

On November 6, 1942, Lieutenant Burkhart was among 1,500 prisoners packed into the coal bunker of the unmarked "hell ship" *Nagato Maru* to Japan. It took three torturous weeks for the ship to make its way from the tropics to the cold of Northeast Asia. Lieutenant Burkhart, nearly blind from malnutrition, was used as a slave laborer for the construction company Toshima Group—today's Tobishima Corporation. He was soon moved to the Hiroshima No. 1-B Zentsuji POW Camp on the island of Shikoku. The enlisted men at Zentsuji were slave stevedores for Nippon Express Co.—Nippon Tsuun—at Sakaide Rail Yards and the Port of Takamatsu. As an officer, Lieutenant Burkhart worked in the camp garden. On June 23, 1945, he and 334 officers were transferred to POW Camp 11-B Rokuroshi, deep in the Japanese Alps. Food was scarce, conditions were overcrowded, and winter clothes were unavailable, leading many to fear that they would not survive the harsh winter. Lieutenant Burkhart was liberated from this camp in early September.

Lieutenant Burkhart remained in the Army and had a distinguished career with the quartermaster corps, retiring in 1957 as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. Throughout his life, he was plagued by health problems most likely caused by the illnesses and hardships of being a POW. In 1972, at age 57, he passed away and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Thomas Burkhart's daughter Caroline has honored his memory by working tirelessly to preserve the history of the POW experience and to teach its lessons of American perseverance and grit. Ms. Burkhart is an active member of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society. In this year, the 75th anniversary of the fall of the Philippines, we appreciate the effort by Japan to reach out to Ms. Burkhart and the American POWs in the spirit of reconciliation and healing.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Caroline Burkhart a safe and meaningful journey and in expressing our gratitude and appreciation to Thomas F. Burkhart and all veterans of the war in the Pacific for their heroic service and sacrifice.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE JAMES WRIGHT

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor George James Wright, a resident of Laurel, MT, and a veteran of the Second World War.

George, I would like to thank you and your family on behalf of Montana and the United States of America for your service to our Nation in times of war.

George was born on June 14, 1923, in Hinsdale, MT.

Like many Montanans from Valley County, he made a living off the land farming and ranching. He worked hard alongside his older brother, where he remembers driving the tractor and

looking up into the big blue Montana sky.

Also, like many Montanans, he did not back down from answering the call to serve his Nation when we needed him most.

In 1943, George enlisted in the Army, making him the first in his family to serve in the military.

He spent over 2 years fighting in the jungles and on the beaches of the Philippines and New Guinea as a proud member of the 32nd Infantry Division.

He braved the mud. He braved the rain. He braved the bugs, and he braved the bullets.

He saw the unimaginable, as Japanese kamikaze pilots slammed their airplanes into American ships.

He did the unbelievable, driving Army bulldozers into the unknown, making sure our soldiers got the supplies and food they desperately needed.

He served our Nation with bravery, courage, and dignity, working his way up to the rank of T5.

After America's victory, George came home, and returned to those same Montana fields and skies.

After seeing the war's destruction firsthand, he knew that the world needed to be rebuilt, and he knew he was the person for the job. He took what he learned on the battlefield and spent his next years doing construction work.

He married the love of his life, Vivian, who we remember today, and they had two children Roland and Sharon.

At the time, he did not receive the recognition that he was due for his service to our Nation, but we are here today to make that right.

Now, a proud father, grandfather of two, and great-grandfather of seven, he will get that long overdue acknowledgement.

I have the proud honor of presenting him with the following: Bronze Star Medal with one Bronze Service Star, Good Conduct Medal—Army, American Campaign Medal with three Bronze Service Stars, World War II Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one Bronze Service Star, and Honorable Service Lapel Pin—WWII.

George, you are a Montana farmer through and through, whether feeding Americans at home or soldiers in the field.

I am proud to call myself a farmer, if only because it means I have something in common with a man like George Wright.

George, you have spent your life providing for Montanans at home and protecting Americans overseas.

These medals serve as a small token of our Nation's appreciation for your service and your sacrifice. You are an American hero and one of Montana's best. Thank you for your service.

TRIBUTE TO GERALD ROBERT ZELMER

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Gerald Robert Zelman, a veteran of the Vietnam war.

Gerald, I would like to thank you, on behalf of the State of Montana, and the United States of America, for your service to this Nation.

Gerald, known by his friends and family as Gerry, was born in Bismarck, ND, on June 25, 1947.

He married the love of his life, Dora Jean or D.J., on October 12, 1968, in Worden, MT, at the height of the Vietnam conflict.

Two months later, Gerry was off to war.

He attended boot camp in Fort Lewis, WA, and then moved on to advanced infantryman training in Fort Eustis, VA.

He deployed soon thereafter, serving proudly with the 101st Airborne Division out of Camp Eagle.

Gerry served as a helicopter crew chief, ensuring that pilots and crews were safe as they flew aerial missions. His skills on the battlefield ensured that rotary-wing aircraft were fine-tuned and ready to take off for their missions.

Gerry is a fixer and a problem solver.

In Vietnam, he fixed helicopters and kept our birds in the air, covering our soldiers on the ground.

When he returned from war, he worked as a maintenance foreman at Montana Sulphur and Chemical.

It is his skills on the battlefield, his bravery and courage, and his service to our Nation that earned him these commendations decades ago. It is my honor to finally deliver them today.

As a father to Carrie and Cody and grandfather to two grandchildren Sienna and Aden, he will get that long overdue acknowledgement.

I have the proud honor of presenting you, Gerry, with the Bronze Star Medal for your meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force.

I am also presenting you with copies of your previous awards: Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with Silver Service Star attachment, Expert Badge with Auto Rifle Bar, and sharpshooter badge with rifle bar.

Gerry, these medals are but a small token of our Nation's appreciation for your service and your sacrifice. You are an American hero, and Montana is proud to call you one of our own.

NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, in support of National Forest Products Week and in my role as a cochair of the Senate Paper and Packaging Caucus, I would like to recognize the almost 20,000 hard-working men and women employed by the forest products industry in the great State of Arkansas.

Arkansas is home to over 90 wood products, paper, and packaging manufacturing facilities that make over \$8 billion in products annually and contribute over \$1.2 billion to the State and local economies through wages and compensation.

The forest products industry plays a valuable role in the life of every American, every day. From paper and packaging to wood products, tissue, and other personal care items, paper and wood products are at the heart of modern life and a modern economy. In total, the industry employs about 900,000 Americans nationwide and manufactures over \$280 billion in products every year. That is nearly 4 percent of the current U.S. manufacturing GDP.

In addition to cochairing the Paper and Packaging Caucus, I am also a co-chair of the Senate Recycling Caucus. In this dual capacity, I have seen the success the forest products industry has had in pairing economic growth with respect for the environment. Be it through the use of carbon-neutral biomass energy or the successful implementation of voluntary recycling programs that now reach 96 percent of Americans, the forest products industry is leading by example.

Last year, I had the opportunity to see firsthand how the forest industry contributes to the economy of my State. Congressman BRUCE WESTERMAN and I visited timber-rich south Arkansas on our "Seed to Sawmill" tour. We learned about proper forest management and the positive environmental impacts achieved through conservation efforts. We also visited a seedling nursery, working private forests, state-of-the-art processing facilities, and the U.S. Forest Service's Experimental Forest in Crossett.

It is clear that the forest products industry contributes a great deal to Arkansas and to the U.S. economy overall. That is why it is important for us to highlight how forest products improve our lives, help grow our economy, and promote healthy environmental practices.

I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating National Forest Products Week and reflect on the many ways this recyclable and renewable resource impacts our daily lives for the better. Thank you for the opportunity to recognize the hard-working professionals of the forest products industry in the great State of Arkansas.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING COMPREHENSIVE JUVENILE SERVICES, INC.

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an organization that is committed to redirecting the lives of youth and their families in western Arkansas. Comprehensive Juvenile Services, Inc., of Fort Smith, AR, helps youth who experience difficulty within their families, have problems in school, or face other challenges that result in them being at risk of or referred to the juvenile justice system. Comprehensive Juvenile Services is celebrating 40 years of incredible, invaluable service to the community, and I want to congratulate them on this milestone.

Incorporated in 1976, Comprehensive Juvenile Services is a private, non-profit community-based youth services agency. It serves 1,000 youth each year in Sebastian, Crawford, Franklin, Logan, Scott, Polk, and Montgomery Counties. CJS is supported by and receives guidance from community leaders as it seeks to help children and youth who are susceptible to delinquency or have encountered legal problems and need positive influences to help get back on track toward a happy and successful adolescence.

CJS provides support to these children and their families in a variety of ways. It employs caseworkers to assess a youth's individual problems and develop case plans, provides aftercare to those in custody of the Department of Youth Services, offers one-on-one mentoring opportunities, operates an emergency shelter for at-risk youth, and features other programs including treatment for major behavioral problems, mental health assessments, and therapy and parenting classes.

The commitment that CJS has demonstrated for youth in western Arkansas is inspiring. The men and women of the agency put their hearts and souls into helping children and teens improve their situations and strive for better outcomes at home, at school, and in life generally. In one of many success stories, a former client named Sherry went through a difficult adoption where she experienced major conflict with her adopted family. Through the help of Community Juvenile Services, Sherry completed a program at the Girls Shelter of Fort Smith and is now a Department of Child and Family Services caseworker herself, advocating for children and helping to make a difference in their lives the same way that CJS did in hers.

I am so proud of the work that Comprehensive Juvenile Services has done over the past 40 years. They truly are changing lives, one child at a time. I want to congratulate everyone involved with CJS on a job well done, and I look forward to hearing many more success stories in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO RONALD K. LORENTZEN

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Mr. Ronald K. Lorentzen, a dedicated public servant who has spent his career advocating for American workers and businesses. Mr. Lorentzen retired on June 30, 2017, after more than three decades of government service.

Born in the blue-collar town of Ash-
tabula, OH—a great hometown, as my wife Connie can attest—Mr. Lorentzen's roots are evident in his life's work. Too often, especially in trade policy, representatives and policymakers fail to live up to the promises they have made to working families, but not Mr. Lorentzen. He never forgot where he came from, and he never forgot the workers who are too often left behind by our trade policy.

In his roles at the International Trade Administration, he has been a leader in our government's efforts to combat unfair trade practices and hold countries that cheat the rules accountable. He served as lead negotiator for the U.S. and chairman of the Steel Committee at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, where he worked to address steel overcapacity within the U.S. Market. While we know we have a lot more work to do to create a truly level playing field for our steel industry, his work helped shape a more fair international steel market for American companies.

In addition, Mr. Lorentzen led U.S. delegations before the North American Steel Trade Committee, NASTC. He helped ensure the NASTC fulfilled its mission as a forum for NAFTA steel countries to build consensus and develop united positions on areas of common concern. A firm grasp of the facts and diplomatic skill made him a strong and effective advocate for U.S. manufacturers.

Through his many roles in government, Mr. Lorentzen has served this country and its working families. He has stood up for workers in my State, and his efforts have helped save jobs. When we enforce our trade policies and hold accountable those who cheat the international trade system, we are ensuring our workers and businesses have access to a level playing field. Mr. Lorentzen has been a leader in that fight.

Mr. Lorentzen will be remembered for his compassion, work ethic, and integrity. I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in thanking him for his service and wishing him all the best on his retirement.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASHER'S CHOCOLATES

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and honor Chester Asher Candy Co., Inc., "Asher's Chocolates," as it celebrates the 125th anniversary of its founding in Pennsylvania.

In 1892, Chester A. Asher founded Asher's Chocolates in the city of Philadelphia, near Independence Hall. A farm boy from Scotland, who had previously lived in Canada, Chester had a "passion for chocolates" and a "knack for getting to the heart of a sugar craving." In 1899, he moved the company to the historical area of Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia. Chester worked tirelessly to perfect his candies and chocolates and was constantly searching for innovative ways to please his customers.

Following World War II, Chester's four sons took over the business, and they subsequently passed the company on to their sons in their retirement. After their father's passing in 1968, the third generation of Ashers, brothers John "Jack" and Bob Asher, assumed leadership of the company. Asher's Chocolates quickly grew from the