

the U.S. Forest Service and received specialized training as smokejumpers and on the handling of unexploded balloon bombs.

As part of Operation Firefly, the 555th made some 1,200 jumps and fought more than 35 fires in Oregon, Washington, and other western States between July and October 1945.

Smokejumping is no easy feat; it is dirty, sweaty, and dangerous work, but because of the 555th's dedication and professionalism, the unit only ever sustained one fatality: Malvin Brown tragically fell to his death in the Umpqua National Forest about 45 miles northwest of Crater Lake. His death is regarded as the first smokejumper death in U.S. history.

Make no mistake about it, Malvin Brown and the other soldiers of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion are heroes. They were the first Black paratroopers ever to serve in the U.S. Military, which they did with honor and distinction. They are also the only military unit in history to work as smokejumpers.

The soldiers of the 555th faced painful discrimination and blatant racism on a daily basis. They were barred from the store on base while at Fort Benning, GA, even though German and Italian prisoners were allowed to enter. Even after the Triple Nickles arrived in Oregon, they found most restaurants and bars would not serve them.

The Army sent the 555th to Fort Bragg, NC, following the Japanese surrender and, in December 1947, integrated the unit into the famed 82nd Airborne Division—making the 82nd the Army's first racially integrated division.

On June 3, 2017, the State of Oregon will commemorate the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion's remarkable history and important contributions to the country with the installation of an Oregon State historic marker at the Smokejumper Museum in Cave Junction.

It is my true honor to share their story today with my colleagues and to express my profound gratitude to all the Triple Nickles for their service.

75th ANNIVERSARY OF ALEUTIAN ISLANDS CAMPAIGN AND ALEUT EVACUATION

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, as we approach Memorial Day, we remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives in devotion to the causes of liberty, freedom, and democracy. As such, I would like to take the opportunity to speak about one event in our Nation's history that had a profound impact on my great State of Alaska. June 3 marks the 75th anniversary of the Aleutian Islands Campaign of the Second World War.

This "Forgotten Battle" began with the bombing of Dutch Harbor and subsequent invasions of Adak, Kiska, and Attu, AK by the navy of Imperial Japan. For the Allied forces, this cam-

paign resulted in 1,481 casualties, 640 missing, and 3,416 wounded, but perhaps what is even less known, is the impact this conflict had on the Aleut—Unangan/Unangas—peoples of Alaska.

In the months of June and July of 1942, Aleut communities were damaged, homes and personal possessions rummaged through or destroyed by Allied forces, and more than 881 Aleut civilian residents of the Pribilof Islands and the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak Island were relocated to temporary camps in Southeast Alaska. Forty-two residents of Attu were taken to Japan in September 1943, where they spent the rest of the war as prisoners, and nearly half of them died, mainly of hunger and malnutrition.

The campaign ultimately ended in an Allied victory with the Japanese withdrawal from the Aleutians in 1943, but the effects are still felt by those communities and peoples who were impacted.

Today, before the Senate, I would like to take a moment to honor the sacrifices of our servicemembers, including the 25 Aleut who joined the Armed Forces and the three who participated in the U.S. invasion to recapture Attu and later received Bronze Stars for their valor. I want to also honor the civilians, the Aleut evacuees, and Attuan prisoners of war whose communities, culture, languages, and lives were forever affected.

From June 2 to 4, 2017, a memorial ceremony will take place in Alaska to honor and acknowledge the evacuees, their descendants, and veterans of this "Forgotten Battle," both living and deceased.

REMEMBERING CECILIA ZARATE-LAUN

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Cecilia Zarate-Laun. Her passing leaves Wisconsin without one of its greatest advocates for justice and peace, and I am proud to pay tribute to this extraordinary woman.

Cecilia was born in Santander Province of Colombia. She was the oldest of five sisters and attended school in Bucaramanga and at the National University of Colombia. Following the completion of her studies, she took a position as a professor of nutrition, a job that led to her arrival in Madison, WI for graduate school.

Cecilia received a scholarship to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison for her master's degree. While studying in Madison, Cecilia met her beloved husband, Jack. After completion of graduate school, Cecilia returned to Colombia, working as a nutritionist for the Colombian Government's National Nutrition Plan. In 1976, she married John "Jack" Laun and the following year returned to the United States.

In 1987, extended civil war in Colombia inspired Cecilia and Jack to cofound the Colombia Support Network

CSN, a grassroots human rights organization based in Madison, WI. Cecilia's work with CSN was her pride and joy. As CSN program director, Cecilia worked tirelessly to connect Americans to Colombian communities affected by the war. She was inspired to help establish new chapters of CSN in locations ranging from the University of Wisconsin-Madison to central New York, connecting these communities through a "sister cities" program to rural Colombian communities facing violence during the Colombian civil war.

She led over 50 delegations of citizens, journalists, and public officials to Colombia so they could fully understand the effect of the civil war. After working with Cecilia and CSN to establish a sister community relationship between Dane County, WI and San José de Apartadó, Colombia, I had the honor to accompany her on one of those delegations in 1993.

In addition to her public service through CSN, Cecilia was a member of the national board of directors of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She was also a member of the Latin American Subcommittee of the American Friends Service Committee—Quakers—served on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice, and, in October of 2015, received the Global Citizen of the Year Award from the Madison Chapter of the United Nations Association.

Regardless of the cause or project, Cecilia approached everything with unparalleled strength, courage, and a sense of selflessness. She approached her battle with cancer with the same attitude. Over the last 4 years, while Cecilia fought against her disease, she continued to fight for others. Her strength was truly amazing.

While Cecilia is greatly missed by her family, friends, and community, she leaves behind a legacy for future leaders to emulate. She will always be remembered for her courageous effort to fight for those who could not fight for themselves.

Cecilia had an incredibly big heart and an unwavering commitment to others. I am fortunate to have been able to call her my friend.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL H. BENNETT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Judge Michael H. Bennett. Judge Bennett will be retiring in May 2017 after serving 28 years as an immigration judge.

Former Oregon Governor Tom McCall once said, "Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky. They are people who say, 'This is my community, and it is my responsibility to make it better.'" Judge Bennett truly is a hero, for he has devoted much of his life to making the United States and his community better.

Judge MICHAEL BENNETT began his career as a general attorney for the

legacy Immigration and Naturalization Service in El Centro, CA. He also worked as an Assistant Attorney General and Assistant Public Defender for the Government of American Samoa. Judge Bennett was appointed as an immigration judge in El Centro, CA, in 1989.

In Oregon, we were fortunate to have Judge Bennett assigned to our immigration court in 1998. During his tenure, Judge Bennett has served as an impartial adjudicator who is known for his fair and compassionate decisions. He has gained the respect of his colleagues, fellow attorneys, and the public for his intricate knowledge of immigration law. Further, Judge Bennett has created a positive work environment in the Portland immigration court that is commendable and should be recognized.

Judge Bennett comes from a long line of public servants, including his grandparents and parents. His grandfather served in the U.S. Navy and fought in WWII. Judge Bennett's father also served in the U.S. Navy and eventually earned his Ph.D. and became a teacher. Judge Bennett and his wife, Sivai, have continued to dedicate themselves to making Oregon a better place through their public service.

It is an honor to recognize Judge Michael H. Bennett for his service to the United States, to Oregon, and to his community.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAINE DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the Maine Dental Association was incorporated in 1867 with 22 members. Today I wish to recognize the MDA and its more than 700 members for 150 years of dedication to their profession and to the people of our State.

The remarkable advancements in dentistry over the years were accompanied by a greater understanding of the link between oral health and overall health. As doctors who specialize in oral medicine, the dentists of the MDA are a central part of Maine's healthcare sector. Expanding access to healthcare, including oral healthcare, is among the most important issues facing our society. Maine is a large, rural State with a strong network of dental clinics supported by MDA members. In addition, the MDA sponsors the Donated Dental Services Program that provides free comprehensive care to our disabled, aged, and medically compromised citizens in need.

Access to oral healthcare in Maine took a major step forward on May 20, 2017, when the University of New England College of Dental Medicine held a commencement ceremony for its first graduating class. The MDA has been a strong supporter of this first dental college in northern New England since the college was founded in 2013, and many of the 62 graduates who earned doctor of dental medicine degrees performed clinical rotations in commu-

nities throughout the State under the guidance of MDA members. I visited the Portland UNE clinic and was delighted to learn of the plans of many students to practice in Maine where their services are very much needed. From preventing and treating oral health problems to educating parents and caregivers, MDA members also play an essential role in the health, safety, and well-being of Maine children.

Throughout our State, members of the Maine Dental Association provide vital healthcare with expertise, commitment, and compassion. It is a pleasure to congratulate the MDA for 150 years of accomplishments and contributions benefiting the people of Maine.

175TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASE IH AGRICULTURE AND FARM EQUIPMENT

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 175th anniversary of Case IH Agriculture and Farm Equipment and to recognize its outstanding commitment and contribution to Wisconsin's economy.

Mr. Jerome Increase Case, born in 1819 in western New York, was well acquainted with agricultural equipment even as a young man. Case provided threshing services to local farms and realized at the young age of 16 that farming techniques needed improvement after witnessing a demonstration of an early threshing machine that could thresh more in one hour than a man could all day. After settling in Wisconsin in the early 1840s, Case built his first thresher-separator in Rochester, WI, but when the town refused to let Case draw electricity from the local mill, Case loaded his invention into a wagon and headed to Racine, WI.

The J.I. Case Threshing Machine Company was founded in 1842 at a time when Racine's tallest building was the local grain elevator. By 1848, the company was Racine's largest employer. As a true pioneer in the field of agricultural equipment, J.I. Case manufactured the first steam engine tractor in 1869. The Old No. 1 is still on display at the Smithsonian Institution. Although it was mounted on wheels, it was still drawn by horses. The first self-propelled steam engine followed in 1876.

Case machines were first transported beyond U.S. borders in 1871 and won first prize at the Paris Exposition. By 1886, Case became the largest producer of steam engines in the world.

During World War II, the company's plants manufactured aircraft wings, aircraft towing tractors, artillery shells, and doors for the Sherman tank. In fact, the company's 1942 centennial was celebrated 7 years late because of the war.

In 1985, Case IH became the Nation's second-largest farm equipment manufacturer after J.I. Case purchased the agricultural division of International Harvester and the business legacies of

two major equipment companies were united under one company. In 1999, Case IH merged with New Holland Ag to form a parent company, CNH Global, although equipment was still produced under the Case IH name. Since the merger, Case has remained at the forefront of the farming industry, seeking new ways to adapt to the changing trends. In 2010, Case IH created the world's first tractor to meet the tier 4 emissions requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency. Case IH Agriculture and Farm Equipment currently works with more than 4,900 dealers and distributes products in more than 160 countries.

As one of Wisconsin's founding manufacturers, Case has been a major contributor to Wisconsin's farming legacy. Over the past 175 years, this proud company has provided jobs for countless Wisconsin families and economic growth for the State I am so proud to represent.

I offer my sincere congratulations to Case leadership and workers as they celebrate 175 years of business, and I wish them the very best for many more years of success in Racine and around the world.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HARRY SIMMONS, JR.

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Harry Simmons, Jr., of Yazoo City, MS, for his service and contributions to the State of Mississippi while serving as the 81st president of the Delta Council.

Since its founding in 1935, Delta Council has grown to be a widely respected economic development organization representing the business, professional, and agricultural interests of the Mississippi Delta region. I am grateful to Delta Council for its continuous role in meeting the economic and quality of life challenges in this unique part of our country.

Harry Simmons's tenure as council president began in May 2016. In leading the council, he has been a notably strong advocate for Federal flood control, farm support, and infrastructure improvements in the Delta region.

A Yazoo County native, Mr. Simmons graduated from Yazoo City High School and earned an agricultural economics degree from Mississippi State University. He has had a strong career as a catfish and row-crop producer. Mr. Simmons, with his daughter Katy and son-in-law Andy Prosser, jointly manage both his farm operation and highly successful catfish processing operation, Simmons Farm Raised Catfish. His processing facility employs more than 200 people in Yazoo County, and his farming operation consists of catfish, corn, soybeans, and cotton production.

In addition to his leadership in Delta Council, Mr. Simmons has served as chairman of the Catfish Institute, president of Catfish Farmers of America, and on the boards of both the