

said Meeker. "A lot of other resorts took advantage of it, but we took full advantage of it. It was the largest single snowgun update of any resort in Vermont's history and that was a big step in the right direction for our snowmaking system to run as efficiently as possible and also make the best product possible."

ANNIVERSARY

Mount Snow's 60th Anniversary is right around the corner and Meeker said that a weekend of festivities have been planned in celebration.

The celebration is going to be on Friday, Dec. 12, which is known as "Founder's Day." The date is the first day Mount Snow opened back in 1954, Meeker said.

"Since it's on a Friday and it is our 60th we're going to celebrate all weekend long. So, we're going to have stuff going on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Saturday we're going to have a party at the Snow Barn with Orange Crush, which is an 80s band, so we're going to have a throwback party. We're already encouraging people to wear retro gear all weekend long; whatever time period in which they have some clothes from the past."

Part of what the resort will be doing to celebrate is offering \$12 lift tickets when the tickets are purchased in advance online. The resort is also going to have a big historical display of Mount Snow memorabilia.

There are also going to be parties at Cousins and the Main Base Lodge.

On Sunday of that weekend, Meeker said they are also probably going to have an "old school" bamboo gate series.

"Back in the day when people would run gates they would be made of bamboo and so we're going to set some of those up. We're going to have a straight ski category," said Meeker. "It's just going to be a real focusing on our history."

While the Dec. 12 weekend is going to be the big celebration of the resort's 60th Anniversary, Meeker said that they will be celebrating throughout the winter with some other events as well.

"We love to celebrate things here at Mount Snow," said Meeker. "It's one of the things that we do so hopefully folks will come out and help us celebrate because it's not just about our history this season, it's about our future and we have a lot of great stuff to talk about with that."

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LOUISIANA CASUALTIES

Mr. VITTER. I come to the floor today with a heavy heart to remember and commemorate the 11 soldiers, including 4 members of the Louisiana National Guard, who we lost this month as a result of a helicopter training accident on the Santa Rosa Sound. These were brave men, having regularly risked their own lives while flying in combat and in responding to the numerous hurricanes Louisiana has been devastated by during the many years of service they gave. I agree with Major General Curtis, the Adjutant General of the Louisiana National Guard, in describing them as the best of us. They were selfless men willing to sacrifice their own safety and lives if it meant ensuring our security or saving the life of another. Nothing can ever fill the void left by their absence, an absence that makes it our duty to keep their memories alive, so that others may

know of their bravery and sacrifice. Recognizing the valor that each of these men served with, today I submit for the record specifics regarding Louisiana's soldiers.

Chief Warrant Officer George Griffin joined the Louisiana National Guard in 1994 before deploying to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004 and again in 2008. He is remembered as one of the most talented and respected warrant officers in the Louisiana National Guard, who routinely sought to teach his fellow aviators to be the best they could be. He also served during State deployments in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Isaac; in support of Operation River Guardian in 2011, which sought to extend the levee protecting Klotz Springs; and in the response to the Deepwater Horizon spill. He is survived by his wife Becky, his four children, Marianne, Cody, Dylan, and Logan, and his father George.

Chief Warrant Officer George Strother joined the Louisiana National Guard in 1988, serving until 2007 before rejoining the Guard in 2009. In addition to his service in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Isaac, he deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004, to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2011, and Kosovo in 2014 as a member of the NATO peacekeeping force. He was a devoted husband, father, and service member. An experienced combat aviator and instructor, he is remembered as a caring man with an outsized personality that touched the lives of everyone he met. He is survived by his wife Melissa; his children Chelsie and George II, and his mother Sara.

Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1994, serving on Active Duty until 1998 and as a reservist until 2001, when he joined the Louisiana National Guard. He was a seasoned combat veteran, having deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004 and again in 2008. He also deployed in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Isaac, and as a part of Operation River Guardian in 2011. He is remembered as an experienced crew chief that the members of his unit looked up to and aspired to be. According to men in his unit, he served with an unparalleled excitement and dedication to his duty as a National Guard member, husband, and father. He is survived by his wife Monique, his two children Callie and Landon, and his parents Mark and Stella.

Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard in 2007, and served as a Black Hawk repairman. He served in numerous State deployments, including Operation Deepwater Horizon and in response to Hurricane Isaac. He is remembered as a cheerful man dedicated to the National Guard and always willing to step up if it meant the unit would be able to better complete its mission. Staff Sergeant Florich is not only survived by his parents Stephen and Kimberley, but also his wife Meghan, who is pregnant with their first child.

TRIBUTE TO DR. MARVIN HOGAN

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I wish to commend Dr. Marvin Hogan for his remarkable involvement with early childhood education, job training and workforce development in the State of Mississippi for more than 40 years.

Currently, Dr. Hogan serves as executive director of Friends of Children of Mississippi, based in Jackson. Friends of Children of Mississippi operates Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Humphreys, Sharkey, Issaquena, Madison, Leake, Rankin, Copiah, Kemper, Newton, Clarke, Jasper, Smith, Jones, Wayne, and Green Counties.

Friends of Children of Mississippi has a notable record of providing quality early childhood development and educational services to low-income children in our State. In the organization's 48-year history, it has transitioned nearly 140,000 children into the public schools of Mississippi.

Friends of Children of Mississippi was recognized recently by the National Head Start Association for its accomplishments. Its two-generation model, which engages parents of Head Start and Early Head Start children to break the cycle of poverty and put families on the path to self-sufficiency, was featured in a National Association report as a case study for exceptionally effective two-generation programs. Since the Friends of Children of Mississippi two-generation program began in 2003, almost 97 percent of enrolled parents have successfully completed their GED or gone to college and transitioned to employment. This well-deserved honor is a credit to Dr. Hogan and his colleagues in the 15 counties they serve across Mississippi.

A native of Waynesboro, MS, Dr. Hogan has been recognized nationally for his work to break intergenerational cycles of poverty and to expand educational opportunities for African Americans in our State. I am pleased to commend Dr. Hogan for his service and to wish him and his colleagues continued success in their work to provide a solid educational foundation for Mississippi's children.

RAIL SAFETY AND POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I voice my concerns on an important rail safety issue that we have been working on in the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. While railroads and commuter rails may face the immense challenge of implementing appropriate PTC precautions, now and always we must place the safety of our citizens above the fear of difficulties incurred by necessary technological change. We must face these difficulties head-on in order that our citizens' lives be ensured safely in public transportation.

New Jersey runs on rail. Our economy simply could not sustain itself

without it. Our Northeast corridor alone moves more than 700,000 people a day. Without the necessary PTC safeguards, these people will face the threat of a devastating crash more so every day. The sheer volume of commuters itself presents momentous concern for the State to be able to successfully guarantee the well-being of its rail lines. Knowing now that crashes like the Metro-North accident could have been prevented by PTC protections, I can say with bursting resolve that it is time for us to do better. The application of PTC directly translates into lives saved. To me and for many, that is an easy trade—as easy as it ever gets.

But it is rarely ever that simple. I recognize that for many in the rail industry, who share my commitment to improving safety, the reality is that difficult investment decisions need to be made and the current timeline is not achievable, even for those with the best of intentions. Implementation will take time. We cannot expect these complex technological improvements to come overnight. In spite of this, we can still hold these improvements to a reasonably tight schedule, one that is attainable.

I am hopeful that in the time between today's committee vote and before the final passage of PTC legislation, we can work to shorten the extension and find a better balance. I look forward to working with the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee chairman, ranking member, and the rest of my colleagues to improve this initiative.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD WILLIAMS

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Edward C. Williams, Jr. Ed honorably served the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for more than 15 years, most recently as State director for my Senate office. Ed has been a trusted advisor and friend over the 8 years we worked together.

A native of Wilkes-Barre, an alumnus of the Head Start program in Luzerne County, and a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Ed has deep roots in Pennsylvania. Prior to joining my staff, he served in the House of Representatives for Congressman Paul Kanjorski as a staff assistant, later earning a leading advisory role on House budgetary proceedings. When he was recommended to my staff following my election to the Senate in 2006, we knew right away that we wanted Ed on our team. He was the first legislative staffer hired for my Washington, DC office, serving as our projects and appropriations director.

Ed immediately became one of my most valued and effective legislative aides. To further his education he attended law school at night while working full-time in Washington, DC and

passed the bar. He was promoted to senior counsel in my office shortly thereafter. In 2010, Ed accepted the position of State director for my Senate office. Overseeing seven district offices and serving as my primary liaison to many of the State's most prominent leaders, Ed has never failed to exceed expectations. Were it not for Ed, many of our most ambitious projects could never have been realized.

In my years of public service, I have had the privilege of working with many intelligent and hard-working professionals. Without question, Ed ranks among the top. He is one of the most capable and diligent people I have had the pleasure of working with, and his commitment to excellence is evident in all that he does.

On a personal note, getting to know Ed has been a privilege. A true champion for the people of our State, Ed should be extremely proud of the great work he has done for thousands of our constituents. I will forever be grateful to him for his public service.

My staff and I will miss Ed greatly, but we know that he will remain a close friend and trusted advisor. I wish him, his wife Lisa, and their son Matthan well in this exciting new chapter of their lives.●

TRIBUTE TO DAWN JUSTICE

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I honor Dawn Justice, who is retiring from serving as president and chief executive officer of the Idaho Bankers Association.

Dawn, who grew up in Sarasota, FL, began her career in the hotel industry working in hotel management for the Hilton and Hyatt hotels. Her work in this field took her to California, Texas, Singapore, and Thailand before we were blessed that she chose to make Idaho her home 24 years ago. Prior to her work with the Idaho Bankers Association, she also worked as vice president of human resources for the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry and special projects assistant for Boise State University, where she also earned her master of public administration degree.

For the past 11 years, Dawn has led the Idaho Bankers Association with remarkable skill and knowhow. Throughout her time with the association, Dawn has been instrumental in advancing a number of the organization's priorities, including initiatives involving the Idaho Bank Act, Personal Information Security Act, the Credit Report Protection Act, the Residential Mortgages Practices Act, the Uniform Prudent Investor Act, and much more. She has utilized her indispensable talents advocating for policy objectives of importance both at the State and national levels.

Dawn's efforts and advocacy on behalf of the Idaho banking community have been exceptionally helpful as we have worked together over the years. She has been an outstanding advocate

in explaining the need for traditional banking and the costs of overregulation on consumers, small businesses and communities. She was instrumental in providing valuable insight and recommendations that helped me craft and advance my regulatory relief legislation into law. Additionally, her help pushing back against harmful Dodd-Frank rules and providing insight into how many of these rules would negatively impact credit and economic growth opportunities in Idaho has been especially appreciated.

Dawn, thank you for your hard work and effective leadership. You have been a great strength in advancing Federal policy changes of assistance to Idahoans. I commend you for your service to Idaho and our Nation. I wish you all the best and hope you have a retirement filled with many good times with your loved ones. Congratulations on your remarkable career and retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:30 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 216. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1092. An act to designate the Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, as the "Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Building".

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

At 7:07 p.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 joint resolution:

S.J. Res. 8. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures.