

globe, setting a new standard for zoological institutions worldwide. Senator FEINSTEIN and I want to congratulate the staff, volunteers, and supporters of this extraordinary organization for the important role they play in the care and preservation of our earth's most beautiful creatures and habitats. We know their work will continue to make a profound difference for generations to come.●

REMEMBERING SAMUEL STATEN, SENIOR

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I remember the distinguished life and career of Mr. Samuel Staten, Sr., who passed away at the age of 80 on Tuesday, April 26, 2016. Sam was not only a trusted adviser and dedicated father, but a pillar of strength for thousands in the labor movement and Philadelphia. I would like to take this time to not only send my condolences to his family, but to reflect upon his remarkable life. He spent 50 years in the labor industry and dedicated his career to strengthening the rights of workers and the bonds of friendship between the communities of Philadelphia. He worked his entire life for the betterment of his fellow workers and experienced firsthand the hardships that inadequate wages and benefits can have on hard-working Americans.

Sam's presence was felt in the labor movement long before his time as one of Philadelphia's most prominent civic leaders. He spent 10 years as a construction laborer in Philadelphia in the 1960s and remembered working for \$2.60 an hour, without health care, without a pension plan, without any of the support many of our Nation's workers have come to enjoy today. His experience in the transformative decade of the sixties showed him not only the importance of the labor movement, but the power that collective action can have for the well-being of the community and the Nation.

Following 10 years as a construction worker, Sam's capacity for leadership and his ability to unite people were recognized when he became a field representative for Laborers' Local 332 in 1970. His skills and leadership helped him to quickly rise through the ranks, and in 1973, he was appointed assistant business manager for Local 332. The high esteem in which he was held by his colleagues continued to be evident in 1978 when he was elected business manager for Local 332 and held that position until 2008. He also served as the secretary-treasurer of the Laborers' District Council of the Metropolitan Area of Philadelphia & Vicinity. He officially retired from Laborers Local 332 and the Laborers' District Council in 2010.

Never one to narrow his focus to just one area, he brought his leadership and insight to countless other organizations. Over the years, he served as a trustee of the Laborers' District Council Building & Construction Health &

Welfare Fund, delegate to the Philadelphia Building & Construction Trades Council, board member of the Philadelphia Housing Authority, member of the African-American Chamber of Commerce, trustee of the Laborers' District Council Building & Construction Pension Fund, board member of the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority, and member of the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Appeals Board. These represent only a few of the many organizations to which Sam lent his support, but show the extensive influence and support he has given to the Philadelphia area.

Given the breadth of his dedication to the workers and people of Philadelphia, it is unsurprising that his leadership extended even further through charitable work. He helped to found the Laborers' District Council Charity Fund through an act that, though remarkable, was typical of Sam. At a 1987 Friends of Labor Committee dinner held in his honor, Sam was presented with \$25,000 for his service over the years. However, he saw the gift not as a chance to help himself, but an opportunity to improve the lives of others. He chose to donate the money to charity, which in turn inspired his colleagues and gave birth to the Laborers' District Council Charity Fund. Renamed the Samuel Staten, Sr., Charitable Trust in 2011, the organization continues to provide thousands of dollars in services and scholarships to Local 332 members in need.

Throughout his life he fought for the dignity and well-being of hard-working Americans and, regardless of his success, never forgot his roots in the labor movement. He experienced both great success and hardship, but regardless of the hand he was dealt, he always saw an opportunity to extend that hand to others in need. As he rose through the ranks of Local 332, he brought together diverse communities and labor interests for the benefit of the community. Even when confronted with the tragic death of his son, Qaid Staten, Sam's dedication to the community could not be diminished. His son was killed just months before he was to attend Howard University, but Sam chose to honor his son not through grief, but through the creation of the Qaid Staten Memorial Scholarship Fund, which continues to provide support to other young students preparing to enter college. Sam's life was a story of uncommon acts of kindness in service of the common good.

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a grateful nation, I would like to once again extend my deepest condolences to the family of Samuel Staten, Sr. Philadelphia and the Nation may have lost a distinguished leader, dedicated public servant, and devoted father and grandfather, but we will never lose the positive change he brought to the city of Philadelphia, the impact he had on the lives of thousands, nor the legacy of idealism, compassion, and community

service that he has left so others may continue to fight for the causes of dignity and equality to which he dedicated his life.●

TRIBUTE TO PAUL COOKE

● Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Director Paul Cooke of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control for his 35 years of service to Colorado.

Paul's steadfast leadership throughout his career in fire and emergency services has had an extremely positive impact on Colorado's public safety. Mr. Cooke first began as a volunteer firefighter in 1979, and he has since served in a variety of capacities as a career fireman, fire chief, and other influential roles in local and State government.

Paul's contributions to Colorado's fire safety and first responder system are immeasurable. I commend his bravery and fortitude during times of tragedy, specifically his direction during the South Canyon fire.

Additionally, his work with local and State officials developed and implemented some of Colorado's most significant fire prevention and safety programs. Most notably are the updates to the State's fire protection services, organization of the State-level fire and life safety programs, as well as the statewide first responder training programs.

I thank Director Paul Cooke for his dedicated hard work throughout his entire career and congratulate him on a well-deserved retirement.●

RECOGNIZING THE TWIN CITIES DIVISION OF THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Afton, MN, flotilla of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Established in 1941, this flotilla is the oldest in Minnesota.

The volunteers of the Coast Guard Auxiliary dedicate their time to making sure our community's lakes and rivers are safe. As the Land of 10,000 Lakes, flotillas in Minnesota have a fulltime job. From performing search and rescue operations, to teaching boating safety courses, for 75 years, the Afton flotilla has helped to ensure that Minnesota waterways are safe and accessible.

Over the years, when our State has faced natural disasters such as flooding of the Mississippi River and the Red River, the Afton flotilla has worked side-by-side with local, State, and Federal authorities to aid in search and rescue operations, evacuations, and emergency communications. When the I-35W bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis tragically collapsed in

2007, the volunteers of the Afton flotilla were ready to work with emergency response teams and helped catalog the countless amount of debris examined during the investigation. Even after the disaster was over, the flotilla monitored boater safety once the river was finally reopened.

Even more than responding to disasters, the Afton flotilla works to prevent disasters on the water, making sure that river navigation tools are in working order and patrolling during regattas and other events. There is no way for us to know just how many lives were saved over the past 75 years through the hard work of the Afton flotilla volunteers.

I join all of my fellow Minnesotans in applauding the Afton flotilla's momentous anniversary and the dedication of its volunteer members over the past 75 years. I would also like to thank all of the auxiliary volunteers in Minnesota and across the country who keep our communities and waterways safe.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROBERT F. NORTON, USA, RETIRED

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to honor COL Robert F. Norton, USA, Retired, on the occasion of his retirement as deputy director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA.

After serving in the Army Reserve for several years while he worked as a schoolteacher, Colonel Norton volunteered for full-time Active Duty with the Army in 1978. He served in various assignments on the Army headquarters staff and the office of the Secretary of the Army, specializing in Reserve manpower and personnel policy matters. He served two tours in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, first as a personnel policy officer and then as senior military assistant to the Assistant Secretary.

Colonel Norton retired from the Army in 1995. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the Army War College, and the Kennedy School of Government senior officials in national security course at Harvard University.

After his retirement, Colonel Norton continued his service as a defense contractor for 2 years, including time in Bosnia and other locations, but he found his true calling when he joined MOAA's government relations staff in 1997, specializing in National Guard, Reserve, and veterans benefits issues.

In his nearly 19 years with MOAA, Colonel Norton testified before Congress more than 30 times and played a major role in a wide array of legislative accomplishments. Foremost among these was the post-9/11 GI Bill, where Colonel Norton's efforts played a pivotal role in ensuring this legislation included provisions for the Guard and

Reserve, as well as transferability of benefits to family members.

Colonel Norton also played a key role in winning legislation extending military health coverage to members of the Guard and Reserve and their families and authorizing early retirement credit for Guard and Reserve members called up for combat zone service.

Colonel Norton's 38 years of service to our country and to those who serve and have served in uniform, as well as their families and survivors, is in keeping with the highest standards of excellence and is worthy of special recognition as he and his spouse, Colleen, embark on the next phase of their lives.●

REMEMBERING FRANK LEVINGSTON

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Frank Levingston of Lake Charles, LA. Known affectionately as Uncle Frank, Levingston was the Nation's oldest living World War II veteran until his passing last week.

Levingston was born on November 13, 1905, to Frank and Ida Levingston in Cotton Valley, LA. He was one of seven children. Along with his younger siblings, Levingston helped to maintain approximately 200 acres of land, which remains in his family today.

When the United States entered World War II after the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, Levingston enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942, where he dutifully served as a private and automobile serviceman during World War II and participated in the Allied invasion of Italy. After his honorable discharge from the Army in 1945, he became a union worker specializing in cement finishing. In 1981 Levingston moved to Lake Charles, LA, which he called home for the rest of his life.

As the oldest living World War II veteran, Levingston saw many changes and much growth during his lifetime, including the Great Depression, the Jim Crow era, and the civil rights movement. In November 2015, he was invited by Austin, TX, Honor Flight to travel to Washington, DC, to visit the White House and lay a wreath at the National World War II Monument in remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Frank Levingston entered eternal rest on May 3, 2016. It is a privilege to join with the Senate to honor Frank Levingston's life, his accomplishments, and his commitment to serve his country.●

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF GREGORY CHAMPAGNE

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Gregory Champagne, sheriff of St. Charles Parish, LA.

Born and raised in St. Charles Parish, LA, Champagne attended Hahnville High School and graduated from Nicholls State University in 1979

with a B.A. in government. Champagne went on to earn a J.D. from the Louisiana State University Law Center in 1982, after which he served as the assistant district attorney in St. Charles Parish for nearly 14 years. In 1995, Champagne was elected to serve as sheriff of St. Charles Parish. He was re-elected in 1999 with overwhelming support and has won the subsequent four elections, making him the second sheriff in St. Charles Parish history to win six terms.

In 2003, Sheriff Champagne was selected Louisiana Sheriff of the Year by the Louisiana Crime Victim's Coalition. Champagne was also elected by his peers to serve as president of the Louisiana Sheriff's Association from 2007 to 2008. Currently, he serves as the first vice president of the executive committee for the National Sheriff's Association, NSA, which represents 3,080 sheriffs across the United States. Sheriff Champagne additionally chairs the NSA's legal affairs committee and sits on the congressional affairs committee, global affairs committee, and homeland security committee. Most recently, Champagne joined the U.S. Department of Justice's National Commission on Forensic Science, using his decades of experience and expertise to advise the Justice Department on fighting crime and keeping our communities safer.

Champagne has been married for over 30 years to Alice Landry Champagne and is an active member of the St. Charles Parish community. Champagne is a longtime member of the Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus Council 2409, and the Holy Family Catholic Church. Sheriff Champagne has also served as a mentor with the St. Charles Parish Public School District for over 10 years. In his downtime, the Sheriff enjoys playing music and is known for being an accomplished trumpet player and a member of multiple bands.

Today I would like to honor Sheriff Champagne for his remarkable career and to thank him for his endless commitment to serving the community of St. Charles Parish.●

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET N. LAURANT

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Ms. Margaret N. Laurant, of Slidell, LA.

Ms. Laurant was born in Bonfouca, LA, in 1926 to Jean and Elmonia Narcisse, both of whom were direct descendants of original French settlers of Bofouca. Ms. Laurant is the last remaining of her nine siblings and currently serves as the matriarch of the Narcisse family. As a young child, Ms. Laurant dealt with racism firsthand. She recalls attending a small segregated one-room school called the Golden Key. Later she attended middle school at the St. Tammany Parish Training School for Negroes, where each day she walked to school as she was unable to ride a school bus with her