

“adopt a class” program, and a weekly career corner on the Long Neck Elementary School’s televised news program. Lastly, the school improvement committee, which consists of staff, parents, and community members, identifies and allocates resources to enhance achievement for all students.

At Long Neck Elementary, students are not only challenged academically. They are also expected to demonstrate model behavior. Good citizenship is reinforced through a character education program where students are honored monthly with certificates and medals for demonstrating the six pillars of good character which promotes making positive choices and becoming a productive member of society.

No school could achieve the gains and progress Long Neck Elementary has met without having a staff that believes every child can learn and who are committed to providing students opportunities to reach their fullest potential. Long Neck Elementary has implemented professional learning communities where teachers work closely together, both within and across grade levels, to promote learning. All members of the staff assist students in improving their academic performances, increasing the likelihood that they will find success through their school years and go on to become productive and active members of society. This is done through after school programs, differentiated instruction, and extra support programs. In addition, instructional staff members participate in numerous learning-focused professional development activities, which enable them to provide students with instructional strategies that are sound and research-based.

Tirelessness of staff and parents at Long Neck Elementary have made possible real progress in closing that school’s achievement gap. Along with the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award, the school also earned “Superior” rating from the State of Delaware in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Long Neck Elementary School is a school that demonstrates that all students can learn. The school’s selection as a national blue ribbon school is a testament to their hard work and dedication.

Delaware is a small State, but we are building a growing record of achievement in public school education. Helping lead the way are the students at Long Neck Elementary School, along with their teachers and parents. Collectively, they are truly an inspiration to other schools and communities in Delaware and throughout our Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO JACK GHERTY OF LAND O’LAKES

● Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to recognize an individual who has made a significant positive difference in U.S. agriculture, agribusiness, rural communities and cooperative enterprise.

That individual is Land O’Lakes’ President and Chief Executive Officer Jack Gherty, retiring after a 35-year career with the cooperative and 16 years as its President and CEO.

During his tenure as CEO, Land O’Lakes was transformed from a regional to a national farmer-owned business and membership organization—giving producers a powerful presence in the marketplace and, from my experience, an equally powerful and positive voice in the policy arena.

Jack Gherty’s role in Land O’Lakes’ transformation comes as no surprise, for agriculture, rural communities and cooperatives have always been close to his heart.

Gherty grew up on his family’s western Wisconsin dairy and livestock farm, in a close-knit rural community, where the local cooperative was at the center of agribusiness activity.

He learned the importance of diligence and teamwork. He learned to value family, community and the land. And, he learned the important role farmer-owned businesses can play in helping preserve the integrity of family-based agriculture and rural communities.

Jack carried these lessons with him when he left the farm in the mid-1960s and earned business and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin. They were also part of his work in the late 1960s as a VISTA volunteer on the tough, poverty-stricken south side of Chicago.

In 1970, Jack joined the Land O’Lakes law department. Over the next several years, he held a number of executive positions within the cooperative. In 1989, the board selected him to serve as Land O’Lakes’ President and CEO.

In this leadership role, Gherty continued to be driven by a strong set of personal values. He combined this with the belief that the most critical role a CEO must play is defining organizational culture, and he immediately began working with the board and his leadership team to set the foundation for Land O’Lakes’ future—the organization’s vision, mission and values.

Over the past 16 years, Gherty’s vision, mission and values have served Land O’Lakes and its members well. Not only has Land O’Lakes built business success while remaining true to its cooperative principles, the company has gained a reputation for uncompromising standards of ethics and integrity and has established a strong record of corporate social responsibility.

As a Minnesotan, I am proud to count Land O’Lakes as a Minnesota-based company. I am proud of its ethics. I admire its contributions to the success of family-based agriculture and producer-owned agribusiness. I share its rural and family values. I applaud its commitment to community.

I am equally proud of Jack Gherty’s record as its leader and of the values that have shaped his career—and, in turn, the Land O’Lakes of today.

A few years ago, Jack Gherty traveled here to Washington D.C. to speak at the 35th Anniversary celebration for VISTA. At that time he said, “The most successful and satisfied people are not those who are out to make an impression, but rather those who are out to make a difference.”

Jack Gherty has made an impression by making a difference, and I am pleased to share his achievements with you today.●

AMMON, IDAHO

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, this month, the city of Ammon, ID celebrates a very special birthday: it turned 100 on October 10. A century ago, this thriving town of over 10,000 people was covered with sagebrush that was so tall and thick, as one historian put it “one could ride for miles on horseback without being seen.” Today, the vestiges of those stalwart Mormon settlers can still be seen in this community that champions family, faith and hard work.

The steady growth and measured additions of elements that make a city a city: church, school, electricity, railroad, well, park and public works reflect the wisdom of a well-organized, solid community of citizens. I have lived close to Ammon my entire life; it is a fine community and a great place for families. Those Idahoans who call it home can be proud of their fine city and its 100 years of prosperity.●

BURLINGTON, A CORNERSTONE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, one of the greatest challenges we face—not just in Iowa but all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our towns. This is about economics, but it is also about our culture and identity. After all, you won’t find the heart and soul of Iowa at Wal-Mart or Home Depot out in the strip malls. No, the heart and soul of Iowa is in our family farms, and on Main Street in communities all across my State. That is why we need to be as generous as possible—and creative as possible—in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my State—is in a class by itself. It is smart. It is effective. And it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, the town of Burlington, IA, is making an effort to improve the aesthetics and function of its downtown area. So many of our rural communities are fading away, but with the assistance of Federal funding through a Main Street grant, Burlington is revitalizing its downtown. Downtown Burlington has been waiting for a grocery

store for years, and all studies and market analysis done in the city for the past 10 years have shown that a grocery store would be a great asset to the area. Becky and Tom Shockley, two Burlington citizens, have led the charge to get this project completed, and will be investing almost \$4 million into this project made possible through the Main Street Challenge Grant. This project serves the people of Burlington in more ways than just providing them a grocery store; it will create jobs, increase the tax base, and help to improve the community at large.

The beauty of the Main Street Iowa program is that the ideas and initiatives come from our towns and rural communities. I have been pleased to secure \$1.5 million in funding since 2002 for Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants. The Main Street programs of the Iowa Department of Economic Development help provide technical assistance, but, as we have seen in Burlington, success itself comes from local leadership, local teamwork, and home-grown ideas and solutions.

This project is a shining example of new construction and a catalyst for future projects. With a continued increase in residents living in downtown Burlington, a grocery store is a much needed addition. When people see one of the anchor businesses on Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

So I congratulate Becky and Tom Shockley and the citizens of Burlington for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

IN APPRECIATION OF CONNECTICUT'S METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today is Metropolitan District Commission Day in Connecticut and it is with great pleasure that I send my congratulations to the commission as it celebrates another year of impressive service to the people of Connecticut and our State's riverfronts.

Seven years ago, Connecticut's Metropolitan District Commission took on a groundbreaking mission. Expanding its role of providing water and sewer services to the Hartford region, the commission made a historic step to partner with the organization Riverfront Recapture to maintain Connecticut Riverfront parks and provide funding for park rangers in each of the parks. Metropolitan District Commission believed then as it believes today that creating and maintaining an attractive waterfront environment is valuable to everyone in a community.

Of course, the Metropolitan District Commission is no newcomer to civic

engagement. For decades the commission has participated in enhancing the Connecticut River's water quality—making it possible to use the once-polluted river for a rich variety of recreational activities, including fishing tournaments, triathlons, rowing regattas, and dragon boat races.

Metropolitan District Commission's partnership with Riverfront Recapture is only natural. The team has worked together skillfully to create a welcoming presence in the parks and attracting visitors as well as residents. Last year, more than 786,000 people visited the riverfront parks and as much as \$4 billion worth of development projects are underway or planned within walking distance of the parks. The Metropolitan District Commission's funding efforts and maintenance capabilities are critical to making the mission succeed. Unsurprisingly, this exceptional partnership is attracting national attention as a model for urban parks management.

By commemorating the contributions of the Metropolitan District Commission today, we honor the spirit of entrepreneurship that has profited the people of Connecticut and their guests so significantly.

I am very happy to join colleagues in honoring the Metropolitan District Commission on this day, October 25, 2005.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL BRAD APPLGATE

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of Oregonians, the people of the Pacific Northwest, and all Americans to pay tribute to COL Brad Applegate, the Wing Commander of the 142nd Fighter Wing. In doing so, I also pay tribute to all those who wear our Nation's uniform, as Colonel Applegate's professionalism and capability is characteristic of all those who serve to protect our Nation.

Brad Applegate began his association with the Air Force while attending Indiana University when he received an Air Force Reserve Officer Training Course aviation scholarship. Upon graduating, he received his commission in the U.S. Air Force, and shortly thereafter, began his training as an F-15 pilot. From that time until now, Brad has served in many locations and has been awarded several decorations. As an F-15 pilot, he is quick to tell you that homeland security has long been his specialty.

My association with Colonel Applegate is relatively late in his career. With the recent round of Base Realignment and Closure, BRAC, proposals from the Defense Department, the people of the Pacific Northwest woke up to the news that the reassuring roar of the F-15 Eagles from the 142nd Fighter Wing might not be flying over their heads in the years to come. I learned quickly that the Portland Air National Guard base was among the first bases to be scrutinized by the BRAC Commissioners and analysts.

With little more than a weekend to prepare, Colonel Applegate organized his team, sifted through the scant and murky details of the proposal, and prepared such an extensive briefing to the Commissioners and analysts that the efforts of the 142nd presentation became a model for bases across the country. The media will give, and the politicians will take, credit for saving the bases, but I am here today to set the record straight in regards to the preservation of the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland. The intelligence, skill, and knowledge of COL Brad Applegate and his team is why we will continue to have air defenses in the Pacific Northwest. Without his leadership skills, my part of the country would be an open target for our enemies.

Colonel Applegate will soon be retiring from military service after more than 20 years of dedicated service to his Nation. The leadership torch of the 142nd Fighter Wing will soon be passed to another very capable fighter pilot and leader, and the important work of our Air National Guard will continue.

Mr. President, I would like to offer my words of appreciation and thanks to COL Applegate and the countless others who wear our Nation's uniform. Although our Nation has dangerous enemies who wish to do us harm, I sleep better at night knowing that the reassuring roar of the F-15 Eagles will continue to fly overhead in the Pacific Northwest.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO ENTER INTO A FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE SULTANATE OF OMAN—PM 26

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-210) (the "Trade Act"), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intention to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Sultanate of Oman.