

executed more than 38,000 contracts totaling more than \$8 billion and providing critical and timely support to our combat forces.

Serving as the Program Executive Officer for Ammunition, he managed 12 Army ammunition plants and depots and delivered more than 300 different categories of ammunition totaling \$4 billion, providing critical capabilities to every service. As the Deputy Program Executive Officer for Aviation, he effectively managed the Army's five major aviation programs totaling more than \$14 billion. His strategic initiatives directly impacted the modernization of over 80 percent of the Army's aviation fleet.

Following his distinguished military career, Lieutenant General Phillips continued to impact our national defense strategy through his senior roles in the defense industrial base, notably at the Boeing Company in Huntsville, AL. There, he was responsible for delivering combat capabilities to the military, including AH-64 Apache, CH-47 Chinook, Long Range Precision Fires, Future Vertical Lift Unmanned Aerial Systems, and support across a broad array of Special Operations Aircraft.

His service to our country has been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including Army Acquisition Commander of the Year, induction into the Defense Acquisition University Hall of Fame, the "Federal 100" award, and an Honorary Doctorate at Middle Tennessee State University, underscoring his vast influence on our national defense.

Therefore, on behalf of the people of the great State of Alabama and our Nation, I extend our deepest appreciation to Lieutenant General William "Bill" N. Phillips for his dedicated service and enduring contributions to our Nation's safety and security.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE VETERANS CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the Veterans Celebration Committee, which has been together since 1999 to honor and support veterans throughout northwest Louisiana.

Every year, the Veterans Celebration Committee puts on a veterans honor ceremony in Shreveport. This past year, they held a program at the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium on Veterans Day. At that event, they honored specific veterans who make enormous contributions to their country and community. One such veteran was Mr. Sam Archie Mattox, who turned 104 years old last September. He served in the 642nd Company Army Field Organization and in Australia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Japan for 26 months during World War II. He was awarded two Bronze Stars, among other medals, and worked as a brick mason until he was 92 years old.

The Veterans Celebration Committee also honored veterans who served in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and in other theaters and now support churches, businesses, nonprofit groups, and other veterans in northwest Louisiana. One overcame homelessness to help homeless veterans in Shreveport. Another organizes fundraising events for Toys for Tots. Yet another serves as the assistant medical director for Overton Brooks VA Medical Center. The Veterans Celebration Committee ensures that northwest Louisiana knows about their accomplishments and service to the community, by publicly honoring them.

They also hold a veterans parade on the day after the veterans honor ceremony to give the community another opportunity to show their love for veterans. This year's parade will be the 13th to take place. Moreover, they hold an annual event close to Memorial Day that supports the family members of veterans and honors those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

When the Veterans Celebration Committee started its work in 1999, one of its cofounders was retired Air Force Colonel Steve dePryssler, who is the only known American to serve in World War II, Korea, French Indo-China, and Vietnam. He helped veterans obtain disability benefits, hosted annual POW-Purple Heart veteran's luncheons, established the Northwest Louisiana Veterans Home Trust Fund, and volunteered for 47 years at the Barksdale AFB retiree center, without pay. He passed away in 2020 at the age of 101, and every year, the committee gives an award in his name for outstanding service to veterans.

Today, the Veterans Celebration Committee carries forward the legacy of Colonel dePryssler to support and honor veterans in northwest Louisiana. I want to specifically thank Caddo Parish Commissioner Ken Epperson, Sr., for chairing the committee, and everyone who supports their efforts, including American Legion and VFW posts, Active and Reserve military units, Barksdale Air Force Base, and elected officials throughout the region. Thanks to them, our veterans are not forgotten and never will be. •

RECOGNIZING BROWN'S SHOE FIT CO.

• 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 Brown's Shoe Fit Co. of Mt. Pleasant, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 1952, Brown's Shoe Fit Co. opened its doors right off the Mt. Pleasant town square before Kurt Moon, a loyal employee since 1986, became a managing partner in 2000 and purchased a storefront in the heart of Main Street.

Kurt renovated the building and expanded the shop to offer an extensive selection of shoe sizes and styles for everyone from farmers to runners. Brown's Shoe Store Co. offers complete sit-and-fit shoe services, specifically training its staff to cater to every client's lifestyle and has become a staple in the Mt. Pleasant community.

After managing Brown's Shoe Fit for over 30 years, Kurt looked to his daughter Tara Mullin to take over the Mt. Pleasant store. Tara trained under her father and other members of the company, and in 2020, she became a managing partner. In addition to running the shop's daily operations, Tara is a member of both the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber and the chamber board. She has also volunteered on the Mt. Pleasant July 4 planning committee.

Throughout the company's history, Mt. Pleasant has consistently voted Brown's Shoe Fit Co. as their favorite shoe store. In 2018 and 2023, Brown's Shoe Fit Co. was named a Mt. Pleasant Small Business of the Year finalist. Similar to the previous storefront owner, Adventure Land Video, Brown's Shoe Fit Co. sells community event tickets to commemorate the storefront's history and foster community engagement. Tara and the team have dubbed the shop the "Ticket Master of Mt. Pleasant." This has helped unite the community and honor the history of the place they have called home for nearly 25 years. This year, Brown's Shoe Fit is celebrating its 72nd business anniversary.

Brown's Shoe Fit Co.'s commitment to providing the Mt. Pleasant community with high-quality shoes is apparent. I want to thank Kurt, Tara, and the entire team at Brown's Shoe Fit Co. for their continued dedication to Henry County, and I look forward to witnessing their continued development and success in Iowa. •

RECOGNIZING GREAT DAY CAFE

• 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 Great Day Cafe of Keosauqua, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 2015, Jennie Lee opened Great Day Cafe on Main Street which provides the Keosauqua community with specialty coffee, homemade breakfast, lunch, and Iowa comfort foods such as scratch fudge, biscuits and gravy, and even Dr. Gary Lee's homemade popcorn.

Their stellar service and high-quality food have made Great Day Cafe a staple in Van Buren County and beyond. Great Day Cafe is a community hub and has become the spot for veterans to congregate and discuss opportunities. Each month, the Van Buren County Veterans Affairs office hosts a meeting at the cafe where speakers come

with information to share. Those who attend get to enjoy a warm home-cooked meal and breakfast discounts from Jennie and her team.

Jennie is a member of the Villages of Van Buren County, an economic development group that works to improve the quality of life for all county residents. Through Great Day Cafe, Jennie frequently donates food to local schools and church initiatives to help those in need. From preparing and delivering homemade meals to folks in the community, Jennie plays an active role in Van Buren County. In 2023, Great Day Cafe earned a Northern Dammy award from Radio Keokuk for serving the best breakfast in Henry, Jefferson, and Van Buren Counties. This year, Great Day Cafe is celebrating its ninth business anniversary.

Great Day Cafe's commitment to the Keosauqua community is touching. I want to congratulate Jennie and the entire team at Great Day Cafe for their continued dedication, and I look forward to watching this cafe continue to foster community ties and expand their impact in Iowa and beyond.●

RECOGNIZING JUNIPER & OLIVE CO.

● 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 Juniper & Olive Co. of Jewell, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Juniper & Olive Co. is a full-service bistro and bar that stands out for its interior design and commitment to local sustainability. After graduating from my alma mater, Iowa State University, Cyndi honed her marketing and mixology skills in New York City and Texas, where she gained diverse experiences that would later shape her vision for her own bistro. In 2020, Cyndi returned to her home State of Iowa and later opened Juniper & Olive Co. named after the classic cocktail and two dogs she rescued from the local shelter.

Juniper & Olive Co. is located on Jewell's historic lot No.1, which was established in 1881. The building, once a 1920s speakeasy, adds to the historical charm that Cyndi embraced in her restaurant's design, which is known for its vintage, eclectic sophistication. Juniper & Olive Co. serves small plates featuring locally sourced and produced items, including everything from cheese boards to desserts and chicken salad. The team has a passion for specialty cocktails, including martinis and especially Cyndi's secret Bloody Mary blend, which is a customer favorite. In 2023, Cyndi expanded the business by opening a bridal boutique, where brides can try on dresses and select the one for their special day.

From the start, Juniper & Olive Co. has been a community-driven endeavor.

Cyndi collaborated with a childhood neighbor and classmate to build the restaurant's bar. A group of her former teachers and coaches helped paint the restaurant's interior. Friends from all over the community contributed to the design and renovations, and they even helped clean the dishes during Juniper & Olive Co.'s soft opening. Today, the company has nine full-time employees who dedicate themselves to supporting the Jewell community, making Juniper & Olive Co. not only a dining destination but a place for community, family, and fun.

I want to congratulate Cyndi and the entire team at Juniper and Olive Co. for their hard work and passion that adds to Hamilton County's community charm. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING PODIUM INK

● 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 Podium Ink of Mount Ayr, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

After attending Mount Ayr High School, hometown friends Brad Elliott and Burton Murphy graduated from Iowa State University and Northwest Missouri State respectively. They both returned to Mount Ayr doing freelance graphic design. What began as a fun hobby for both soon turned into a serious endeavor when a former Mount Ayr High School alum asked them to create marketing and signage materials for NASCAR star Kevin Harvick. In 2006, after completing the project, Brad and Burton transformed their shared dream into Podium Ink, a business that centers around creativity and imagination.

Today, Podium Ink specializes in designing a wide variety of products and services, including vehicle wraps, signs, banners, and marketing materials. The company has work featured across the globe from local college bus fleets to projects in Australia. In 2012, their work was featured on the hit television show "Duck Dynasty." Brad and Burton bought a limousine in Kansas City, gave it a camo wrap, added horns, and before they knew it, NASCAR driver Clint Bowyer was driving the car on national TV. The project generated significant attention for both Podium Ink and the Mount Ayr community. In addition, Podium Ink worked on a zebra print cargo van for Blake Shelton's rescue ranch, which he once drove while wearing a chicken suit. Podium Ink employs seven full-time and four part-time community residents.

Podium Ink is deeply involved in Mount Ayr and Ringgold County. Brad and Burton actively support sports teams at schools in Mount Ayr and Diagonal. Beyond being a dad and small

business owner, Brad is in his 17th year as Mount Ayr's track coach; he served on city council for two 4-year terms and currently serves on the Iowa Workforce Development Board. In 2014, Northwest Missouri State recognized Brad with the Young Alumni Award for his contributions beyond the college. The team at Podium Ink has completed projects for small businesses, community groups, and many local initiatives. Podium Ink received the Iowa Farm Bureau's Renew Rural Iowa Entrepreneur Award in 2020, honoring their global business presence and unwavering commitment to positively impact the Mount Ayr community.

Podium Ink's resolve to delivering high-quality graphic design products and services in Iowa is evident. I want to congratulate Brad, Burton, their families, and the entire team at Podium Ink for their continued devotion to the Mount Ayr community. I am eager to watch their continued progress and achievements in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING TOOTSIE'S ICE CREAM & MORE

● 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 Tootsie's Ice Cream & More of Vinton, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

After more than 50 years of serving the Vinton community, Leon's Malt Shop was seeking a new owner. In 2012, Iowa native Corey Seibert and his family took a leap of faith and bought the ice cream shop and changed the name to Tootsie's Ice Cream & More in honor of Corey's mother.

As a building engineer for more than 20 years, Corey understood the value of location. He continued to purchase shops in prime locations such as Center Point and La Porte City, expanding his business.

Today, Tootsie's Ice Cream & More offers a wide variety of food options in addition to their signature ice cream flavors. The shop also serves fish, tenderloin sandwiches, and broasted chicken. At its core, Tootsie's Ice Cream is a family business. Corey oversees business operations, while his wife Teresa and daughter Michelle manage and operate the shop. Their son Michael is also a manager. The family strives to provide a memorable experience for every guest, giving out a Tootsie Roll with every purchase. Whether you are in the mood for something sweet or savory, Tootsie's Ice Cream & More has you covered. They have over 20 employees and operate year-round in Vinton and La Porte City.

The shop collaborates with the Vinton Library to reward any child participating in the Summer Reading Program with a free ice cream cone or small fry. In addition, Tootsie's ran a