

HONORING BENJAMIN W.
TIMBERMAN

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Benjamin W. Timberman, a community leader, educator and humanitarian from New Jersey.

Mr. Timberman's career began as a mathematics teacher at Monroe Township Junior High School in Williamstown, NJ. He served in that capacity for 2 years when he was drafted for a 2-year tour of duty in the U.S. Army. Upon his return, he continued his teaching until 1961 when he became vice principal. In 1963, Mr. Timberman was appointed as elementary supervisor for the Monroe Township School District, where he served for 12 years. In 1975, Mr. Timberman reached the penultimate position when he was appointed superintendent of schools, where he served another dozen years. During his 33 years of service to the children of Monroe Township, Mr. Timberman was also the first president of the Monroe Township Education Association.

Mr. Timberman also demonstrated his commitment to his community through his service as an elected official. Like his education career, Mr. Timberman's government career began in 1954 when he was elected to the Elmer Borough Council. He served in that capacity for 7 years before being elected mayor of Elmer in 1963. In 1971, Mr. Timberman was elected to the Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders where he served for 24 years. With his education background, Mr. Timberman used his position on the Freeholder Board to provide educational opportunities to Salem County residents. Mr. Timberman championed the passage of the bond issue for construction of the Vo-Tech Career Center and advocated for the establishment of the Salem Community College as a degree granting institution.

Despite his retirement from education and government, Mr. Timberman and his wife Mary Lou continue to work in the community as volunteers for Meals-on-Wheels and on visits to a local nursing home to lead residents in a monthly sing-a-long.

It is my honor to recognize Benjamin W. Timberman for his hard work and commitment to make his community a better place. I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful human being.●

MATTIEBELLE WOODS

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of a great and proud Milwaukeean, a courageous social pioneer and journalist and—above all else—a wonderful person. On February 17, Mattiebelle Wood's long life ended at the age of 102. Ms. Woods left a remarkable legacy in her field, in her community and in the Nation.

Mattiebelle Woods was a tremendous woman, and I am proud to honor her life today. She was born in Louisville, KY, in 1902, and moved to Milwaukee when she was just a few years old. In the 1940s, before the days of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, Ms. Woods was already actively involved in the civil rights movement.

Ms. Woods has rightly been called the First Lady of the Milwaukee press, and as a reporter, her coverage of social events and developments contributed to an increased sense of identity and unity in the local black community. By the 1960s, she had written for the Chicago Defender, the Milwaukee Defender, the Milwaukee Star, and the Milwaukee Globe. In 1964, she joined the Milwaukee Courier and contributed to its very first edition.

Ms. Woods never stopped writing—her final column was published 1 week before her death.

Ms. Woods also energetically participated in politics fighting for the advancement of the African-American community. She became active in the Democratic Party in the late 1940s, and worked persistently to ensure that elected officials worked just as hard as she did for the African-American community.

To those who knew her, she will ultimately be remembered for her lively, beautiful personality. She instilled confidence and pride in countless young people and helped them build the connections that would help them succeed later in life. At the age of 102, Mattiebelle Woods still could be found on the dance floor, loving life.

That love of life, along with her commitment to social justice, has undoubtedly been passed on to all those who knew her.●

DR. HIRAM C. POLK, JR., TRIBUTE

• Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a Kentuckian who has dedicated his life to saving the lives of others. Dr. Hiram C. Polk, Jr., the chairman of the University of Louisville's Department of Surgery in Louisville, KY, has become a leader in the medical field due to his relentless push for excellence.

In his 34 years as chairman of the department, Dr. Polk has trained over 200 surgeons who have gone on to become the best in their profession. He is the world's leading authority on surgical wound infections. He developed the now common application of perioperative antibiotics—that is when the patient takes antibiotics before surgery, so the medication is in the patient's tissue during operation.

Under Dr. Polk, the department has provided over \$100 million in free health care to Louisville area indigent patients. The department has performed two successful hand transplants and the world's first implantation of an

AbioCor artificial heart. And Dr. Polk is an honorary fellow of the very prestigious Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Scotland, the oldest surgical college in the world.

Dr. Polk has also found time to engage in one of Kentucky's greatest passions—horse racing. He is an owner and breeder of several thoroughbreds, including Mrs. Revere, a four-time stakes winner at the racetrack that is home to the Kentucky Derby, Churchill Downs.

No wonder, then, that upon Dr. Polk's retirement after such a pre-eminent career, his colleagues have decided to honor him by naming the University of Louisville surgery department the Hiram C. Polk Department of Surgery. He is a model citizen for all Kentuckians, and has earned this Senate's respect.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD an article from The Louisville Courier-Journal about Dr. Polk's lifesaving career.

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

[From the Louisville Courier-Journal, Feb. 4, 2005]

A PASSION FOR EXCELLENCE; U OF L DOCTOR LEAVES ENDURING MARK TRAINING SURGEONS
(By Laura Ungar)

Part drill sergeant, part modern-day Socrates, Dr. Hiram C. Polk Jr. briskly led medical residents and students through University Hospital on early morning rounds this week.

Stopping in front of patients' rooms, Polk called on residents to describe each case, then peppered them with questions.

Sometimes he offered a compliment, such as "Wonderful question" or "That's exactly right." But more often, he displayed a characteristic toughness, and his trainees usually answered, "Yes, sir."

"You're lost," he admonished the group outside one patient's room.

"You're not betting your life," he said to a resident assessing a patient. "You're betting his life."

Polk is stepping down today after more than three decades as chairman of the University of Louisville's surgery department, where he has trained a legion of surgeons—about 230, which U of L officials say is more than any other current surgical chair in the country.

Colleagues say a relentless push for excellence marked Polk's tenure. That has given U of L's program a national reputation as the Marine Corps of surgical residencies and left him with a nickname based on one instance from his early career: "Hiram Fire-em."

But it also has made him a teacher students always remember, a strict father figure who strives to make them better and leaves them with an internal voice telling them to push themselves.

"Dr. Polk demands excellence from his trainees and will not accept mediocrity. And by demanding it, he often gets it," said Dr. Kelly McMasters, a former resident under Polk who is now the Sam and Lolita Weakley Professor of Surgical Oncology and director of U of L's division of surgical oncology.

Polk could go a little too far, "could be too tough," said Dr. Frank Miller, a professor of surgery at U of L.

But Polk makes no apologies. Surgery "is a serious, big deal and you need to take that seriously," he said. "Striving to be the best you can be sometimes means telling people, 'I think that's stupid.'"

Colleagues say Polk, 68, held himself to those same high standards as he has helped build a nationally renowned surgery department.

He has written or co-written hundreds of papers and journal articles, dozens of textbook chapters and numerous books, and served as editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Surgery for 18 years.

He pioneered the practice of giving antibiotics within an hour of surgery to stave off infection, which has become commonplace.

And McMasters said residents who have risen to Polk's challenge earn his loyalty, and return it. "Most people are pathologically loyal to Dr. Polk. He stands by his people 100 percent. . . . He's made my career. While he was firm and strict as a teacher, he also has a very benevolent and loving side."

LIFE-CHANGING DISCUSSION

Polk attended Millsaps College in his hometown of Jackson, Miss., at the urging of his father. He graduated at the top of his class, and as a favor to a professor, he said, he applied to Harvard Medical School, only to turn down a chance to attend on scholarship because it was too far away. But Harvard sent a premier physiologist to try to persuade Polk to change his mind—an hourlong discussion that determined the direction of his life.

"He reinforced some of what my father said," Polk said. "He said I ought to go, end of discussion."

Polk hated medical school until he got interested in surgery. As a medical resident in St. Louis and a young doctor and academic in Miami, Polk found mentors to emulate. His reputation grew, and universities began to court him.

In 1971, at 35, he became U of L's surgery chairman, lured by the promise of a department with potential, a growing downtown medical community and a closet attraction to the horse-racing scene.

One early decision was to not renew the contracts of six of the residents who were there at the time, earning him the "Fire-em" nickname—although he said he has let only five more people go since then.

Colleagues who knew him during those early years remember how Polk honed his skills in the aging Louisville General Hospital, a relic of an older era with long hallways, an open ward and few of the technological amenities of today. Polk brought residents on bedside rounds there, firing questions at them and demanding good answers, recalled Dr. Gordon Tobin, a U of L professor and director of the division of plastic and reconstructive surgery.

"He fit right in with the other surgeons I met in that era," Tobin said. "The surgical personality is very straightforward and blunt."

Polk's reputation for demanding excellence was a draw for some, said Dr. J. David Richardson, a professor and vice chairman of U of L's surgery department.

"I don't think people have really come here who are really unaware" how demanding it would be, Richardson said. "It's not a place to come and rest on your laurels and enjoy a quiet kind of life."

Dr. William H. Mitchell, a retired surgeon in Richmond, Ky., was among Polk's early residents. He said Polk expected him and his peers to be on their game at 7 a.m. "whether we were bright-eyed and bushy-tailed or not."

"If you ran out of gas, you'd better get pumped up. You were expected to be cogent, coherent and well thought out," Mitchell said.

But Polk was mindful of tailoring questions to a trainee's level of understanding, Mitchell said, and would be hardest on senior residents. Also, many doctors-in-training saw something beneath the harshness—intelligence, skill and passion for his work.

Mitchell remembers a case presented in a conference in which another resident stabilized the fractured jaw of a motorcycle accident victim without calling for backup, even though he had never seen such a fracture.

"He fried him," Mitchell said of Polk's response. "He said: Don't undertake something you've never done without backup."

"No question about it," Mitchell said, "he made all of us better doctors because he made us think about what we're doing."

FAMILY—AND HORSES

Nurturing residents and building a department required long hours.

"He was busy and gone a lot," said his daughter, Susan Brown, one of two children with his first wife. "My mom kept everything running for us."

That didn't change her love and admiration for him, said Brown, 44. And she said he has taken an active interest in the lives of her three sons, attending sporting events with them and talking medicine with two who have expressed an interest.

Dr. Susan Galandiuk, Polk's 47-year-old second wife, said she understands the long hours and is a workaholic herself. She said Polk routinely gets telephone calls at their East End home from doctors around the country asking for professional and personal advice—and sees this as a compliment, evidence of the relationships he has built over the years.

Some of Polk's rare hours outside of work have been focused on his love of horses. He and Richardson together are owner-breeders whose horses have included Mrs. Revere, a four-time stakes winner at Churchill Downs in the mid-1980s for which a stakes race is named.

Richardson sees things in common between surgery and the horse business, such as the reminders, every time a horse gets hurt, of the fragility of life and success. Polk sees common points, too, but noted: "A good horse is better than a good resident. You love them, and they try hard to be the best they can be."

Polk claims to have mellowed over the years, and links it to his divorce, his remarriage, and the death of Mrs. Revere, whose memory still chokes him up.

He said he also gained new perspective through four major operations, including one for prostate cancer. And he has had to adjust to changing times in medicine; he has been sued for medical malpractice, usually in an administrative capacity, and has had to work within new national rules limiting residents' working hours to 80 a week.

But current trainees and friends haven't noticed a mellowing. Cornelia Poston, a third-year medical student, prepares diligently for rounds by writing questions on note cards, studying the night before and carrying a book called "Pocket Surgery" inside her white coat.

You strive for perfection, and he demands that," said Dr. Bryce Schuster, chief administrative resident. "At times it could be intimidating. But fear is a great motivator."

Mitchell agreed. "The residents still get sweaty palms," he said, "but they still stand

and deliver and give a straight answer to a straight question."

To celebrate Polk's career, colleagues, residents and others have launched a \$5 million campaign to rename the department in his honor and secure an endowment for clinical, education and research activities.

But his true legacy, colleagues say, may be best symbolized by a picture of a tree in his office, with names of the surgeons he has trained near the many branches.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, 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 which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:59 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award a Congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1124. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closure of pollock in statistical area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska" received on February 28, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1125. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone (Including 3 Regulations): [CGD05-05-008], COTP Western Alaska 05-002], [COTP Western Alaska 05-001]" (RIN1625-AA00) received on February 28, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1126. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to