

National Register. These historic buildings include the Doddridge County Court House with its Romanesque architecture, and the Silas Smith Opera House which was built at the turn of the last century and now serves as the county library.

For a small town in the hills of West Virginia, the town of West Union has been the home of a number of prominent American citizens. General Bantz Craddock, who rose to be the Commander of U.S. Southern Command and is responsible for military operations in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America, was raised in West Union.

For many years, West Union was the home to Clyde Ware, a novelist who has been actively involved in television and film production. In fact, Mr. Ware wrote and directed many episodes of what was one of my favorite television series, "Gunsmoke."

The town's most famous historic resident was the legendary Ephriam Bee. Mr. Bee was a pioneer, a blacksmith, the U.S. Postmaster for West Union, and the owner of a highly popular inn and restaurant, appropriately referred to as the "Bee-Hive." At the age of 60, Mr. Bee served as captain of the Doddridge militia which protected the area from Confederate forces, thieves, and outlaws.

In 1863, Mr. Bee was elected to the West Virginia State Legislature, defeating Joseph H. Diss Debar, the person who later designed the State seal of West Virginia, which is still in use today, without change.

Another contest that Mr. Bee won was being named the Ugliest Man in the State of West Virginia. For that victory, he was awarded a beautiful pocket knife, a proud possession which he was forced to relinquish a few years later when the State found a man whom it deemed to be even uglier.

In 1845, Mr. Bee originated the Ancient and Honorable Order of E. Clampus Vitus, ECV, of which he became Grand Lama. ECV was originally formed as a secret order for playing practical jokes, but as it spread across the country, it took on different purposes and missions. Today, ECV has become an important historic preservation society, with more than 100,000 members.

Mr. Bee also operated an important station on the underground railroad. He hid his guests in a nearby cave until it was filled, then, it appears, he used ECV to create a diversion so that the escaped slaves could be sent on their way to freedom.

What became the town of West Union was originally settled in 1807. It was incorporated on July 20, 1881, which means the town of West Union will be celebrating its 125th anniversary this summer. The town will be using this milestone anniversary in an effort to promote and celebrate the town's his-

tory and as a jump start toward the economic revitalization of the town. The festivities are planned for July 22, and they promise to be a time of fun, entertainment, and education as the town wants to share its unique and colorful history with the world.

The town of West Union has adopted as a slogan, "We love our history—that's why we're still making it!" With its history—and its energetic, creative residents, I am confident that the town of West Union will be making history for a long time into the future.

I wish them the best on their 125th anniversary.

#### HONORING RETIRING JOURNALIST DICK KAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Dick Kay, a man of great journalistic integrity. Many things have changed in the past 40 years, but from Martin Luther King, Jr., to Adlai Stevenson, from Iraq to the Daleys, from Watergate to the 1985 Bears, there has been one voice Chicagoans have consistently trusted for an objective and thoughtful perspective. Dick Kay has established himself as an institution in our television news. Over his 46-year career in the TV business, Dick has proven himself to be a professional newsman—a reporter with no motive other than to give his viewers an insight on the news.

Dick's distinguished career began modestly. A high school dropout at the age of 14, he worked to support himself. He once said, "the experience of those years taught me the most valuable lessons of my life: that I would never achieve any real success without an education." He enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the age of 17, earning a GED certificate. After his discharge, Dick realized his dream of an education by graduating from Bradley University in Peoria through the GI bill, receiving a B.S. in speech education in 1962.

Dick remained in Peoria to work on TV and radio programs before getting his big break as the news director of WFRV-TV in Green Bay, WI. After 3 years in the "Dairy State," he relocated to Chicago in 1968 as a producer and writer for WMAQ-NBC 5. He was tested immediately, as one of his first assignments was the tumultuous 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Within 2 years, Dick had worked his way up to full-time reporter and eventually political editor. He became host of the weekly news show "City Desk." This Sunday morning broadcast became a Chicagoland staple—a "must-see" for everyone following the political scene. Dick's questions were often tough but always fair. Political guests knew that a visit to "City Desk" would always be memorable.

Dick's achievements include a long list of honors and awards. His 1984 9-

month investigation of the Illinois General Assembly's so-called Legislative Study Commissions earned him the George Foster Peabody medallion, the most prestigious honor in television broadcasting. The report also won him a National Headliner Award and the Jacob Scher Award for investigative reporting. Dick's numerous accolades include 11 Emmys; induction into the Television Academy's Silver Circle Hall of Fame; Commentator of the Year from the Joint Civic Committee of Italian-Americans; as well as multiple awards courtesy of the Associated Press, the Chicago Headline Club, and the Society of Professional Journalists. Perhaps one of Dick's proudest moments was being honored as a Bradley University Distinguished Alumnus. He has surely come a long way since shining shoes at the age of 14 in Evansville, IN.

Mr. President, after nearly a half century of reporting the news, Dick says that he is ready to "smell the roses," and he has certainly earned it. Dick Kay has played an important role in reporting the exciting news stories of our time and has left his mark on the "Land of Lincoln." I wish a restful and happy retirement to Dick Kay, one of Illinois' and Chicago's premier newsmen.

#### W. RALPH BASHAM, COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today President George W. Bush witnessed the swearing-in of W. Ralph Basham to serve as Commissioner of Customs in the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Basham's nomination was favorably reported out of the Finance Committee on May 18, 2006, and he was confirmed by the Senate on May 26, 2006.

The President nominated an outstanding individual to be Commissioner of Customs. Ralph Basham has served as Director of the Secret Service and is a 29-year veteran of the Secret Service. He has also served as chief of staff for the Transportation Security Administration and as director of the Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, GA. His demonstrated commitment to public service is admirable. And the breadth of his experiences will be an important asset as he assumes his new responsibilities.

The Commissioner of Customs serves in a critical and demanding role. The Commissioner of Customs must ensure that the dual demands of securing our borders and facilitating the smooth flow of international trade are each fully met. As part of his confirmation process Mr. Basham appeared before the Finance Committee, which I chair. During his hearing, I was impressed with Mr. Basham's appreciation of the importance of maintaining an appropriate balance in meeting those dual demands.