

Empowerment Zone, Beadle and Spink Enterprise Community, four Champion Communities, and public information activities for USDA rural development. He served on the senior management team for USDA rural development in South Dakota and is the recipient of the 1999 USDA Road Warrior Award. He served as chairman of the South Dakota Rural Development Council and also served USDA on several national committees. Pat led the process for a 5-year strategic plan for rural development in South Dakota, which included strategic planning processes for eight American Indian tribes. He shared responsibilities in the Federal/private collaboration that planned and developed the SuAnne Big Crow Youth Wellness Project on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Pat will be greatly missed at the USDA rural development in South Dakota, and I wish Pat, his wife Donna, and their family all the best in the days to come. They are good friends, and I look forward to spending time with them in the future. It is an honor for me to share Pat's accomplishments with my colleagues and to publicly commend his outstanding services to my office and the people of South Dakota.●

A SALUTE TO PHIL WARD

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise on the floor today to express my deep appreciation for Phil Ward's service as director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture. As a Senator and as someone who has made his living from the land, I can say that Phil's time as director demonstrated a clear understanding not only of the land, but also the people who rely on it for their livelihood.

By trade, Phil Ward is both a farmer and a teacher. Both professions require a great deal of patience and perspective, and Phil has admirably displayed these virtues as ODA director. Producers respect Phil because of the time he has personally spent with them and his constant call for balance in natural resources policy.

Since he was appointed by the Governor in 1999, Phil guided the department as it dealt with a growing number of challenges facing Oregon agriculture. The collapse of the Asian market and implementation of S. 1010 are two prime examples. Phil was also a regional leader, serving as president of the Western Association of State Departments of Agriculture, played a prominent role in the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and was extensively involved in trilateral accord discussions with Canada and Mexico on agricultural issues.

Phil Ward has also been a great advocate for Oregon agriculture in dealing with the Federal Government. His agency successfully took over responsibility from the Environmental Protection Agency for implementing water quality standards for CAFOs. Phil and

the ODA also worked closely with me and my office in ensuring that the 2002 farm bill was a hand up to the vast array of Oregon farm producers struggling through drought, low commodity prices, and increasing regulatory obligations.

One of the things I admire most about Phil Ward is that his service to Oregon always rose above partisan politics and he stood tall for Oregon's farmers and ranchers when they needed him on their side. On behalf of myself and Oregon's agricultural community, I thank Phil Ward for his dedicated service to Oregon, for his years of counsel to me, and to wish him all the best in his future pursuits.●

TRIBUTE TO UCONN HUSKIES WOMEN'S BASKETBALL RECORD-BREAKING STREAK

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, it's my pleasure to rise in tribute to the University of Connecticut Huskies women's basketball team, which on Saturday, January 18, made Division I history by winning their 55th consecutive game. In doing so, they surpassed the 54-game streak set by Louisiana Tech between 1980 and 1982 and delighted fans all across my state.

Fifty-five straight wins would be an incredible accomplishment in any sport at any time. But it's especially impressive in women's college basketball today, because this is an era of true parity in the sport. There are so many strong teams able to compete with and, on any given night, beat a great team like the Huskies. But the Huskies keep on working, and they keep on winning. At home and on the road, in blowouts and in squeakers. Sometimes they win with defense. Sometimes with 3-point shooting. Sometimes with pure hustle. But they always find a way.

It's no wonder the Huskies have an admirer in legendary UCLA coach John Wooden, whose UCLA men's basketball teams in the early 70s set an all-time Division I record with 88 straight wins. Coach Wooden said of what the Huskies have accomplished, "It's a tremendous feat in any era. I think they play the pure game, more so than the men. The best college basketball in my opinion is played by the better women's teams."

Of course, last year the very best team in the nation was UConn, which racked up a perfect 39-0 season en route to the national championship. The players on that team, led by All-American seniors Sue Bird, Tamika Williams, Swin Cash and Asjha Jones built the bulk of this record streak.

And this season, a team led by All-American junior Diana Taurasi and many terrific young players is in the hunt for the championship again. There will be many tough games to play. Just this Monday, January 20, they matched up against Notre Dame and extended the streak to 56. And on February 1st, they will play Duke, now ranked first in the country.

Competition isn't about perfection. It's about perseverance. I'm reminded of the words of Michael Jordan, who said, "I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot . . . and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that's precisely why I succeed." So even if, if, the team should lose someday, the real measure of their character will be how they bounce back, what they learn, how they become an even better team because of it.

So much of the credit for this team's success goes to coach Geno Auriemma, who has built the best program in the nation during his 18 years in Storrs. Assistant Coach Chris Dailey has also played a pivotal part in the remarkable run. The Huskies have won three national championships over the last seven years. They have made 14 straight NCAA tournament appearances and won a combined 23 Big East regular and tournament championships. Over the last three years, they've amassed an astounding 123-4 record.

I wish them luck in the weeks and months to come as they seek to extend the streak further. This has been a month of history in women's college basketball. Tennessee coach Pat Summit just won her 800th game, and the Huskies won their 55th straight victory. It's a golden time for the sport, and for all the fans who love it.●

RECOGNIZING DR. JAMES MONTGOMERY OF ROSWELL, NM, AND THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise before you today not only to recognize the dedication and hard work of a fellow New Mexican, but to celebrate a century of conservation by the National Wildlife Refuge System.

On February 1 of this year, the man I honor today, Dr. James Montgomery of Roswell, NM, will receive the 2003 Refuge Volunteer of the Year award offered by the National Wildlife Refuge Association. This award is given to an individual who displays outstanding dedication to the preservation and advancement of the national refuge system and its endeavors to protect the beauty of the American landscape.

Dr. Montgomery has spent the last 15 years and given more than 10,000 hours of service protecting and improving the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Roswell. He has done this for no compensation, motivated only by his concern and appreciation of the refuge. During his work, Dr. Montgomery played an integral role in many important projects, including: spearheading efforts to maintain and establish species on the refuge; providing support to community outreach and events service; and assisting refuge staff in their budget process. Dr. Montgomery also holds the position of treasurer for the