

of this remarkable marine is felt by all Nebraskans, and his courage to follow his dreams will remain as an inspiration. ●

#### RECOGNIZING HODGDON YACHTS

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I commend a Maine business that last month unveiled a remarkably sturdy vessel for use by our Nation's Navy SEALs, a project for which I was honored to secure funding for. Hodgdon Yachts of East Boothbay, a family-owned company for five generations, has been a source of pride for Maine's boatbuilding industry for nearly 200 years, and its recent accomplishment is without a doubt one of its most impressive.

Hodgdon Yachts began building boats in 1816, when the company launched the 42-foot schooner *Superb*. Since then, Hodgdon Yachts has developed a reputation as one of New England's premier shipbuilders, persevering through difficult times and continually reevaluating its company's methods to be consistently on the cutting edge of the latest technologies. Of particular note for the State of Maine is Hodgdon's 1921 schooner *Bowdoin*, named for the Brunswick alma mater of Arctic explorer Donald MacMillan. The boat proved itself an invaluable tool in Arctic research and sailed more than 300,000 miles over 26 icy voyages in its career. Prior to the *Bowdoin*, the company turned its attention to building submarine chasers for the military in World War I, and continued its defense work by gaining minesweeper and troop transport contracts during both World War II and the Korean war.

By the late 1950s, Hodgdon Yachts returned to building more traditional wooden yachts for a variety of customers. By the mid-1980s, the company began to modernize its shipbuilding, providing clients with yachts of superb quality and strength while employing innovative technology in the creation of its boats. Hodgdon Yachts recently began using carbon Kevlar deposits to construct its yachts to make the boats as strong and secure as possible.

Hodgdon's proficiency in using Kevlar proved useful when, in May 2005, the company won a contract from the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research to build the prototype for a new special operations craft using these composites. The ship has a foam core surrounded by multiple layers of carbon, and its durability is reinforced by an outer layer of Kevlar. On January 11, 2008, the company launched this prototype, the 82-foot Mako V.1, named for a shark that frequents the Gulf of Maine's waters. It is the first Navy vessel constructed with carbon-fiber technology and was designed to protect Navy SEALs from injuries caused by the harsh conditions of the seas. Hodgdon teamed up with Maine Marine Manufacturing and the University of Maine in completing the Mako V.1, and I am so proud of the role that each

played in supporting our nation's armed forces. I look forward to successful trials by the Navy and the continued role Hodgdon Yachts will play in the production of this fine vessel.

Throughout its history, Hodgdon Yachts has produced over 400 yachts and ships, perhaps none more vital than its latest. The company's work to keep shipbuilding alive and well in Maine is well documented, including President Tim Hodgdon's involvement in the formation of Maine Built Boats, an alliance whose goal is to present Maine's boatbuilding industry to a wider global audience. I firmly believe that, given our seafaring history and established work ethic, Mainers build the best ships, and Hodgdon Yachts only further exemplifies this tradition. I commend everyone at Hodgdon Yachts for their remarkable accomplishment in the Mako V.1, and wish them well in their future boatbuilding endeavors. ●

#### TRIBUTE TO JOHN ROCK

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of John Rock, who passed away in November of 2007. John was an invaluable member of the Black Hills community, and he will be truly missed by all who knew him.

John will be remembered for his dedication to service in the Black Hills region. He made many invaluable contributions to the region through his extensive knowledge and life experiences. This dedication was evident through John's support of the Mammoth Site museum in Hot Springs, SD. He worked with the finance/personnel and governance committees and the board of directors of the Mammoth Site of Hot Springs, SD, Inc., from 2001 to 2007.

In addition to his being recognized by the Mammoth Site board, two theater seats will be dedicated to John and his wife Bonnie. A plaque in John's honor will also be placed on the Memorial Wall at the Mammoth Site.

John Rock's absence will be deeply felt in the Black Hills community. He was a truly dedicated individual who will be remembered for his lifetime of service to others. ●

#### TRIBUTE TO VIOREL G. "VI" STOIA

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Viorel G. "Vi" Stoia, a great South Dakotan who passed away on January 28, 2008.

Vi Stoia was born on February 13, 1924 in Aberdeen, SD, and began his lifetime of service and leadership at Aberdeen Central High School where he served as senior class president. Vi continued this leadership and service while he served in the U.S. Navy and attended the University of Minnesota. In 1949, Vi graduated with a degree in business administration and married his lifelong companion, Donna Marie Maurseth.

Vi's thirst for knowledge along with his extraordinary leadership abilities

served him well during his lifetime. His long and illustrious professional career included countless distinguished appointments, awards, and honors.

Vi will be remembered by the Aberdeen community because of his exuberant service and dedication to constant improvement of the city, county, and State. Vi was a member of numerous community organizations, including the Aberdeen Jaycees and the Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, Vi's dedication and leadership were instrumental in rallying support for dozens of community projects.

The profound wisdom and deep commitment that Vi possessed is reflected through his role in the businesses, health organizations, educational affiliations, and political organizations for which he so diligently served throughout his life. Vi also received many awards recognizing his excellent work and service including: Distinguished Alumni Award—NSU, 1976; the George Award, 1979 and 1994; South Dakota Community Volunteer of the Year, 1991; Distinguished Service Award, Excellence in Economic Development, 2000; and South Dakota Medal of Distinguished Excellence, 2008.

Vi will be lovingly remembered by his wife Donna as well as his children and grandchildren as a loving husband, father, and a great man. He will forever remain in our hearts for his contributions to the Aberdeen area and the entire State of South Dakota. Few men will ever give as much of themselves or make as much of a difference in the lives of others as Vi Stoia. Today we celebrate the life and accomplishments of this great man. Although he does not stand among us, his legacy will live on for a time without end. For all that has been accomplished and achieved, for all of the lives that have been touched and enhanced, thank you, and God bless Viorel G. Stoia. ●

#### 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 treaty which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

#### REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS DECLARED WITH RESPECT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA'S DESTRUCTION OF TWO UNARMED U.S.-REGISTERED CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT—PM 36

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message