

means to be a leader in providing exceptional post-permanency services. I cannot imagine a more qualified or more deserving individual to receive this year's Congressional Angel in Adoption Award on behalf of Vermont.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 2025 INDUCTEES OF THE ARKANSAS BROADCASTERS HALL OF FAME

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions of five distinguished Arkansans who have been selected for induction into the Arkansas Broadcasters Association—ABA—Hall of Fame. These individuals exemplify the highest standards of commitment and leadership across their industry, and their trusted voices have shaped the media landscape within the Natural State.

This year's inductees have made tremendous contributions to broadcasting that enriched countless communities. Former chief meteorologist at KTHV in Little Rock Ed Buckner's reliable forecasts and calming presence guided Arkansans through severe weather and everyday conditions alike. The owner of Bunyard Media Group and KDQN in DeQueen, Jay Bunyard's entrepreneurial spirit and passion for local radio have engaged communities across southwest Arkansas. A veteran broadcaster from Clinton, Sid King's decades-long career has informed, entertained and served generations of Arkansans. Bob Knight, former ABA president and KTLO Radio station head, pioneered local radio and news coverage in Mountain Home while also leading advocacy efforts that strengthened the industry statewide. Tom Nichols, the owner and operator of KVRE Radio in Hot Springs Village, dedicated his professional life to community-focused programming beginning in 1959 and continuing to serve listeners today.

These inductees reflect the diversity and excellence of Arkansas broadcasting, from television to radio and large markets to smalltown audiences. Their careers are defined not only by professional achievement but by a deep commitment to public service and community engagement.

I extend my sincere congratulations to each inductee and share our gratitude to their families, friends, and colleagues who help them tell the stories that have informed, educated, and connected with viewers and listeners over decades. Arkansans have been well served by their professionalism and skill.●

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MERCY HOSPITAL IN ROGERS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate 75 years of dedicated

service to the people of northwest Arkansas by Mercy Hospital in my hometown of Rogers. For three-quarters of a century, Mercy Hospital has been a community pillar while providing high-quality care, compassion, and hope to countless families throughout the region.

Founded in 1950 as Rogers Memorial Hospital, this institution quickly grew from a small local facility into a regional leader in healthcare. Since then, it has remained committed to meeting the evolving needs of residents amid the area's drastic transformation, from joining the Sisters of Mercy Health System in 1995, to opening a modern facility in 2008 and now completing a \$247 million expansion featuring a seven-story medical tower. Mercy Hospital has consistently advanced the standard of care and strengthened access for individuals and families.

At the heart of Mercy Hospital's success are the physicians, nurses, staff, and volunteers whose dedication and compassion truly make a difference every day. Their work has touched countless lives, including my own when I experienced a medical emergency that required immediate, complex surgery. I am forever grateful for the exceptional and empathetic care I received and that I know numerous other families, neighbors, and loved ones also depend on.

Mercy Hospital has long extended its mission beyond clinical care, championing community health across northwest Arkansas. Through outreach programs, health education efforts, and strategic partnerships with local organizations, Mercy has worked tirelessly to ensure Arkansans have access to the tools and support they need to lead healthier lives. Its commitment to serving vulnerable populations and extending the reach of vital health information and support helps underpin the fabric of the region.

On this 75th anniversary, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the entire Mercy team. Thank you for your decades of service, and may the next 75 years be marked by continued growth, innovation, and fidelity that saves lives and improves health outcomes.●

TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL WILLIAM "BILLY" BYRD

• Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, as our Nation and its allies mark the 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day that formally ended World War II, it is with profound respect that I call attention to U.S. Marine Corps Corporal William "Billy" Byrd of Richland, MS, an American hero whose bravery at Iwo Jima exemplifies the highest ideals of American valor.

As a young rifleman in one of World War II's fiercest battles, Billy Byrd showed remarkable courage and resilience. Landing among the first waves on Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945, 18-year-old Billy and his fellow marines faced a determined enemy in what was

expected to be a short campaign. Instead, it became a grueling 36-day struggle, marked by staggering losses.

Despite the overwhelming odds and the constant threat of death, Billy and his fellow marines fought with unwavering courage, inching forward under fire. The capture of Mount Suribachi, immortalized in the iconic photograph of the flag raising, became a lasting symbol of hope amid the carnage.

Even after enduring the horrors of Iwo Jima and the loss of many comrades, Billy answered the call again, volunteering for service in the Korean war. His commitment speaks volumes about his character and devotion to our country.

Marine Corps veteran Billy Byrd, who will celebrate his 100th birthday on September 17, stands as a living testament to the strength, courage, and selflessness of the American fighting spirit. He represents the best of Mississippi and the best of America.

Like so many families in our great country, Billy's service was borne out of a fierce sense of patriotism. His father served in the Army in WWI, and all five Byrd brothers served in the military.

The anniversary of the formal end of the Second World War is a touching reminder of the hard-fought peace secured by brave Americans like Billy Byrd. And the legacy of their sacrifice endures in the freedoms that we enjoy today.

So it is more than appropriate that fellow veterans, family, friends, and others will celebrate Billy Byrd's 100th birthday on September 17 and honor his extraordinary life and service. While his beloved wife Louise is no longer with us, Billy's daughter Kristen will be there to help spread his story, which reminds us of the true cost of freedom and the lasting debt we owe to all who serve.

On behalf of the people of Mississippi, my Senate colleagues, and the entire Nation, I join in wishing Mr. Byrd a very happy 100th birthday. May his legacy continue to inspire generations with honor, courage, and unwavering dedication.

Let us all strive to live lives worthy of the sacrifices he and so many others made to protect our freedom.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHEYENNE CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

• Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, as our Nation gets closer to the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, it is essential that we acknowledge those who are playing a crucial role in the planning of this monumental celebration and to thank those who have helped guide us to this point. I am certainly looking forward to it, as I have very fond memories of our 200th anniversary in 1976 and believe the celebration next year will be an incredible showcase of our Nation's

history and a tremendous spectacle for all to remember.

The list of those who have made contributions to our Nation over the past 250 years is practically endless, but today I wanted to take a moment to thank the Daughters of the American Revolution for the work they have done to preserve our history and to perpetuate the memory of the men and women who have fought and made contributions to achieve and maintain freedom. Since its founding more than 135 years ago, the efforts of DAR and its local chapters have devoted immeasurable time and resources to aid our military dating back to the Spanish-American War, with significant contributions made during both World War I and World War II.

Today, local chapters across our Nation continue to serve our communities by promoting and fostering civic engagement and offering opportunities to both promote and preserve our collective history. This year, my hometown chapter in Cheyenne, WY, is going to be celebrating their 125th anniversary, and I couldn't be more proud of this achievement and the work they have done.

Founded just 10 years after Wyoming statehood, the Cheyenne chapter has worked in conjunction with the national organization and been dedicated to historic preservation, education, and patriotism. Their work continues today. The Cheyenne chapter continues to remain active by supporting both those currently serving in our military and our many veterans in Wyoming. Their charitable efforts are felt in our local communities where they have made a positive impact and left a lasting impression. These include historic preservation awards, scholarships, and the recognition of local residents who have made positive contributions to their community through the spirit of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

I want to congratulate the members of the Cheyenne Chapter on the momentous occasion of their 125th anniversary and thank them for all they do. I join everyone in Wyoming in saying how proud we are of them and look forward to the many wonderful things they have in store for next year's 250th anniversary celebration.●

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS B. HAGEN

● Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I, along with my colleague Senator JOHN FETTERMAN, rise today to recognize Pennsylvania's own Thomas B. Hagen, a true American patriot and public servant on his 90th birthday.

Thomas B. Hagen has been a business and civic leader for more than 60 years. He is chairman and a former CEO of the Fortune 500 listed Erie Insurance Group and also chairman of Custom Engineering Co. Mr. Hagen served as the first secretary of the department of community and economic development

in the administration of Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge. He was cofounder and past chairman of Team Pennsylvania Foundation and a past chairman of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry. Mr. Hagen continues to make significant philanthropic contributions in local, statewide, and national nonprofit organizations, historic property restoration efforts, and economic development initiatives; he has left a particularly indelible mark on his hometown of Erie, PA.

Mr. Hagen funded the Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Transformational Philanthropy at the Erie Community Foundation, the first of its kind for philanthropy in Greater Erie; the restoration of the historic main building at the beloved Erie Zoo; the Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Community Outreach, Research, and Evaluation at Penn State Behrend Campus; and the Erie County Historical Society. Mr. Hagen has invested in the revitalization of Erie through Erie Restorations, LLC and the historic preservation trust that he founded and chairs. A trustee of American Ancestors in Boston and a recipient of Preservation Pennsylvania's Otto Haas Award, he has led the restoration of over 30 houses in the Federal West Sixth Street Historic District with plans to preserve and maintain a total of more than 40 buildings as part of this initiative.

In addition to his philanthropic service, Thomas B. Hagen served his Nation for nearly three decades, first enlisting in the Inactive Naval Reserve at Pittsburgh, PA, on June 18, 1957, in the special enlisted rate of officer candidate seaman apprentice. Soon after graduation from The Ohio State University, he was called to Active Duty for 16 weeks' duty under instruction in Class 34 at the Navy Officer Candidate School, Newport, RI.

He graduated from officer candidate school and commissioned an ensign, Supply Corps, on November 1, 1957. He was sworn in by revered maternal grandfather, retired Commander Frank J. Bailey, who presented him with his naval officer sword acquired upon his commissioning in 1909.

Mr. Hagen graduated from Navy Supply Corps School in Athens, GA, on May 29, 1958; after qualifying for independent duty he was ordered to the Atlantic Fleet Destroyer, USS *Harwood* DDE 861, homeported Newport, RI, as the sole supply and disbursing officer and one of four department heads.

Mr. Hagen reported on board *Harwood* in June 1958 at the Boston Navy Yard. The *Harwood* soon became one of eight destroyers in Destroyer Squadron 24 that was assigned to Task Group Bravo, one of two ready anti-submarine warfare groups patrolling the North Atlantic to detect Soviet submarines during the Cold War. Task Group Bravo would switch off with Task Group Alpha out of Norfolk, VA. Task Group Bravo consisted of Destroyer Squadron 24 and the aircraft carrier USS *Wasp*

CV18 homeported at Quonset Point Rhode Island. During this period, the task group visited Bermuda, Norfolk during NATO exercises, and a mid-shipman cruise to Quebec City, Canada. He was promoted to lieutenant junior grade on May 1, 1959, while on board *Harwood*.

In late January 1960, Mr. Hagen was transferred to the Naval Supply Depot, Newport, RI, as fleet liaison officer and issue control officer. This duty included being liaison officer to the British warship, HMS *Shoulton*.

On October 2, 1960, he was released from Active Duty and returned to Erie, PA, where he affiliated with the Naval Reserve Training Center. Attached to a Ready Reserve billet with the mobilization team unit, he performed 2 weeks Active-Duty training for the next few years at Philadelphia Navy Yard and the Navy Pay Center in Cleveland. On February 6, 1963, he became a "Plank Owner" in the then-new Naval Reserve Training Center on Old French Road near Erie's Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

During his early Reserve Training Center years, he was promoted to lieutenant and lieutenant commander, and he transferred to the Inactive Reserve. After about 5 years in the Inactive Reserve, he reaffiliated and returned to a drilling status at the Naval Reserve Center. Back in the Ready Reserve, he performed Active Duty for training with the commanding officer of the Naval Supply Depot, Norfolk. He was soon promoted to commander and affiliated with a Reserve unit in Erie serving the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. His 2 weeks Active-Duty for training were then performed in Norfolk with the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet Assistant Chief of Staff for Logistics Readiness. One such Active-Duty period was serving as the senior watch officer for a NATO logistics exercise at London-based Naval Activities, United Kingdom, for which he received a Letter of Commendation from Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet for "outstanding performance of duty" during 1980 and 1981.

Mr. Hagen also received Letters of Commendation for "meritorious achievement," "superior performance," and "professional achievement" from the Chief of the Naval Reserve and Commander of the Naval Reserve Readiness Command Region Five regarding U.S. Navy Great Lakes Cruises between 1978 and 1980. He was promoted to captain on June 1, 1985, and retired after nearly 30 years service on November 1, 1986. In post-retirement years, he was honored by the Navy Supply Corps Foundation and by the Chief of Supply Corps with the Navy Supply Corps School Distinguished Alumnus Award on April 21, 2011.

Born in Buffalo, NY, Mr. Hagen moved to Erie at age 7 and attended Erie Public Schools, graduating from Strong Vincent High School. He attended Penn State Behrend and received a bachelor of science degree in