known as Hermansburg, AR. In fact, Rufus Seay, the husband of Jennie Kimbrough and son-in-law to Thomas Kimbrough, donated the land for the church, and the Kimbrough, McCarty, English, Seay, Holland, Patterson, and Hodges families funded the construction. It was a community effort as the men built the church and the women provided food and encouragement.

While much has changed since Liberty Baptist's doors opened in 1883, the community spirit and spiritual nourishment provided by Liberty Baptist Church remain a foundation for the citizens of Dutch Mills.

Liberty Baptist will commemorate its anniversary the week of November 2 through 9 with community events and activities. Although I will be unable to attend the festivities, I want to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations and recognize them on this glorious occasion.●

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF 4-H IN ARKANSAS

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, tomorrow evening, Arkansas 4-H will cap a year long celebration, "Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Future," at the 4-H Centennial gala in Little Rock, AR. Nearly 1 year ago, on October 1, 2007, the 4-H Centennial Celebration kicked off in Searcy, AR, located in White County, where Arkansas 4-H began.

Founded as a boys' corn and cotton club in 1908, Arkansas 4-H soon expanded to include girls' canning clubs and is now one of the largest youth development programs in Arkansas. The mission of 4-H is to provide opportunities for youth to acquire knowledge, develop life skills, form attitudes, and practice behavior that will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society.

It is exemplified in the pledge every Arkansas 4-Her recites: I pledge my Head to clearer thinking; my Heart to greater loyalty; my Hands to larger service; my Health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world.

Mr. President, what great words to live by.

Approximately 133,000 young people, in all 75 Arkansas counties, participate in Arkansas 4-H clubs. Arkansas 4-H carries out its mission across our diverse State in inner cities, suburbs, and rural communities. It seeks to break barriers among our youth by focusing on a philosophy of learning by doing.

Associated with the University of Arkansas's Division of Agriculture, through the Cooperative Extension Service, 4-H members can select activities in 82 project areas from automotive and clothing to space camp and show horse competitions. In addition, Arkansas 4-H youth receive more than \$80,000 in college scholarships each year at the State level for their 4-H work.

So as Arkansas 4-H culminates its year long celebration, I want to extend my congratulations on a tremendous 100 years and wish 4-H the best for another 100 years.

I would also like to take this time to recognize the over 40 clubs statewide that joined the Centennial Club Circle to help fund centennial activities this year. They include the following:

Garland County Teen Leader Club, Garland County; Busy Beavers 4-H Club, Pope County; Elkins 4-H Club, Washington County; Galloping Clovers, Yell County; Fusion 4-H Club, Columbia County; Town & Country 4-H Club, Benton County; Bear Pride 4-H Club, White County; Yellowjackets 4-H Club, Grant County; Rocky Top 4-H Club, Crawford County; 4-H Soaring Eagles Group, Cross County; Perry County Teen Leaders, Perry County; Vilonia 4-H Club, Faulkner County; Centerton 4-H Club, Benton County; Pastoria 4-H Club, Jefferson County; Western Wranglers 4-H Horse & Pony Club, Lawrence