

now Maine's preeminent purveyor of wild blueberries, as well as the top selling brand of frozen fruit in the United States.

Each year, Wyman's harvests and freezes tens of millions of pounds of Maine blueberries. In addition to owning over 30,000 acres of land in Maine, Wyman's partners with hundreds of Maine blueberry farms to process their products and export them around the country and around the globe. Four generations later, Wyman's continues to be a leader in cultivating the wild blueberry for which Maine is famous, providing economic vitality for the Downeast region and high-quality jobs across the State.

Wyman's is also at the cutting edge of agricultural research. Recently, the business has partnered with the University of Maine to study how harsh weather patterns such as early frosts and droughts impact growth, gaining valuable insights into what can be done to boost productivity for all in the industry.

While Wyman's is certainly a generational affair for the Wyman family, it is wonderful to see how the business has also become generational for so many within the community. More than a third of Wyman's employees have tenures lasting over a decade, and many families continue to return to work at the blueberry harvest over several generations. Wyman's deep roots and work in the field of agricultural sustainability show that the company continues to live up to its values of enhancing health. I am very proud to join them in celebrating their 150 years of operation.

2024 ECLIPSE

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, the eclipse was a momentous occasion for Vermont, bringing more than 160,000 people to our State. I am especially thankful to our emergency personnel, law enforcement, and small business owners who handled the busy weekend with grace. Everyone viewing "totality" in the Green Mountain State, whether they were locals or visiting for the first time, experienced something that was pretty special: the beauty of our State.

Steven Pappas, publisher and executive editor of the Times Argus and Rutland Herald, summarized the celestial spectacle in his editorial titled "Overshadowed" and published April 9. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Times Argus/Rutland Herald]

OVERSHADOWED

(By Steven Pappas)

It lived up to the hype.

While there are those individuals who went out of their way to voice certain disappointment, the vast majority of Vermonters and humanity who witnessed Monday's total solar eclipse seem to agree the rare astronomical union was worth waiting for.

It took patience for it to arrive, but the few minutes of the totality in Vermont drew gasps and cheers heard in crowds. There were many hugs, and more than a few tears of joy. It had a profound effect.

On Tuesday, eyewitnesses were overjoyed to share their photos and stories about the eclipse. And while we all—more or less, thanks to a clear, sunny day in the Green Mountain State—saw the same thing, we each brought a piece of ourselves to the moment.

Save a few naysayers, the eclipse united us briefly. The day had the feel of a holiday, with picnics and barbecues; laughter and anticipation. Folks were going out of their way to share the moment with others who might not be in the path of totality.

It has also been impressive, in hearing the various debriefings and anecdotes, just how much one thought overshadowed all others: We needed that common space.

Whether you were standing alone, gazing skyward; or you were crammed together on the State House steps or along the Burlington waterfront, the unity above transcended all else.

The moment reminded us of a series of editorials we wrote back in 2020, at a time when we all came together under less joyous circumstances: the COVID-19 pandemic.

At that time, we wrote about how fear and tragedy were uniting us because the coronavirus did not distinguish between us. In those early days, if you will recall, it felt as though if you "got COVID" it was akin to a potential death sentence. Over time, and vaccines, those fears abated somewhat, but we still followed the numbers and our concern over public health was kept going for months—and in certain circumstances—years.

Monday's eclipse, which had been calculated down to the minute (and those mathematical predictions were absolutely spot on), provided the expected darkness (in dramatic effect) but it continued out of totality, and the light returned. As we felt the warm sun on our faces once again, there was hope and jubilation. We knew it was coming, but it was still a bit unexpected.

Individuals with hours of waiting in vehicles ahead of them were—for a brief period of time—giddy over the show in the sky. They did not care much about the traffic jam awaiting. It stripped us of worry.

Other parts of the country had cloud cover. Across Vermont, though, we got (at least according to most scientific experts) the best of the show. It was unobstructed, and it shone brightly into our hearts.

The moon's shadow fell across all stripes of people. Your station in life did not matter; nor did your political leanings; nor did your place along the gender spectrum; nor was your race a factor in what happened in the sky. We were all citizens of the universe; and we were became witnesses of history, plain and simple.

So, yeah, we needed that.

Because as soon as the eclipse headed northeast to northern New Hampshire, Maine and the Canadian Maritimes, and then off the North American continent, the news cycle returned with its four horsemen. The bickering and sniping was right there waiting. The hardships and anxiety crept back onto the scene. Hate had just been hiding in the shadow.

The moment passed.

What our editorial board is hoping for now is that the enthusiasm, and the moment we felt as that rare sight united us, does not lose all of its momentum. We hope that as most of us look fondly back on eclipse day, the emotion of being awestruck alongside family, friends, neighbors and strangers proves to have a lasting place in our laugh-

ter, on how we carry ourselves, and well beyond (and through) the rigors of life that are already hard enough.

In describing their eclipse day on Tuesday, it was striking how many individuals described themselves as feeling "overwhelmed" by this smallest change—light and darkness well out of place in a normal day. Others suggested that they had been at a loss for words as the world around them fell into a shadow, as if a hush were carried with it. They struggle, as we do, for the best descriptor of the oddity.

But when those dark glasses could come off, and we all took in the same world we had always known, just bathed in the brightest, natural darkness we could probably ever know, we felt it—we did not just see it. It affected us at a cellular level, a spiritual level, and it inspired awe.

We all shared one line of thinking: "Can you imagine if you didn't know what this was? Can you imagine what those people seeing it must have thought? Can you imagine their fear?"

In mere moments, the sun returned to shining brightly, resuming its place in our predictable lives, and we started to forget that shared concern for the legion of witnesses long dead.

It should not always take a pandemic nor an eclipse to allow us an opportunity to measure the magnitude of our humanity. Simply, it should take the sun coming up every morning to inspire us to create our own awe, and inspire ourselves and the others around us to share kindness and commonality.

Apparently, as we witnessed, it happens naturally.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO BEAU MCCAUSTLAIN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Beau McCaustlain, the 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

As a television production teacher at De Queen High School for the past 3 years, Beau has become known for his innovative and engaging teaching practices. He puts students above all else, encourages outside-the-box thinking, and prepares them for future careers through connections with real world opportunities in and around their community.

Beau's love for education is evident in his involvement. He has gone the extra mile by establishing partnerships with a local radio station and the Arkansas Broadcasters Association to give students hands-on work that introduces them to the field and different possibilities it offers. This has led many of his students to paid internships, freelance opportunities, and State and national recognition for their work.

His contributions extend beyond the classroom. Beau has also served as a head baseball coach, assistant football coach, and photojournalist at television stations around the State. He also is certified to teach social studies for grades 7 through 12 and holds a technical permit for television broadcasting.

In addition to receiving a bachelor's degree in communications from the

University of Central Arkansas, Beau has a master's degree in educational leadership and administration from Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia.

Arkansas is fortunate to have an exceptional, selfless leader like Beau representing the best of many great teachers in our State and serving as a role model to new educators. His passion and commitment are an excellent example for others to follow.

Beau demonstrates what it means to truly go above and beyond for his students. I congratulate him for this achievement and am excited to see the positive impact he will continue making throughout his time as Arkansas Teacher of the Year. I am confident his efforts will be an inspiration in the classroom and beyond for generations to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL RICHARD R. NEELY

● Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the remarkable career of Maj. Gen. Richard R. Neely, a 40-year servicemember of the Illinois Army National Guard who will retire on May 31, 2024. Major General Neely served as the 40th adjutant general of the State of Illinois and was the director of the Illinois Department of Military Affairs.

As the adjutant general, Major General Neely oversaw the Federal overseas deployments of 4,800 soldiers and airmen to 21 countries around the world and 5,600 servicemembers on State Active Duty exceeding 500,000 duty days combined. Major General Neely served as the adjutant general since February 2019. Beginning in 2020, Major General Neely directed the largest and longest domestic operations activation in Illinois National Guard history in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Illinois National Guard soldiers and airmen assisted with 250,000 COVID-19 tests, delivered 8 million masks, administered nearly 2 million vaccines throughout the State among many other support missions. Major General Neely further oversaw the Illinois National Guard's State Partnership Program with Poland. During one mission, the Illinois National Guard servicemembers provided direct training support to Poland's newly formed territorial defense force in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Due to Major General Neely's exceptional efforts, he was awarded the Polish Commanders Cross with Silver Star Order of Merit from the President of Poland in 2022. Throughout his entire career, Major General Neely led by example, providing a steady hand through some of the most tumultuous times in the history of our State and our Nation. The Illinois National Guard is better because of General Neely's service.

Major General Neely was also the Nation's first cyberspace officer to serve as an adjutant general and was a nationwide leader in cyber security. He

was the senior cyber adviser to the Chief and Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau, national lead for implementation of the Nationwide Integration of Time Resiliency for Operations (NITRO) program, vice chair of the National Guard Bureau's Cyber General Officer Advisory Council, chair of the Army National Guard's Information (Cyber) Readiness Advisory Council, and the senior adviser for Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure for U.S. Northern Command's Dual Status Commanders Course.

Major General Neely's leadership, determination, and commitment have no doubt changed lives and helped to make our country safer. As his Air Force career ends, may he continue to be "Always Ready, Always There!" and forever take pride in knowing that his exemplary efforts and unwavering professionalism contributed greatly to the success of the Air Force and the National Guard mission.●

RECOGNIZING THE COTTAGE

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize The Cottage of Denison, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In January 2020, mother and daughter duo Cindy and Taylor Borkowski purchased the Your Treasure Chest home decor store from longtime owners Deb and Jeff Frehse. After purchasing Your Treasure Chest, the Borkowski's changed the name to The Cottage and continued selling home decor on Broadway in Denison. When Cindy and Taylor started The Cottage, they went to different craft shows and vendor fairs to get the latest home decor items. While Cindy and Taylor started as the only two employees, their store has since grown to employ two additional part-time employees. On April 1, 2024, The Cottage announced that they would be moving down the street to a new location in Denison, with a ribbon cutting planned in early May 2024.

The Cottage maintains an active Facebook account with videos and pictures of new items in stock, events at the store, and updates on promotions and sales. In addition to selling home decor, Cindy and Taylor Borkowski offer a selection of children and baby, seasonal, and devotional items. Due to their hard work, The Cottage celebrated its fourth business anniversary in 2024.

The Cottage is well recognized for its contributions to the Crawford County economy. In 2022 and 2023, the Bulletin-Review named The Cottage as the Best Boutique in Crawford County. In 2022, The Cottage won the Innovators Award from the Chamber and Development Council of Crawford County. Cindy and Taylor are also involved in the Denison

and Crawford County communities. In 2023, Taylor was named the Businesswoman of the Year by the Chamber and Development Council of Crawford County. Taylor also serves as organizer of Hot Summer Nights in Denison, a series of summer events that include live music, food trucks, activities for kids, and a fundraiser. In 2024, proceeds from the Hot Summer Nights fundraiser will go to Washington Park.

The Cottage's commitment to providing quality home decor in Denison is clear. I want to congratulate Cindy and Taylor Borkowski and the entire team at The Cottage for their continued dedication to the Crawford County community. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

REMEMBERING HAWKEYE MOLDING

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week it is my privilege to recognize Hawkeye Molding of Roland, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week during National Small Business Week.

In 1979, Bob Rusell and Mike Lawrence founded Hawkeye Molding in Albia as a plastic injection product manufacturer. Bob later became the sole owner of Hawkeye Molding and was critical to the company's growth and success. In 2007, he passed away, leaving behind a legacy of hard work, dedication to the community, and manufacturing excellence. In 2008, Hawkeye Molding was purchased by an LED lighting manufacturer, Innovative Lighting, as an addition to their plastics division based in Roland. Innovative Lighting owners Jerry and Janet Handsaker continued to operate the Albia location as Hawkeye Molding, with their Roland plastic manufacturing facility operating under the Innovative Lighting name.

In April 2021, the Handsakers sold Innovative Lighting's plastic division to Ryan Gruhn and Lana Leander, a husband-and-wife team. The Handsakers wanted the new owners of Hawkeye Molding to keep the company's roots in Iowa. Ryan and Lana purchased both plastic facilities from the Handsakers and included the Roland plastic facility under the Hawkeye Molding name.

Today, Hawkeye Molding maintains a 58,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, warehouse, and company headquarters in Roland. It has 38 horizontal injection molding machines and two 20-ton vertical injection molding machines to serve the molding needs of the agriculture, appliance, industrial, and lighting industries. The team also provides molding services for home and office furniture and manufacturing parts. The International Organization for Standardization certified Hawkeye