

have served and led. Because of his efforts, northwest Arkansas is in a much better place today than we he first called it home.●

TRIBUTE TO URBAN RAHOI

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I honor an Alaska legend, Urban Rahoi, on the occasion of his 100th birthday, which occurred on Monday, January 6, 2019. Now, my colleagues might wonder, what the heck is an Urban Rahoi?

To his admirers throughout the State of Alaska, the question is more appropriately stated: What is Urban Rahoi not?

Urban is a World War II veteran, an Alaska pioneer, a homesteader, a lodge owner, a legendary hunting guide, an aviator, a snowmobiler, an entrepreneur, and a statesman. They call him “Urban Legend—kind of an odd play on words because “urban legends” are supposed to be false, but you will not find a more direct and honest guy than Urban Rahoi.

He has been flying for more than 80 years and has survived three plane crashes with barely a bruise. That earned Urban a reputation of being somewhat indestructible. That reputation has only strengthened over the years.

In 2016, Urban was out at his remote lodge on an inholding in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. He woke up at 6 a.m. one morning with a “difficult to describe feeling.” He felt something was just wrong and needed to get out of there. Urban was 97 years old at the time.

Now, most 97-year-olds who wake up to these feelings would likely call 911—not Urban. He gets in his plane and flies off from the lodge to Tok. Then he gets in a truck to begin a 202-mile drive to Fairbanks. He stops for breakfast, drops by a friend’s cabin for lunch and storytelling along the way, goes home for a half hour, and then drives over to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. It turns out Urban had suffered a stroke, albeit a minor one in his estimation.

Urban is fond of saying: “In my dictionary, two words don’t exist: can’t and impossible.” So he wasn’t about to let a little stroke stop him. Following his release from the hospital, Urban put in long hours in physical therapy. He was reportedly grumpy about missing fall hunting, but he was looking forward to returning to flying and participating in the Tired Iron snowmachine race.

The Tired Iron race is a fundraiser for the Boy Scouts that features racers in relatively ancient snowmachines, or what people in the lower 48 would call snowmobiles. Urban races a 1965 vintage Polaris Mustang. He is known to quip that the iron may be tired, but he isn’t. True to form, Urban won the 2017 Tired Iron, months after his stroke. Come to think of it, he won the 2018 Tired Iron as well.

Just as I said, “indestructible.”

Urban Rahoi was originally from Iron Mountain. He learned to fly in 1934, making his first solo flight at age 15, and joined the Air Force in 1942, where he flew B-17s during World War II. After the war, Urban attended Michigan Technological Institute for 18 months. Restless, he began flying in Alaska and soon packed up his wife Vi, their four dogs, and a pile of gear into his three-passenger Super Cruiser, flying north to Fairbanks. That was in 1947, a dozen years before statehood.

He was one of the founding partners of Interior Airways, which at one point was one of the largest operators of C-130 cargo planes in the world. He remained active in the Air Force Reserve in Alaska and founded his own air service, which enabled him to get back to his homestead on the Tanana River every night. A real estate developer, as well, he developed the Lakeview Terrace subdivision in South Fairbanks.

Urban holds Alaska State Guide license No. 1, issued shortly after statehood, but he began guiding from his Ptarmigan Lake Lodge even before Alaska statehood and remains a master sheep hunter today.

My family has many stories from hunts with Urban, and all end with how Urban kicked their butts as he hiked up and down the mountain, packing more than his share. Urban’s energy humbled the strongest hunter, regardless of age.

Urban is also a citizen-statesman. He served on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly and has run for the Alaska Legislature several times. He remains active in the realm of game policy.

In recent years, Urban has been working on a bucket list item: flying vintage planes. He flew the B-17G Yankee Lady out of the Yankee Air Museum in Ypsilanti, MI, when he was 94. In 2015, he wanted to fly a B-17 over the National Mall in commemoration of VE Day. Despite my efforts to help him gain permission to fly, he ended up a passenger because the government wouldn’t let him fly in restricted airspace. They clearly didn’t know my friend’s skill as an aviator.

During a visit to Eielson Air Force Base in 2016, Urban told his hosts that he lives by a simple philosophy: “Be happy with what you do and if you aren’t happy, go find something you’ll be happy with.” By all accounts, Urban has enjoyed a happy and successful life following that philosophy.

It is with great pleasure that I honor my friend Urban Rahoi in the U.S. Senate. On behalf of my colleagues, I extend Urban best wishes for what I know will continue to be an adventurous future.●

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 messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:20 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 128. An act to clarify the primary functions and duties of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 227. An act to amend the Small Business Act to specify what credit is given for certain subcontractors and to provide a dispute process for non-payment to subcontractors, and for other purposes.

H.R. 251. An act to extend by two years the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 259. An act to extend the Medicaid Money Follows the Person Rebalancing demonstration, to extend protection for Medicaid recipients of home and community-based services against spousal impoverishment, and for other purposes.

H.R. 269. An act to reauthorize certain programs under the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to public health security and all-hazards preparedness and response, to clarify the regulatory framework with respect to certain nonprescription drugs that are marketed without an approved drug application, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 4 of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-196), and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States Semiquincentennial Commission: Mr. Evans of Pennsylvania.

At 5:36 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 264. An act making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 227. An act to amend the Small Business Act to specify what credit is given for certain subcontractors and to provide a dispute process for non-payment to subcontractors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.