

fighting—for want of a better term—with the Department of Defense, begging them to try to identify his uncle's remains with the new technology available in 2014. He was part of a movement of families and veterans trying to piece together where their loved ones were buried and get them returned home.

In 2015, the Pentagon announced plans to exhume and attempt to identify the fallen sailors and soldiers buried in the Pacific. DOD began removing caskets and using dental records and DNA to identify the remains and return those fallen heroes to their families.

Billy Welch was identified. Now, with the help of dedicated staff in my office, next month he will finally be returned to Springfield and buried with full military honors in his hometown. It will be my honor to stand with Seaman Welch's family at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Springfield and witness this hero be shown the honor and appreciation he deserves and his family has been denied for so long.

Billy and his fellow sailors may not have known the contribution they were making that day on the USS *Oklahoma* to future generations at home and around the world as the first to sacrifice their lives fighting tyranny during the Second World War. That makes their actions all the more heroic. There is a reason we call them the "greatest generation."

We are losing more and more of that generation with each passing day. Less than 700,000 World War II veterans remain with us. We lose some 430 of those heroes each day. My father, a World War II veteran stationed in New Zealand and Iran—what he always called Persia World War II—passed away back in the year 2000.

Projects like this one are all the more important and more timely. We need to identify these sailors and soldiers now, while their loved ones are still with us and still able to pay their proper respects. We owe William Welch and all those who gave their lives for our country a burial and, equally important, a tribute that befits their service and their sacrifice. I will be honored to take part in that tribute for Seaman Welch next month.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ROY SCHOTT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a hard-working businessowner, veteran, and respected Kentuckian, Mr. Roy Schott. Mr. Schott recently celebrated 61 years of work as a mechanic and service station owner and 55 years as a U-Haul outlet.

His dedication to his work is something to be admired by us all.

Mr. Schott's journey began at the age of 15 when he discovered his interest and aptitude in mechanics. This led him to his first job in a garage, where he repaired motor vehicles. In 1951, he left his job and home to serve our country in the Korean war as a motor sergeant.

Upon returning to London, KY, from his time in the military, he and a friend opened a service station. Mr. Schott made an addition to his business in 1961 after seeing a U-Haul ad in the paper. The service station became Schott Marathon and U-Haul Dealership. At that time, U-Haul charged only \$3 a day to rent a trailer, later adding a \$1 fee for hitch rentals.

Mr. Schott's secrets to U-Haul success are good help, good customer service, and a good field manager. To this day, he has remained active in his business, coming every day to work alongside his loyal employees and interacting with his customers. After the loss of his wife in 2002, Mr. Schott considered retiring, but ultimately decided that he loves his job too much to ever stop.

I am very honored to represent Mr. Schott here in the U.S. Senate and want to wish him congratulations on his many years of service not only to the people of London, KY, but also to this nation. I am sure my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in expressing gratitude and admiration for his service as well. He truly represents the finest of Kentucky.

Mr. President, an area publication, the Sentinel-Echo, published a compelling article on Roy Schott's life. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Sentinel-Echo, Aug. 22, 2016]

STILL GOING STRONG: ROY SCHOTT CELEBRATES 61 YEARS OF KEEPING VEHICLES ON THE ROAD

(By Nita Johnson)

London businessman Roy Schott has many memories.

He will share some of those, but often says they are not important.

But after 61 years of operating Schott's Service Station on Main Street, he has a lot of memories and a lot of knowledge to go with it.

"Be sure to find out what kind of oil it needs," he said to a customer who called his business on Thursday afternoon, before going into the service section and assisting an employee with loosening bolts on a car part.

Schott said he got involved in the mechanic business because it paid better than some other vocations available in 1943.

"I started working at a garage that is where the Sentinel-Echo is now," he said. "I got \$1.50 a day. Other places only paid \$1 a day, except the railroad and it paid \$1 an hour."

Schott learned to weld as part of his job, recalling that parts weren't manufactured then as they are today.

"If a bus came in with a broken window, you had to fix it with a piece of tin," he said.

Schott left the business in 1951 with many other Laurel Countians who went to serve

their country in the Korean War. He served two years during that conflict "when all hell was going on." War is no good memory for Schott, who still tears up when he thinks about the end of World War II.

"When World War II ended, the bell at the courthouse rang all day," he said. "There would be four or five bodies of boys come in every day."

Schott served as combat engineer in Korea, where he was a motor sergeant and oversaw 23 trucks. He remembers those trying times through a book presented to Korean veterans by the Korean government. The book shows pictures of the devastation during and following the war there, but highlights the achievements made over the years as the country rebuilt.

Once safely back home after the Korean War, Schott opened his service station on South Main Street near the former Ormsby Hardware. While also operating his service station, Schott became an authorized U-Haul rental facility. He credits Bill Ormsby for that venture—one that earned him recognition from U-Haul last year for 55 years as an authorized dealer.

"I'm the oldest one in the state, probably the oldest one in the country," he laughed.

But in 1955, Schott got a loan to start his own business. He remembers that day when his loan was approved.

"It was August 28, 1955," he said. "When you borrow money you know the date you got it."

He moved the business to its current spot on North Main Street across from London Elementary School in 1960. Now, 56 years later, he continues the tradition he began, still working performing his magic on brakes, tires and air conditioning units. The business has served him well, providing for his four children over the years. He also has grandchildren, of whom he cannot hide his pride.

"Let me tell you about my grandchildren. No, that would take too long," he said with a laugh.

Schott plans to continue to work until he is no longer able, refusing to retire. When asked if he still works on vehicles himself, he holds out his hands as proof.

"I guess I do," he said.

He once considered retirement following the death of his wife 14 years ago. But his son-in-law quickly talked him out of it.

"He said, 'What are you going to do, climb the walls?' so I decided to stay open," he said.

He believes working and staying busy is why he continues to be able to serve residents in the London and Laurel areas.

"A friend who retired told me to work all I could," he said. "He said the walls would close in on you after a little while. So when people ask me if I'm going to stay here until they have to carry me out, I tell them I guess they will."

GEAR UP HAWAII

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, today, September 19, marks the beginning of National Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, GEAR UP, Week, and I would like to recognize the meaningful work of GEAR UP in Hawaii.

Since 1998, GEAR UP has provided support and resources to low-income students across the country to inform them about, prepare for, and succeed in college. GEAR UP helps these students, many who are first-generation college students, overcome the challenges they face in their communities.

GEAR UP Hawaii serves over 16,000 students each year from low-income and underserved communities throughout the State in grades 7 through 12 and in their first year in college. The program equips students with the tools they need to succeed in college and their careers. GEAR UP delivers a number of services to students, including supporting early college-level academic preparation in high school, providing opportunities for early college options, increasing college access and financial aid information to students and families, and advising students during their first year of college to increase first-year completion. GEAR UP Hawaii has gained national recognition for its success in closing the achievement gap among groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education and helping low-income students prepare for college.

Through its collaborative partnerships between Hawaii's State Department of Education, K-12 schools, the University of Hawaii, local businesses, and community organizations, GEAR UP Hawaii inspires students to see postsecondary education as something they can achieve. The early outreach GEAR UP Hawaii performs is key to improving access to postsecondary education for students from low-income families in our State.

The program's results demonstrate that GEAR UP Hawaii is making significant strides towards increasing the number of low-income students who are prepared for and enroll in college. For example, 20 percent of Step Up Scholars, a GEAR UP Hawaii program, graduated from high school in June 2015 with the Board of Education Recognition Diploma, BOERD, compared to 14 percent of students statewide. The BOERD is an honors diploma that requires students to earn a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and complete a senior project. Additionally, GEAR UP has increased the availability of High School Based Running Start, HBRBS, courses, which allow high school students to attend University of Hawaii classes to earn both high school and college credits. For the Hawaii class of 2014, 83 percent of students who took at least one HBRBS course enrolled in college the semester after graduation compared to the statewide average of 56 percent. Thanks to these programs, thousands of Hawaii's students graduate from high school every year better prepared for college and for their futures.

A college education is a path of opportunity for our students. GEAR UP Hawaii has been and will continue to be critical in supporting the State's goal of having 55 percent of working-age adults in the State earn a college degree by 2025. I commend GEAR UP Hawaii for the vital role it plays in helping Hawaii's students access and excel in their higher education.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING BEN CRAIG

• Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, all who knew Ben Craig know that his passing marks the loss of an exceptional family man, local leader, and community banker. Ben was a great neighbor and a shining example of a Kansan who improved the lives of all he knew.

The youngest of five children, Ben was born in 1929 to Benjamin D. Craig, Sr., and Orpha (Cox) Craig. He grew up and went to school in Baxter Springs, where he was an avid baseball player and sports fan. During high school, he was the pitcher for the Baxter Whiz Kids, the local regional team.

He attended the University of Kansas, and during his college years, he pursued his minor league baseball dreams playing with the New York Yankees and the St. Louis Browns.

After the Korean war began in 1950, Ben enlisted in the Air Force and spent 18 months stationed in Tripoli, Libya. Following his deployment, he returned to the States and was stationed at Sewart Air Force Base near Nashville, TN. He was joined by his new bride, Evadean Talbot, who he married after returning home from Tripoli. In 1954, he was honorably discharged from the service as an E-5 tech sergeant.

Ben's long career in business began after leaving the Air Force when he took a job with the Cassville, MO, chamber of commerce. He later worked with the Kansas City, KS, chamber before beginning a banking career that would span decades. Ben served as president of Metcalf Bank in Kansas City for 35 years and then as chairman of the board until 2007. When the bank was sold in 2007, Ben remained on the board of directors and served as chairman emeritus until his death.

In addition to strengthening the Kansas City economy with his work in the banking community, where small businesses and families alike could depend on Ben for solid financial assistance and advice, Ben served in leadership positions in a number of local charities and service organizations. For 52 years, he had perfect attendance in the Overland Park Rotary Club, which is where I first met him. He also played a key role in establishing many of the Kansas City institutions we know today, such as Johnson County Community College, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, and the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce.

Ben was preceded in death by his wife of 52 years, Evadean. He leaves behind his friend and companion of the last 10 years, Vivian Sirratt, along with his daughters, Denise Koonse (Charles), Kellee Hearst (Rex), granddaughters, Amanda Lubiewski (Michael), Kelsey Houchen (Andrew), and great-granddaughters, Abigail and Emily Lubiewski.

Ben's dedication to public service and constant desire to find ways he could help others will benefit generations of

Kansans to come. He had a kind heart and giving nature. Ben was a natural leader who freely gave his time to all he knew. I am thankful for my friendship with him. May he rest in peace.●

REMEMBERING RODGER MCCONNELL

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, on July 21, 2016, shortly before his 72nd birthday, the United States lost a great man, an outstanding soldier, and an unparalleled advocate for his fellow veterans—and I lost a great friend. Rodger McConnell's legacy will be forever remembered as one of perseverance, passion, a humbling work ethic, and an enduring love of Starbucks coffee.

Born in August 1944, Rodger graduated high school in 1962 and found employment with a local gas company for several years.

Answering the call of duty, Rodger enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1966. He saw combat in Vietnam as a cavalry troop forward observer for mortars and artillery with the 9th Infantry Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment before his honorable discharge a year later.

In his postwar years, Rodger overcame several personal hardships, including homelessness and posttraumatic stress disorder, but he remained undaunted and undefeated. It was these struggles that created an empathetic man, who became a tireless and fearless advocate for other struggling veterans.

Eventually receiving a liberal arts degree from Carroll College and a master's degree in K-12 education from Montana State University-Northern, Rodger spent several years as an educator before he retired in 2003 and launched into his unwavering service for veterans in Cascade County.

Working with State District Judge Greg Pinski, Rodger helped create a veterans court to help veterans navigate the justice system and get the help and treatment they need to get back on their feet. Rodger also played a pivotal role in constructing the Montana Veterans Memorial, which serves as a landmark in Great Falls to honor those who have served.

Most notably, Rodger spearheaded the "Stand Down" event in Great Falls, providing veterans with clothing and access to job training and health services. Through this important event, Rodger made a difference in the lives of hundreds of veterans.

Rodger was also an extremely active volunteer, contributing to the Great Falls community by registering voters, hosting a radio show on a local Great Falls station, and volunteering with the local Optimist Club.

In Rodger's eyes, the community was his family, and he was theirs.

Let us now take a moment to recognize the exceptional life of Rodger McConnell and the legacy he left behind. It is a legacy I hope each of us can aspire towards.●