accomplished when people come together. The new, state-of-the-art wing is truly impressive.

I was honored to see it firsthand when I attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony and applauded the many people who poured their hearts into the project. The nearly 50,000 additional square feet; four cutting-edge operating suites; and patient rooms with maximum comfort and connectivity are remarkable, to say the least.

The goal of healthcare in Nebraska is a hospital like the Phelps Memorial Health Center, providing high-quality and compassionate care close to home. Today I celebrate their success in turning an aging institution into a state-of-the-art facility and highlight it as a shining example of what can be accomplished with determination and commitment.

TRIBUTE TO COAST GUARD HEROES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I mourn the loss of one of our brave Coast Guard airmen who gave his life in the line of duty when a Coast Guard MH–65C helicopter crashed during a training flight in the vicinity of Mobile Bay, AL, on Tuesday evening with four crewmembers aboard. Three other crewmembers remain missing, and the Coast Guard is continuing to search for them in cooperation with State and local authorities from Alabama and Florida.

The cause of the incident is still under investigation, but it serves as a tragic reminder of the heroism and sacrifice that the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard make on a regular basis to protect the people of this country from terrorist threats, natural disasters, environmental hazards, and criminal activity. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the Coast Guard airmen who died in the crash, rescued the downed aviator, and crewmembers leapt from the deck to escape the sinking ship. Flores, however, decided to strap himself to the lifejacket locker door so he could float lifejackets up to the surface as the ship was on fire. Twenty-two of Flores’s shipmates tragically perished that day, but 27 others survived thanks to his heroic sacrifice. SA Billy Flores was posthumously awarded the Coast Guard Medal for his actions that day, the service’s highest award for heroism during peacetime.

Margaret Norvell served for 41 years in the U.S. Lighthouse Service, beginning her career watching over the southern entrance to the Mississippi River at the Head of Passes and later taking over as keeper of the Port Pontchartrain Light and West End Light on Lake Pontchartrain in New Orleans. In 1903, a storm destroyed every building in her small Louisiana community of Buras except Norvell’s lighthouse. She refused to leave her home, working in the entire community and providing shelter and comfort to more than 200 of her fellow citizens who had been rendered homeless. Later in her career in the year 1926, Norvell received a report that a naval airplane had crashed into Lake Pontchartrain. She immediately set out in her small rowboat and battled a merciless squall for 2 hours before she finally arrived at the scene of the crash, rescued the downed aviator, and brought him back to shore.

Stewards-Mate First Class Charles Walter David was a cook aboard the Coast Guard cutter Comanche when the Army transport ship Dorchester was torpedoed by a U-boat on the night of December 29, 1941. David survived the crash, but the entire ship was on fire. He jumped into the water to save his shipmates. On January 28, 1942, the 180-foot Coast Guard buoy tender Blackthorn collided with a 605-foot oil tanker near the entrance to Tampa Bay. The Coast Guard vessel quickly began to capsize after impact, and crewmembers leapt from the deck to escape the sinking ship. Flores, however, decided to strap himself to the lifejacket locker door so he could float lifejackets up to the surface as the ship was on fire. Twenty-two of Flores’s shipmates tragically perished that day, but 27 others survived thanks to his heroic sacrifice. SA Billy Flores was posthumously awarded the Coast Guard Medal for his actions that day, the service’s highest award for heroism during peacetime.

TRIBUTE TO MELVA E. RADCLIFFE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Melva E. Radcliffe on her 111th birthday this past Saturday, March 3. A lifelong native of New Jersey, Mrs. Radcliffe is the oldest recorded resident of my State. Her father, the late Wilmer A. Cadmus, served as mayor of my home town of Paterson. Mrs. Radcliffe attended the Paterson Normal School, now William Paterson University, and taught art and music to elementary school students in Paterson until 1968. Her family tells us she has proudly voted in every election since 1921, and greatly enjoyed traveling after she retired. I wish Mrs. Radcliffe all the best, and congratulate her on this amazing milestone in her life.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, 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.)