

The inception of this special month-long celebration has created an exclusive platform to zero in on Caribbean-specific issues like economic development, health, and education.

Caribbean-American Heritage Month recognizes and celebrates the many wonderful people of Caribbean heritage who have gone unrecognized for their immense contributions to this wonderful country. For that, I salute Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

TRIBUTE TO ALLAN ATKINSON

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the retirement of Chief Administrative Officer of Winneshiek Medical Center, Allan Atkinson, and to express my appreciation for his dedication and commitment to the medical center and Northeast Iowa.

For 25 years, Allan has worked in healthcare administration, spending the last ten years at Winneshiek Medical Center in Decorah, Iowa. His long-term vision and teamwork approach has helped WMC grow and improve tremendously by offering an expanded range of services, experiencing a five-fold patient increase, and undertaking a \$17 million expansion and renovation project.

With his many years of experience in healthcare administration, Allan brought valuable knowledge and ideas to the table and credits the hospital's Board of Trustees for being such a great team. Their group effort has generated more quality healthcare options to Northeast Iowa, and I offer Allan and the Board my utmost congratulations and thanks.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Allan Atkinson for his service to WMC and Northeast Iowa. I consider it an honor to represent Allan in Congress, and I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

BIRDSEYE QUASQUICENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, this year marks the 125th anniversary of the founding of the town of Birdseye, in Dubois County, Indiana. This rural community of approximately 500 citizens represents the epitome of Hoosier values and, like many small communities across the United States, forms the bedrock of our Nation.

The city's ceremonial observance of this anniversary will be held beginning Thursday, August 21, continuing through August 24. A number of celebratory events have been planned, including musical performances, a farm machinery show, a queen contest, parade and children's activities. I look forward to celebrating Birdseye's Quasquicentennial with its residents and supporting some of these events during the celebration.

The foundations of Birdseye began much like other frontier communities as a trading crossroads in the early 1800s. For many years, this crossroads did not have a formal name, but by 1846 migration west had produced enough settlers in this rugged wilderness area to necessitate a Post Office. Benjamin Goodman, a popular minister and postmaster in nearby Worth (later renamed Schnellville), was asked to help select the site for the new office. Upon finding a site he liked, he commented, "It suit Bird's eye to a T-Y-tee." The phrase so struck the other frontiersmen that they named the Post Office and community "Birdseye."

It wasn't until 1880, however, that the community took on a more formal appearance as a town. Seven property owners—Enoch and Martha Inman, Elbert and Mary Baxter, John and Sarah Pollard, and Scott Austin—gathered together and laid out a plat, each donating a portion of their land to divide into streets and lots.

This platting proved to be well timed. The expansion of the Louisville, New Albany, and St. Louis Airline Railroad through the community in 1882 created an economic boom, growing the small community's population. By 1883, the community incorporated and held its first town board meeting on December 26, with William Koerner serving as board President.

The early settlers of Birdseye were a hardy bunch. The main source of power was the horse or mule and fields had to be cleared of timber, rocks and other natural debris. The soil, although fertile, was often "corned to death" by early farming practices, forcing settlers to use early fertilizers or let the field lay fallow. Citizens relied on each other to help harvest crops, build homes and storage buildings or care for one another in an emergency. Despite changes through the ages, this community spirit persists today and is the foundation of daily life in Birdseye.

The town's history, written and edited by L.L. Tussey for the Quasquicentennial and sponsored by the Birdseye Volunteer Fire Department and the Birdseye Park Board, recalls many of the town's more popular family and community stories. The book contains stories of small, one-room schools from the area and notes the common occurrence of baptisms in the nearby Anderson River. It recalls the annual Birdseye Reunion, when young boys would dress in their finest "church clothing" to present themselves to young ladies. They would often purchase tickets for their sweetheart to ride the steam swing—a version of our modern merry-go-round—at the event. An essay included in the book by Sereina Comstock remembers Birdseye's thriving sorghum industry. Known worldwide for its "smooth texture" and sweet taste, it was the town's fundamental cash crop at the turn of the 20th century. Farmers processed the sorghum into syrup, graded it according to color, and then sold the product both locally and abroad using the railroad as a distribution network.

Then there are stories like the one about Carl Neukam, written by his grandson Josh Neukam. A tribute to his grandfather, Josh wrote about Carl's service with the 151st Airborne Unit during the Korean War, his strong work ethic with companies such as Jasper

Novelty, J.H. Hines, Jasper Desk, and Kimball International, and his love and dedication for his wife Helen Whaley. It tells his unique life stories, such as the time he worked for the State Highway Department and battled for 72 hours straight against a winter storm or his recollection of returning from Korea only to have his plane catch fire. Carl's life may never be highlighted in any history books or be made into a movie, but it is nonetheless a quintessential example of a true American story and of a regular American hero.

Birdseye has grown over the years and seen many changes and improvements to the town. The creation of a Volunteer Fire Department in 1968, the establishment of a municipal park in 1983, and the opening of a new town hall this year are representative of the town's growth and development.

Many more stories from Birdseye serve as a testament to its strong Hoosier values and warm community spirit. But the greatest treasure Birdseye possesses is the people of this small Indiana community. Regardless of the challenges they face or the difficulties that lay ahead of them, they illustrate the best qualities of rural America.

It is an honor and a privilege to represent this community in Congress. I want to congratulate Birdseye on its Quasquicentennial, and look forward to seeing how this unique and wonderful town thrives for decades to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FACILITIES
AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I join together today to introduce the "Smithsonian Institution Facilities Authorization Act of 2008".

I thank my colleagues, including Committee on House Administration Chairman BRADY and Ranking Member EHLERS, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Ranking Member MICA and Subcommittee Chairwoman NORTON, and the Congressional Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, for their efforts to move this important legislation forward. I also thank the Smithsonian Institution for its effort on behalf of the legislation and welcome the new Secretary, Dr. G. Wayne Clough. I look forward to working with Secretary Clough as the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure works to address the enormous repair and maintenance backlog of the Smithsonian Institution facilities and ensure that its facilities meet the highest standards of energy efficiency and conservation.

The bill authorizes the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to design and construct laboratory space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center ("SERC") in Edgewater, Maryland. The bill also authorizes the Board of Regents to construct laboratory space to accommodate the terrestrial research