

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KENTUCKY LOCK AND DAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the Commonwealth of Kentucky is home to several marvels of engineering. These feats of concrete and metal have brought prosperity and opportunity to tens of thousands of Kentucky families. Earlier this month, we recognized the 75th anniversary of one of these landmarks, the Kentucky Lock and Dam. For three-quarters of a century, this massive structure has delivered electricity, commerce, and jobs to West Kentucky. I would like to take a moment to congratulate this community for brilliantly taking advantage of its geography to improve the quality of life for generations.

In October 1945, a crowd of roughly 20,000 gathered for a glimpse of the first U.S. President to ever visit Marshall County and the mammoth construction project he came to dedicate. Although President Truman's visit was only temporary, the Kentucky Lock and Dam's rural electrification marked a turning point that has lasted for decades. It began as plans drawn in a humble patch of dirt by local businessman Luther Draffen and engineers from the Tennessee Valley Authority. Luther envisioned a lock and dam system that, for the first time, would bring electricity to much of Marshall County and the Jackson Purchase region. He relentlessly pushed for the investment and construction of the project to improve flood control, enhance the flow of commercial traffic, and power the region's future.

Luther made some influential allies along the way, including Senator Alben Barkley, who began his political career a few miles down the road in Paducah. Barkley was elected Senate majority leader in 1937 and, with his new clout, secured the first appropriation for the Kentucky Lock and Dam's construction the next year. Today, the dam creates the largest water reservoir in the eastern United States.

In my career, I have had my own opportunities to deliver for the families who depend on the Kentucky Lock and Dam. As its waterway traffic increased, I led the authorization for the construction of a new and larger lock. Since then, I have directed over \$600 million to the project through the Appropriations Committee, investing in Kentucky's 20,000 maritime workers and their future. As work continues on the lock, I will always continue to support this project and the Kentuckians it serves.

Just up the river, we celebrated the ribbon cutting of a similar project at the Olmsted Locks and Dam in 2018. Over the course of three decades, the Olmsted became one of the largest civil works projects in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' history. Today, it sees more commercial traffic than any other in-

land waterway location within the United States. From its authorization through completion, I was working in the Senate to ensure the project received necessary funding for the families who depend on it.

So I am proud to join this community in marking the 75th anniversary of the Kentucky Lock and Dam and its transformative impact on this region. I look forward to the completion of the new lock project to continue its great benefits for years to come.

Bobbie Foust, a columnist for the Marshall County Tribune-Courier, attended the dedication of Kentucky Lock and Dam in 1945. She recently wrote an incredible article about its historic impact, and I ask unanimous consent the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Marshall County Tribune-Courier, Oct. 6, 2020]

KENTUCKY DAM BROUGHT PROSPERITY 75 YEARS AGO; PROMOTERS DREW PLAN IN DIRT AT A PLUM THICKET

(By Bobbie Foust)

It was October 10, 1945. The weather was sunny and warm. President Harry S. Truman was dedicating Kentucky Dam from a platform below that powerful engineering achievement.

The dam had been producing electricity for 13 months. The crowd was estimated at 20,000, and it was the only time a sitting president has visited Marshall County.

I was 11 years old, and I was there.

Saturday will mark the 75th anniversary of that dedication. It will pass with little fanfare. Yet it is impossible to understand the impact Kentucky Dam has had on western Kentucky unless you have experienced it.

Kentucky Dam literally pushed Marshall County and environs out of poverty. It was the brainchild of Calvert City businessman Luther Draffen and U.S. Sen. Alben Barkley of Paducah. Barkley later became vice president of the United States. Their unwavering work to have the dam built and located here is unmatched.

For those born after 1945, Kentucky Dam, Kentucky Lake and Kentucky Dam State Resort Park have just been here for their enjoyment. However, there's a powerful—at times poignant—backstory of how they became reality.

At a 1975 dinner, the late Murray State University Professor L.J. Hortin painted a vivid picture of Luther Draffen as the driving force behind Kentucky Dam: "In 1936, we met in an old plum thicket overlooking the Tennessee River and there was poverty all around us," Hortin said. "If anybody had predicted we'd be in this beautiful Calvert City Country Club now, I wouldn't have believed it."

During the plum thicket meeting, Tennessee Valley Authority engineers and Draffen drew plans of the dam in the dirt with a pointed stick for Senator Barkley and a bevy of congressmen.

Before the dam, Marshall County was a poor farming community. Thousands were leaving to work in factories in Detroit and Flint, Michigan, and chemical industries or steel mills in Akron and Cleveland, Ohio. Electric power didn't exist here. There were no electric lights, electric refrigerators or kitchen ranges, running water or indoor plumbing. Farm families lit their homes with kerosene lamps. In winter, families

heated their homes with wood-burning fireplaces or potbellied coal stoves. Neither television nor the internet existed though some families had battery-powered radios.

In 1933 Congress passed the Tennessee Valley Authority Act, the New Deal federal agency that built a series of 16 dams including Kentucky Dam. Kentucky Dam had three objectives—enhanced navigation, flood control, and hydroelectric power production. After operations at the dam began, it took another five years before rural electric cooperatives, created under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, extended electric power to farm communities.

The history of economic development in the lower Tennessee River Valley and construction of Kentucky between July 1, 1938 and Aug. 30, 1944 is a long series of events going back to the Civil War. Without Draffen's vision, financial investment, time and political prowess the dam might never have been built at the Gilbertsville townsite. Though he didn't do it alone, he was the driving force.

Draffen solicited and received help from a litany of heavy hitters of his era. Besides Barkley, there was Hortin, Paducah broadcaster Hecht Lackey, Congressmen Voris Gregory and Noble Gregory of Mayfield, Senators Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee and George Norris of Nebraska. Draffen also led the powerful Lower Tennessee Valley Association, made up of about 40 business leaders from western Kentucky, northwest Tennessee, southeast Missouri and southern Illinois. LTVA's single goal was to "bring prosperity to this region," known as "the Valley." Electrification was crucial if the Valley's people were to prosper.

Draffen wasn't the first person to envision damming the lower Tennessee River. Efforts to tame the river, especially for navigation and flood control, began as early as 1864. What Draffen understood was that electrifying "the Valley" was the only way to alleviate poverty. Building a hydroelectric power dam would achieve that goal. In 1928, Draffen made 48 trips to Louisville at his own expense to lobby Kentucky Utilities to provide electricity here. KU provided electricity to Paducah, but refused to extend its lines into rural communities saying, "there wasn't sufficient need."

Groundwork that eventually prompted Kentucky Dam's construction started June 5, 1920 when Congress authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a 10-year survey of the Tennessee River Valley. It was the most comprehensive study ever made of any river basin in the United States. In 1928, the Corps recommended a flood control, navigation and power dam at Aurora Landing in Marshall County. The recommendation prompted formation of Aurora Dam Clubs in Marshall, Calloway and Graves counties.

The project went to Congress on March 24, 1930, and on May 28, 1931, Southern Utilities Inc. was granted a temporary permit to build the dam. But on May 18, 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt created TVA. That changed the picture. TVA opposed Southern's plan, and the company's permit was allowed to expire.

Aurora Dam Clubs morphed into the LTVA with Warren Swann of Murray as president, Draffen, vice president and Hortin as secretary. In 1935, Congress authorized TVA to build dams for a nine-foot channel from Paducah to Knoxville, Tennessee. "It was key legislation," Draffen said in a 1973 interview. "Without that, there was doubt TVA would ever build a dam on the lower Tennessee River."

In March 1936, TVA rejected Aurora Landing and recommended Gilbertsville as the preferred site. Then began what Hortin

called “the most frustrating, most difficult problem of the entire effort.” TVA kept stalling and opposition from private interests arose. “TVA had moved in but wasn’t ready to build the dam,” Hortin said. “All the while the nation’s economic condition pressed hard on the people. There was hunger, people couldn’t get work, and the outlook was grim. TVA would say, ‘Someday we’ll build it.’ We wanted them to get it started. TVA was being called socialism, and a lot of unprintable things. But LTVA stayed out of that type rhetoric and petty politics. Our argument was pretty mercenary. We contended that TVA was building dams for other states, it was federal tax money being spent, and here we were at the heart of all this water, and our dam wasn’t being built!”

In January 1937, fate took a hand as nature demonstrated the need for a dam. Rain fell for 19 days. The Tennessee and Ohio rivers and their tributaries overflowed their banks. Multimillions of dollars were lost.

A crucial piece of legislation passed Congress on Feb. 16, 1938. Hortin received a telegram from Sen. Barkley reading: “Just retained, Gilbertsville, whole TVA appropriation.” That bill meant TVA’s appropriation wouldn’t be cut. Still TVA wouldn’t use the word, construction. Draffen was on a train bound for Washington to lobby for the bill when he received the news. He continued his journey and thanked each legislator who voted for it.

LTVA’s lobbying bore fruit on July 1, 1938 when Congress appropriated \$2,613 million for construction of the dam. Its total cost was \$116.2 million. “On that day the word construction was used for the first time,” Hortin said. “It was key; we had our dam!”

At the height of construction, 5,000 men from several states came to work on the dam. The economy boomed, and housing was needed for the influx of workers. TVA floated homes down the river to Gilbertsville from its worker village at Pickwick Dam and built a self-contained community with schools, administration offices, medical clinic and recreational facilities. That community, just south of old Gilbertsville, became known as “The Village.”

After the dam was completed, Draffen recruited Charles Hall to assist him in efforts to entice industry to locate in Calvert City. Hall wrote more than 1,000 letters touting the amenities Calvert City offered—cheap electricity, river, rail and highway transportation. Draffen and Hall reaped success in 1948 when the Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company (now Arkema) announced it would build a plant near Altona. It opened in July 1949. Pittsburgh Metallurgical Company (now Calvert City Metals & Alloys) opened in November 1949. Industrialization had begun.

Predictions that Calvert City’s population would balloon from less than 300 to 10,000 by 1960 didn’t happen. However, industrialization continued with National Carbide of Air Reduction (now Carbide Industries) opening in January 1953, followed by BFGoodrich Chemical Company (now Lubrizol) and West Lake Chemicals. American Aniline and Extract Company (now ESTRON) opened in 1954; Airco Chemical Company (which later became Air Products and Chemicals and is now Evonik), and General Aniline and Film Corporation (now Ashland) opened in 1956. Other spin off companies include Wacker, Cymetech and many support businesses.

A few industries Draffen and Hall courted didn’t locate at Calvert City. Hall said General Tire, now closed, opted for Mayfield. Then there was Great Lakes Carbon Corporation owned by George Skakel, father of Ethel Kennedy. In a 1980 interview, the late Grand Rivers Mayor John Henry O’Bryan, said Luther Draffen brought Skakel to Grand Rivers to buy land for a plant. Great Lakes Carbon

bought more than 1,200 acres a little northeast of Grand Rivers from TVA and three private landowners. But in a letter to Hall dated April 3, 1952, Skakel said he regretted “the company had reluctantly decided to abandon its development plans.” Skakel held out hope that Great Lakes Carbon might build the plant later. But on Oct. 3, 1955, Skakel and his wife, Ann, were killed when their plane crashed.

Probably the most significant impact electricity from Kentucky Dam made on Marshall County was a higher standard of living for its people. In 2015, earnings in all industries averaged nearly \$55,000 annually. Last year, travel and recreation—much of it related to Kentucky Lake created by the dam—added \$74 million to the county’s economy and Calvert City added 2.994 million in payroll taxes to county coffers.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit all news organizations and hit them hard at a time when they have rarely been so essential to the American people and our communities.

News organizations have had to severely trim their staffs, while coping, as we all have had to do, with the pandemic’s health threats and uncertainties. It is a great credit to our Fourth Estate that so many news organizations nonetheless have managed to produce such heroic work in meeting this vital challenge.

Most news outlets have had to transition to an online distribution model in distributing their reporting during this pandemic. These valiant efforts have included those by online-only news organizations such as “Vermont Digger,” in Vermont. The New York Times recently recognized the vital work of such Vermont news outlets as “Vermont Digger” and “Seven Days” in the face of these unprecedented challenges.

Vermont stands almost alone in the Nation in our State’s successful efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19. Much of that can be attributed to the bold steps taken by State and local communities and leaders at all levels, including Governor Phil Scott, to follow the science in promoting mask wearing and social distancing. Sensible and responsible leadership, and strong and steady reporting by Vermont’s news organizations, have produced “a high degree of social trust,” as the Washington Post has reported.

Recently “Vermont Digger” was recognized by the Local Independent Online News Association for its local coverage of COVID-19, and that recognition is richly deserved.

Vermonters know that in troubling times like these, we fare best when we make the difficult but important decisions to protect our families, our neighbors, and our communities. This pandemic continues to rage, but I am proud that my fellow Vermonters are once again leading the Nation in our efforts to conquer out this virus.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY EVERHART

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I would like to recognize Nancy Everhart on the occasion of her retirement from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Nancy Everhart has been a true Vermont leader in agriculture and conservation, dedicating her decades-long career to the protection of farmland and the viability of the farmers who rely on it. She retires with an extensive list of accomplishments. The passion she applies to her work has had a tremendous impact on the Vermont landscape, as well as our Nation’s agricultural future.

Nancy was a farmer first. As a strong pioneer of Vermont’s organic movement during the 1980s, she was among the first Vermonters to sell organic milk to her community. Her work and that of other like-minded farmers in Vermont were catalysts in the early organic movement that ultimately led me to introduce the Organic Food Production Act as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Enacted as part of the 1990 farm bill, that bill created the first-ever standards and label for what is now a \$50 billion industry. Even as she became a national leader in conservation, Nancy has still maintained a small, diversified, organic farm at her home in Marshfield, VT. Her personal experiences as a farmer have afforded her a unique perspective and credibility to bring to each phase of her career.

As the conservation director for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Nancy has led or contributed directly to the conservation of more than 77,000 acres across nearly 500 parcels of Vermont farmland. These projects have helped to keep Vermont farms viable by allowing farm owners to access substantial capital and benefit from their most valuable asset, their land. Those benefits, however, do not stop at the fence line. Nancy knows that investments in preserving working landscapes benefit the rural communities that surround them and contribute greatly to the tourist and outdoor economies of rural States like Vermont. They can be a bridge to the next generation, often providing young and beginning farmers the opportunity to overcome their biggest hurdle: accessing affordable farmland to start and grow their enterprise. When that succession of stewardship is broken and working lands fall out of production, it can exact an immeasurable price from the community.

Nancy’s decades of work have exemplified and brought home to Vermont exactly the outcomes that I envisioned when I worked to establish the Federal role for farmland protection in the 1990 and 1996 farm bills. Since that time, Nancy has drawn on her vast experience to provide counsel on how to expand that role and continually improve farmland conservation provisions, including most recently in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program—ACEP—provisions of the 2018 farm