

the family they raised from my very first experiences with them.

For more than 40 years, the Dopfs worked together to publish a small weekly newspaper known as the Upper Country News-Reporter. It was printed on newsprint, but I have no doubt in my mind that this paper represented and still does the very fabric of that community. The paper plays that role because the Dopfs wanted it that way, and made sure it happened.

I believe my first experience with Stu Dopf was almost 50 years ago at the Washington County Fair in Cambridge. I was in 4-H and had entered fat calves to be judged at the fair. Now, to some reporters or newspaper editors, livestock judging at a county fair may not seem like much of an assignment. But Stu understood the community in which he lived, and the farm and ranch families that made it a closely-knit community. People were interested in the activities and accomplishments of their neighbors, and no achievement was too small to report.

After that, any time I had some news or any stories about my 4-H or FFA activities, or public speaking contests, I knew I could stop by the News-Reporter office, where the Dopfs would be certain to listen. More often than not, those stories would show up somewhere on the pages of the next issue. Later, when I made my decision to run for office for the first time, for a seat in the Idaho State Senate, I went to the Dopfs to ask if they would print the pocket brochure for my campaign. Their sons, Alan and Don, had just started a printing business the year before, so it was an easy choice for me to go there.

Throughout my life, whether in the activities of my younger days, my endeavors in the legislature, or my time in the U.S. House and Senate, Stu Dopf always provided a fair, unbiased account in the News-Reporter. He always gave me a fair opportunity to make my point. Continuing Stu's example, the editors generously include each weekly column I write in the paper, and I am truly grateful.

Even after they retired, the influence of Mr. and Mrs. Dopf remained at the News-Reporter. Their children have carried on the same brand of community reporting, and this is why I continue to subscribe to the paper and read and enjoy it every week.

The Dopfs took pride in Cambridge and Washington County, and they loved it down to the smallest details. They took a special interest in the youth of the area, including articles and pictures of local high school sporting events, essay contest winners, invitations to baby showers, and as I mentioned, 4-H and FFA news.

They were great community people, and they were great people in their community. The Dopfs were a big reason I had such a positive experience growing up in rural Washington County. It is people like them who make Cambridge, Midvale, Weiser, and other small towns across Idaho great places

to live. I'm sure they are resting peacefully in Heaven.

TRIBUTE TO WALLACE RUSTAD

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a member of my staff who will be retiring from his position in the U.S. Senate. Wally Rustad is a man who is recognized by his colleagues and myself as an extremely dedicated, hard-working, and joyful public servant.

Mr. Rustad has had a remarkable career in public service, spanning close to half a century. He joined the Army in 1955, where he served in Germany until 1958 and in the Reserves until 1961. Following that, he taught high school history and literature in Williston, ND. In 1965, he pursued his interest in politics with a move to Washington, D.C. to become a legislative assistant for the Honorable Rolland Redlin in the U.S. House of Representatives. After 2 years, he returned to North Dakota to work for Basin Electric Cooperative. But in 1970, he was drawn back to Washington, D.C. to work for Congressman Arthur Link in the U.S. House of Representatives as chief of staff and senior spokesperson.

With experience gained from his time on Capitol Hill, Mr. Rustad went on to a position with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, where he soon became the director of Government Relations. His work at the NRECA was recognized and praised by many. Under his direction, the NRECA saw the strength of its political influence grow substantially, prompting the Wall Street Journal to call the co-op lobby the second most powerful in Washington. He spent his years on the political front lines defending against attacks on the rural electric program. On February 17, 2004, Wally was presented with the prestigious Clyde T. Ellis Award, which honors an individual for contributions clearly above the routine call of duty in furthering the principles and progress of rural electrification and the development and utilization of national resources.

For the past 5½ years, I have been honored to have Wally serve on my staff. He brought with him his extensive experience in the energy industry and rural economic development and a tremendous dedication to our home State of North Dakota. During his tenure in my office, he has worked on economic development issues for North Dakota and in outreach to numerous individuals and groups throughout the State. As my State liaison, he has built strong rapport and stayed in close contact with constituents, responding to needs and monitoring priority issues to make sure that the views of North Dakotans are represented in Washington.

A native of Grenora, ND, population 261, Wally is a tremendous advocate for our home State. He and his family still own a farm near Grenora. Last summer, Wally and his wife, Marlys, organized a trip for a group of 38 of their

friends to tour the State. They visited the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and trails along the Missouri River, toured the Theodore Roosevelt National Park, attended the musical and pitch fork fondue in Medora, and did a lot of golfing. His tour group was awed by the history and beauty of the State and, of course, its golf courses. As Wally put it, it was "one small thing" he could do to help promote economic development and tourism in North Dakota.

Wally and his wife of 43 years, Marlys Rustad nee Jacobson, live in Leesburg, VA. Their daughter Kimberly and her husband, Clark Kelly, and their children, Avery, Kate and William, live in Mobile, AL. Their daughter Jill and her husband Jonathan Adler, and their children, Julia, Jami and Jessica, live in Leesburg, VA. Jon, their son, lives in Los Angeles, CA.

Wally is a man with great dedication to public service. He arrives at work each day shortly after 6 a.m., after commuting for 2 hours, and brews the first pot of coffee. He greets his colleagues with a smile on his face and the news of the day as they arrive into work. As the late North Dakota Senator Quentin Burdick once said, "Wally Rustad is a small-town North Dakotan who has made it big in Washington. He has a genuine commitment to serving the people of rural America."

As Wally goes forward in his life, I hope that he proudly looks back from time to time and knows what a difference he has made in the lives of so many people. He is a good friend and a wonderful American whom I am honored to have had the pleasure to work with. I commend him for his accomplishments and outstanding service and wish him well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RUSS DONDERO

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Professor Russ Dondero of Pacific University in Forest Grove, OR. Professor Dondero is retiring from a full-time teaching load in the Department of Politics and Government at the end of this school year. He is being honored this week by his current and former students and friends during events leading up to the annual Pacific University Tom McCall Forum in Portland, OR on February 17.

The Tom McCall Forum may be Professor Dondero's most visible accomplishment. Now in its 23rd year, the forum has become the premier public affairs event in the Pacific Northwest, drawing national political figures each year for a spirited debate between a liberal and a conservative of national interest. The driving force throughout the Forum's history has been Professor Dondero. He has taken the event from the small confines of a basement room on campus to an event that attracts over 1,000 people and the cameras of C-SPAN.