

proud of her girls. South Laurel Middle's Dance Team has not only won nationals this year, but also gained the title of Kentucky Dance Coaches Organization Overall Middle School Grand Champions, took first place in the Pom Division as well as first place in the Open Division, JAMfest Dance Grand Champions, and were the 2013 Big Blue Cheer and Dance Challenge Grand Champions.

"I believe that they danced with all their hearts and souls on that stage, and I'm thankful for the support from our school, administration and their parents," Rogers said.

"Their dance was perfection, it was just incredible . . . it was flawless," added Assistant Coach Jo Anna Sizemore.

The team of six eighth-graders, seven seventh-graders and one sixth-grader took form in March following try-outs. The girls practiced for the national competition five days a week for approximately three hours, and sometimes four, Sizemore said.

"It means the world to me to get to spend five days a week with my dance sisters, not only my sisters in dance, but my sisters in Christ," said Megan Ford, an eighth-grade dance team member.

"I feel that our win was deserved, for all the hard work we've done. But I also have to give all the glory to God for keeping us safe as we go. I'm so thankful for all of these girls for how we've been spending our time together and how we've stuck together as a team—and not just as a team, but as a family," said Hannah Sears, an eighth-grade dance team member.

Six eighth-graders will be moving on to high school next year, vacating their spots on the award-winning dance team. Coach Rogers says try-outs will begin this March.

FREEDOM FOR BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I rise today to remind this body of the plight of a missing person and the suffering of his family.

On March 8, 2007, retired FBI agent Bob Levinson traveled to the Iranian island of Kish on a business trip. From what we know, he checked into his hotel, checked out on March 9, got into a taxi, and then disappeared.

This week marks the sixth year of his disappearance, making Bob one of the longest held or missing Americans in history.

And for Bob's wife Christine and their seven children, it's been 6 years of excruciating suffering. Bob's safe return remains their highest priority—as it must for the U.S. Government as well.

With the assistance of the U.S. Department of State, we continue to receive word that Bob is alive and remains in captivity somewhere in Southwest Asia.

Yet the Government of Iran continues to provide next to nothing in terms of real assistance. Given Iran's resources and capabilities in the region, they could be doing so much more to help reunite Bob with his family.

I remain convinced that our two countries share the same goal: finally putting to rest all the speculation behind Bob's disappearance by safely getting him back to Florida where he belongs.

Today I rise to implore all parties to view this as a humanitarian case that

transcends the differences between the United States and Iran. We must all redouble our efforts to bring Bob home.

LEAD EXPOSURE REDUCTION AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I want to thank Senator WICKER for being an original supporter of S. 484, a bill aiming to improve EPA's lead paint rule. He has been a tremendous help throughout the long effort we have had to address this onerous and frustrating regulation. He and I firmly believe that this rule can be implemented in a way that both protects the health of children and pregnant women without unnecessarily raising the cost of construction projects when there exists only a negligible risk of harm. That is what our bill aims to do, and I want to thank him for being in lockstep with us from the beginning.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF MOUNT VERNON AND KNOX COUNTY

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, today I wish to honor the 125th anniversary of The Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County and its service to the community.

The library opened on February 16, 1888, to serve residents of Mount Vernon. In 1924, services were expanded throughout the Mount Vernon school district and in 1985, the library was officially renamed, The Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County.

Promoting education and cultural awareness, the public library is a valuable resource to the Knox County community. Volunteers have been delivering books to hospital patients and residents of nursing facilities since in 1948. The library delivers books today through its outreach service department, serving hospitals, nursing homes, the local jail, Amish schools, and daycare facilities. More than 35,000 citizens of Knox County benefit from the public library system.

I extend my sincere congratulations to The Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County on 125 years of dedicated service to the community.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVE HOFFMAN

• Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, today I would like to recognize retired LTC Dave Hoffman for his outstanding service to the United States Air Force as a search and rescue helicopter pilot. Mr. Hoffman journeyed to Alaska in the 1970s to fly helicopters in the 71st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, ARRS, an Air Force Unit that performed search and rescue for both civilians and military members in remote Alaska.

At that time, a United States Air Force air rescue unit was considered

top notch if they logged two or more "saves" in a year. The 71st ARRS that Dave Hoffman flew for logged over 90 saves in 1978. With temperatures dipping to 30 degrees below zero, the pilots of the 71st were often on their own in the Alaskan wilderness for days, putting their own lives at risk to save the lives of others.

After his service in the USAF, Dave joined the Alaska Army National Guard, assisting his unit in countless saves. When the Air Force decided to deactivate the 71st ARRS, legislation was introduced that created the 210th Rescue Squadron, RQS, in the Alaska Air National Guard at Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage, AK. Initially, as a cadre instructor pilot and later as first commander of Detachment 1, Dave Hoffman continued the tradition of greatness. By 1996, the 210th RQS had saved a record 310 lives and held the record for both the highest altitude rescue, 14,400 ft., and the furthest rescue, 2037 miles, in an HH-60G helicopter.

In the fall of 1991, then Major Hoffman participated in a rescue effort less than 400 nautical miles from the North Pole where a Canadian C-130 crashed. Flying night and day for over 3 days, Dave Hoffman's ability to persevere under the worst conditions resulted in saving 13 lives while managing to return all rescuers and assets unharmed. This mission earned him the Air Medal.

In 1993, he was involved in the first military exercise teaming Russian and American forces on Russian soil. Lieutenant Colonel Hoffman flew with such precision during an aerial refueling that Russian General Kalugin was convinced an automated mechanism had performed the feat. When it was proven that Dave Hoffman had, in fact, piloted the helicopter, the Russian general presented him with a medal for "superior airmanship."

Although Dave Hoffman is one of the best rescue and recovery pilots, his personality outshines his technical ability. After a rough landing, Dave is known to flash his famous smile and say, "You know, my dashing young lieutenant, if you aren't so hard on the equipment it'll last longer." His loyalty to the guard and to the men and women he served with has touched all who know him.

Many recall a man who is always calm, sincere, honest, and has a great joy for life. Those who had the pleasure of flying with Dave, affectionately called "Hoff-person" and "King Biscuit," are not shy about the respect, admiration and love that they have for the man. Whether he was saving lives or sharing in them, he left a lasting glow within the recipients. On this day, I would like to honor Mr. Dave Hoffman and thank him for his service to this country, to Alaska, and to so many who are lucky enough to know him.●