

served there until he received an honorable discharge that brought the couple home to Kenton County.

Using his degree in social studies, Dan taught history for a short time in Northern Kentucky. Then, a few years later, Dan and his brother Mike started a small concrete company out of their basements. For nearly four decades, Mike and Dan grew their business and earned respect in Northern Kentucky and the greater region as full service concrete contractors. In 2008, the brothers sold their business to Dan's son, Chris, who runs the company to this day.

The family business isn't the only way Chris has followed his father's footsteps, however. After graduating from The Citadel, Chris served 4 years in the Army as an infantry officer. Today, he is continuing to serve the Bluegrass State as a prominent member of the Kentucky State Senate. Like so many veterans, both Dan and Chris continue to make lasting contributions to their community, our Commonwealth, and this great Nation.

So, on this Veterans Day, I am grateful to all those who served our country in uniform. Our Commonwealth is made safer because of their service and stronger because of their example. To Dan and Chris McDaniel, all Kentucky veterans, and their families, it is an honor to say thank you.

#### TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN OTT

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to recognize Kathleen "Kathy" Ott, who recently retired from her role as the Director of the Library of Congress' Congressional Relations Office after 11 years of dedicated service to the Library and to Congress.

Appointed in 2008 by former Librarian of Congress, Dr. James Billington, Kathy was sought after by the Library for her extensive experience interfacing with Congress from both the public and private sectors. As the director of the Library's Congressional Relations Office, she spent more than a decade of her career building strong bipartisan relationships between the Library, Congress, and congressional staff.

Kathy has had the privilege of serving two Librarians of Congress, Dr. James Billington and Dr. Carla D. Hayden. Kathy was instrumental in supporting Dr. Hayden's confirmation process. With the help of Kathy's tireless effort throughout the nomination process, Dr. Hayden was overwhelmingly confirmed in a bipartisan fashion by the Senate during the 114th Congress.

In her time at the Library, Kathy has shaped the Library's relationship with Congress through 3 Presidential administrations, 6 Congresses, and 11 budget and appropriations cycles, building bipartisan support for Library of Congress initiatives along the way. Additionally, she worked with 10 different chairs of the Senate Rules and Admin-

istration Committee and House Administration Committee. As a member of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, I always appreciated Kathy's thorough and dutiful commitment to her role, the Library, and Congress.

During her tenure, Kathy has welcomed nearly 500 new Members of Congress during their freshman orientation activities hosted at the Library. She also created the bipartisan Library of Congress Caucus in the 111th Congress, which currently has 84 Representatives. Moreover, she helped to coordinate the congressional participation in the award of the Library's Gershwin Prize for Popular Song to the likes of Sir Paul McCartney, Billy Joel, Smokey Robinson, as well as other noteworthy musical artists.

In her position, Kathy also played an integral role in the launch of the Library's popular Congressional Dialogue Dinner Series in 2013, which has just concluded its 45th dinner. Marcelle and I have had the pleasure of enjoying many wonderful nights at the Library attending these delightful dinners and discussions.

Marcelle and I have had so many wonderful experiences with Kathy. I have to mention one especially. When Pope Francis came to speak to a joint meeting of Congress, Kathy had arranged to have a special Bible from the Library's collection available to be blessed by the Pope. She knew the Pope would bless it, so she arranged to have with it several religious medals and other things important to her and her family available to be a part of the blessing. I know the Pope didn't mind, and those of us there thought, "This is why we think the world of her."

Kathy has always been known as a reliable and trusted source for Library of Congress information. She will be greatly missed by Members of Congress and congressional staff alike. Marcelle and I wish Kathy the best in retirement.

#### BAT WEEK

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, in the midst of fall celebrations such as Halloween or, for fans in Washington and Houston, the World Series, I want to take a moment to highlight another important annual celebration that occurred last week: Bat Week.

It is fitting that last week, the Senate approved an appropriations bill to fund the Fish and Wildlife Service. At this time each year, we join our friends at the Fish and Wildlife Service, conservation groups around the world, and bat enthusiasts to recognize the irreplaceable role of bats and to highlight our urgent fight to protect them.

Many do not know the profound impact that bats have on our environment and our economy. For an agricultural state like Vermont, bats are vital to both our ecosystem and our economy. They control pests, pollinate crops, and even spread seeds. Some

farmers would consider bats among their best friends. For years, I have worked on the Appropriations Committee to prioritize funding for habitat conservation and to stop the spread of white-nose syndrome. I am proud that the fiscal year 2020 Interior bill once again responds to the call of the bat signal and provides more than \$7 million to combat white-nose, a disease that has devastated bat communities across the country.

So once again I hope Senators will join me in recognizing the importance of bat and keep the advocacy behind Bat Week going throughout the year.

#### RECOGNIZING VERMONT'S MAPLE INDUSTRY

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Vermont sets the gold standard for the maple industry, and maple is integral to our State's economy and to our State's identity. The Vermont families and businesses that keep this sector vibrant and viable are also an essential part of the fabric of our State. I am proud to recognize one of those businesses today. Nestled along the western slopes of Vermont's highest peak, Mount Mansfield, Runamok Maple is one of the roughly 1500 sugar producers in Vermont that produce nearly half of the Nation's maple syrup. Owned and operated by Laura and Eric Sorkin, Runamok Maple exemplifies the innovation and entrepreneurship that is revitalizing communities across Vermont.

Maple sugaring is a tradition carried forward and refined by each new generation of Vermonters. The Sorkins themselves benefited from the mentorship of nearby sugar producers before launching their own business a decade ago. In 2016, recognizing an opportunity, they pumped money and energy into a diversification effort that included a retail line of flavor-infused and barrel-aged syrups, all packaged and branded for the direct sales market. Two years later, I was proud to support funding for the Northern Border Regional Commission that in turn allowed Fairfax, VT, to expand wastewater infrastructure to Runamok's new manufacturing home, an old facility that once manufactured Scrabble game tiles. The improvements enabled Runamok's expansion from 45 to 100 employees and revitalized a part of the historic town.

Through their products, writings, and creativity, the Sorkins and their outstanding staff are not only producing world-class value-added products, they are changing how people think about maple syrup. Long gone are the days when it was considered a mere condiment for pancakes. I was not surprised, then, to see Runamok Maple featured in a recent Washington Post article about the many possibilities of Vermont's sweetest export.

In recognition of the families across our State who continue to keep this bedrock Vermont sector thriving, I ask

unanimous consent to have that article printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 2, 2019]  
BEFORE YOU POUR ALL THAT MAPLE SYRUP ON YOUR PANCAKES, HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT

(By Becky Krystal)

It's fall, so you can take your pumpkin spice and . . . enjoy it in your deodorant, candles, lattes and, well, seemingly everything. Me? When I think of fall flavors, I think about maple syrup. It is actually a bit odd when you consider that spring is the season when producers collect and cook down the sap from the maple trees. Still, I'm going to stick with my convictions, because maple syrup to me evokes New England and flannel and colorful foliage, all of which are the essence of fall.

And no, it's not just sweet. "Maple syrup is a lot more complex than sugar," says Laura Sorkin, who owns Vermont-based Runamok Maple with her husband, Eric. "There's a lot more nuance than what you would get with granulated sugar." The flavor can vary depending on the time of year, but Sorkin says toffee, caramel, honey and apple are among the notes she can pick out. There's also a balance of sweetness and acidity.

We've all poured maple syrup over our pancakes and waffles. Maybe even a little too much—that stuff is \$\$\$. Here's what you need to know about how to better understand, appreciate and use that liquid gold. (Sorry, Mimi.)

The grades. In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture updated its maple grades to come into line with standards already adopted by several states and Canada. One of the goals with the new grades was to give consumers better descriptors of flavor and color, as well as allow some of the very dark syrup previously classified as B grade to be folded into the A grade, providing easier access for home cooks. Sorkin says it's worth keeping in mind that the strength of flavor does not always occur in a smooth progression along with color, as you can get a lighter-colored syrup with an intense taste and a darker that's milder.

Still, here is the rundown of how the government describes the grades aimed at individual buyers (there is a processing grade that can be used by manufacturers making other products), ordered from least to most intense, as well as early to late season:

Grade A, golden color/delicate flavor: "Mild maple taste," according to the USDA. You might know this from its previous grade, Fancy. The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association suggests serving this grade with the expected breakfast fare or rich dairy, such as ice cream or yogurt.

Grade A, amber color/rich flavor: "A full-bodied maple taste of medium intensity," the USDA says. If you choose only one grade, Sorkin says, it should be this one. It's great on waffles and pancakes, but the Vermont association also recommends it for salad dressings, cocktails and barbecue sauce.

Grade A, dark color/robust flavor: The USDA is less helpful on the last two grades, explaining that this grade has a stronger taste than the lighter colors. You don't say. Anyway, our friends from Vermont like to take advantage of its hearty flavor by pouring it over baked fruit and vegetables and using it as a glaze for meat and vegetables. It can also shine in baking.

Grade A, very dark/strong flavor: You guessed it—"a maple taste that is stronger than robust." Okay then! What say you, Vermont? "When you need a strong maple

flavor in a bread or cookie, ice cream, or barbecue sauce, this is the grade of choice."

Storage. Keep unopened maple syrup in a cool, dry spot, out of direct light. The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association recommends storing opened maple syrup in the refrigerator. Or to keep it in very good shape, you can freeze it, going through as many freezing and thawing cycles as you want, the group says, as long as you let it thaw completely and stir in any condensation that forms on the top of the syrup.

Even when properly stored, maple syrup can crystallize. In "The Clever Cook's Kitchen Handbook: 5,037 Ingenious Hints, Secrets, Shortcuts, and Solutions," author David Joachim suggests heating the jar of syrup in a pan of hot water over low heat until the crystals dissolve. (Move the syrup to a glass jar or heatproof bowl if it's in plastic.) Or, try microwaving it for 10 to 15 seconds on medium power. Of course, you can consider it candy and just eat the crystals, too. Joachim says you can salvage moldy maple syrup by scraping or straining out the mold and bringing the syrup to a full boil and returning it to a clean jar or bottle.

Substituting. "Maple syrup is about as sweet as sugar, so you can replace it using an equal amount of syrup," according to the Vermont-based experts at King Arthur Flour. "Decrease the liquid by 3 to 4 tablespoons per 1 cup substitution." If you're adding maple syrup to a recipe that doesn't call for liquid, you need to increase the flour by 1 tablespoon for every  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup maple syrup used. KAF emphasizes using room temperature maple syrup, because if it's cold, it can cause other ingredients, including butter, to clump. If you use a darker grade, expect a "delightfully caramelly" flavor.

Flavoring your own. Runamok's eclectic infused syrups include such flavors as hibiscus, makrut lime-leaf, smoked chile pepper and ginger. (Here's a link to a coffee syrup in our archives.) If you're interested in creating your own infusions, especially with whole spices, Sorkin suggests gently heating the syrup and letting the ingredients steep for a few hours. Taste every so often to see whether you've achieved the right level of flavor. Keep in mind that it's better to be conservative than add too much or steep too long.

Uses. "I would just love it if people would start thinking beyond pancakes," Sorkin says. She notes that honey has really come into its own as an ingredient to be appreciated and used in a variety of ways and hopes the time will come soon for maple syrup. Maple syrup on a cheese board? Go for it! In Vermont, people have been putting maple syrup in their coffee for a long time, and Sorkin says it works in tea, too, particularly a black variety (try it in chai). She is, as you would expect, a proponent of maple syrup in cocktails.

Sorkin says maple syrup can be lost in flour-heavy baked goods, so she prefers to save it for situations when it can really shine, such as in frostings (buttercream or cream cheese), glazes and a simple syrup applied to a cake. It can be used in a wide variety of savory applications, too, adding just the right balance when played against other flavors. Sorkin, who trained at the French Culinary Institute in New York (now the International Culinary Center), likes to add a drizzle on top of a sweet potato and tahini dip. Her other recipes include maple vinaigrettes, roasted cabbage and crispy tofu. Always worth considering: Maple butter.

Need some more ideas? Here are a few contenders from our archives:

Frozen Maple Mousse. This is very much like a no-churn ice cream, which you can drizzle with a bit more maple syrup, naturally.

Maple Olive Oil Pecan Granola. Here's another way to incorporate maple syrup into

your breakfast that does not involve pancakes or waffles.

Maple Spiced Glazed Nuts. These are definitely worth adding to your party food repertoire—they make an ideal game-day snack.

Grilled Maple-Marinated Portobello Mushrooms. Maple syrup is paired with soy sauce and earthy mushrooms for an umami-rich meatless main.

Maple-Chipotle Basting Sauce. Consider using a darker grade for this sauce, which is right at home on pork or any other grilled meat.

#### RECOGNIZING VERMONT'S AWARD-WINNING CHEESEMAKERS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, earlier this year, Vermonters who are expanding and elevating one of Vermont's most honored products—cheese—were recognized with a record number of ribbons at the American Cheese Society's 36th Annual Awards competition in Richmond, VA. I am delighted, though not surprised, that a total of 44 Vermont cheeses won awards, including 5 that were finalists for Best of Show. Many of these cheeses are featured every year at our annual Taste of Vermont, held here on Capitol Hill each May.

Vermont's talented Vermont cheesemakers have brought home top awards from this competition each year, but never before has the State been a winner across so many categories. Despite its small size, Vermont was in the top three States for the number of awards earned—a significant accomplishment for this bedrock sector in our State.

The winners came from every corner of Vermont, every scale of production, and for many varieties of cheese. Large producers, like the Cabot Creamery Cooperative, which represents hundreds of farm families, came home as winners. So, too, did small operations like Barn First Creamery, which is home to just 32 goats and 2 farmer-cheesemakers. This contrast and diverse success is a fitting illustration of Vermont's agricultural landscape.

The Vermont Cheese Council helped to support the Vermont cheesemakers involved in the American Cheese Society's competition by providing technical assistance and marketing support. This council's foundational role is to help produce and advance Vermont-made cheese. The success of Vermont cheesemakers at this year's American Cheese Society's Annual Awards is just the latest testament to its effectiveness. Similar to the American Cheese Society, the Vermont Cheese Council provides the public and food professionals with educational events to learn more about cheese and cheese making throughout the State.

Cheese is a staple for Vermont agriculture and value added production, with over 45 cheesemakers—the most per capita of any State—throughout Vermont working with sheep, goats, and multiple cow breeds, to produce world-class artisanal cheese. The State's Department of Tourism and