

Pomerleau's niece, Marcelle Leahy, wife of Sen. Patrick Leahy, encouraged her uncle to play a role in helping the Guard families with whom she was working through the Guard's Family Readiness Group. Pomerleau was more than happy to do it.

It doesn't take much for Pomerleau to be persuaded to share his good fortune with others. He "came up the hard way," his son Ernie said last week. Tony Pomerleau has been there.

He was the third child of Ernest and Alma Pomerleau, a hardworking French-Canadian couple who decided to try their chances across the border in Vermont. When Pomerleau was 6 months old, the family moved to a dairy farm in Barton, according to an unpublished biography the family has put together.

As a child, Pomerleau was touched by two formative incidents. First, he fell down the basement stairs at age 3 and was forced to wear an iron corset. Doctors feared his life would be shortened.

"He wasn't supposed to live beyond 12 years old," Erie Pomerleau said. "And here he is, 89 and still going strong."

The second incident, according to the family biography, was something of a miracle. Alma Pomerleau took her son, age 10, to Ste. Anne de Beaupre in Quebec—the shrine that is covered in crutches and other medical aids left behind by countless others who believed they were cured.

Alma removed young Tony's iron brace, and they returned home to Vermont without it. Her son was fine.

"Of course it was a miracle. It was my mother's prayers," Pomerleau said in the biography.

And so Tony Pomerleau gives back. He gives and gives, according to the families, charities, schools and organizations that have been touched by his spirit.

There's the renowned annual party, organized by the Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, and paid for by Pomerleau. Now there's also the Guard party. There is St. Michael's College in Colchester, where Pomerleau, received an honorary doctorate after years of contributing to the campus. There is Burlington's Church Street, which he helped rejuvenate in the 1950s. There is the Burlington Police Department, where Pomerleau was a longtime police commissioner. He bought the North Avenue building for the police headquarters and has provided ongoing support for the officers, such as laptop computers for their patrol cars. There are the scholarships at Rice Memorial High School, the renovations at Christ the King Church, the trips Pomerleau has funded for Burlington schoolchildren, and the regular donations to the American Red Cross, United Way of Chittenden County and the Salvation Army.

Pomerleau started his entrepreneurial life as a child, soon after he shed that iron brace. He sold haircuts and canaries. He washed cars, ran errands and helped his family in their general store in Newport. In 1942, after working for a national shoe store chain up and down the East Coast, he decided to settle in Burlington where he bought a failing grocery store. Within three years, he owned four stores and a wholesale beverage business. In 1951, he started his real estate career and by age 45, he was a millionaire. Pomerleau built Vermont's first shopping center in the 1950s, the Ethan Allen Shopping Plaza, and then developed about 20 more.

He has lived large, and the beautiful Greek Revival building on College Street that houses Pomerleau Real Estate is a testament to that life.

Through it all, Pomerleau's wife, Rita, and 10 children, two of whom have died, have been his main focus. Pomerleau is also the proud grandfather of 13.

In many ways, Tony Pomerleau remains the optimistic boy who left his iron brace behind at Ste. Anne de Beaupre.

"Someone asked him the other day when he was going to retire," son Ernie said. "And he said, 'When I get old.'"

Never get old, Mr. P. We like you the way you are.

HONORING PRESIDENT GERALD FORD

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, even as we usher in a new Congress, Americans have said farewell to one of our Chief Executives, President Gerald R. Ford. President Ford was a man of character and integrity, a leader of hope and purpose. I hope and pray that the outpouring of support for President Ford in recent days will be a source of comfort and strength for his family and especially for his beloved wife, First Lady Betty Ford.

The people of Michigan's Fifth District loved their Congressman Jerry Ford. They sent him to the House of Representatives 13 times, by large margins. In fact, Congressman Ford's reelection percentages over nearly a quarter century did not vary by more than a few points. His constituents supported him as he served them, consistently and solidly.

It is easy to see why his constituents felt such a connection with him. Jerry Ford grew up in Grand Rapids, MI. He achieved the rank of Eagle Scout and, in high school, joined the honor society and was named to all-city and all-State football teams. At the University of Michigan, he played center on two national championship football teams and was named most valuable player in 1934.

Early in life, Jerry Ford's values and basic good sense helped him see past the excitement of the moment. He passed up opportunities to use his athletic prowess for the Detroit Lions and Green Bay Packers and instead decided to coach boxing and football at Yale University, where he realized his goal of attending law school. He returned to Grand Rapids to begin practicing law and, after serving in the Navy during World War II, returned again to practice law and seek election to Congress in 1948. Somehow in all that activity, he found time to court Elizabeth Bloomer. She must have been a very understanding woman because he even campaigned on their wedding day. President Ford would later say that his most valued advice was that which came from his wife. They spent 58 years together and had four wonderful children.

The qualities that endeared Congressman Ford to his constituents also inspired trust in his colleagues in the House, who elected him Republican Conference chairman in 1963 and then Republican leader in 1965. In fact, Congressman Ford was so well regarded that President Lyndon Johnson named him to the Warren Commission which investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and President

Richard Nixon tapped him to replace the resigned Vice President Spiro Agnew.

Gerald Ford loved the House of Representatives, and his personal political goal was to become Speaker of the House. He declined invitations to run for the Senate and for Governor. Ironically, while the Republicans' minority status kept him from leading that Chamber, his appointment as Vice President allowed him to become President of the Senate.

The Ford Presidency was brief, just 29 months long, but broke significant new political ground. He was the only occupant of the Oval Office who was never elected either President or Vice President. Former New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller's appointment as Vice President meant that, for the first time in American history, neither of the Nation's two top officers had been elected to either office. The Ford and Rockefeller appointments were the first handled under the procedures established by the 25th amendment to the Constitution, ratified less than a decade earlier. And, of course, President Ford presided over our Nation's bicentennial in 1976.

The passage of even a few years, let alone a few decades, can easily change memories and perspectives. In recent years, the majority party has held either House of Congress by a modest margin. In this body today, the balance of power could rest on one Senator. At one point during Gerald Ford's service in the House, however, Democrats outnumbered Republicans by more than 2-to-1. Even under those difficult circumstances, Congressman Ford found ways of reaching across the aisle, working productively with the other party to find solutions to the Nation's problems.

When Gerald Ford took up residence at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, there were times when he had to stand up to Congress. He issued an astounding 66 vetoes in fewer than 3 years, and Congress was able to override just a few.

President Ford served during one of the most trying times in American history, facing troubles at home and abroad. At home, there was the Watergate scandal that had resulted in the Ford Presidency. In 1975, unemployment reached a level nearly twice what it is today. Inflation was in double digits. Fears of energy shortages persisted. Elsewhere in the world, President Ford faced the war in Vietnam and crises in the Middle East and the continued threat posed by the former Soviet Union. And on top of all of that, he shouldered the burden of restoring Americans' faith in their leaders and in democracy itself. Last week in his eulogy, Dr. Henry Kissinger, President Ford's Secretary of State, put it this way: "Unassuming and without guile, Gerald Ford undertook to restore the confidence of Americans in their political institutions and purposes."

He made decisions, some of which were unpopular at the time, that he

felt were necessary for the good of the Nation. Some say that these contributed to his narrow loss to Jimmy Carter. At the same time, from opinion polls after the political conventions showing the incumbent trailing by nearly 30 points, President Ford closed the gap to make the 1976 election one of the closest in American history.

We are all thankful President Ford did not simply retire from public life when he left the White House. For nearly three decades, he remained active as a statesman and involved in important issues. He founded, and for many years chaired, the World Forum conducted by the American Enterprise Institute, and he continued writing about some of the political and social challenges of our day. In 2001, he authored a poignant column which appeared in the Washington Post and endorsed legislation to promote regenerative therapies that can give hope to Americans suffering from chronic diseases. As a cosponsor of that legislation, I was moved and grateful for President Ford's wisdom and support.

For these and so many other activities and contributions, President Ford received the Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian award, in 1999 and the Profiles in Courage Award from the Kennedy Foundation in 2001. In 1999, he and Mrs. Ford received the Congressional Gold Medal for their dedicated public service and humanitarian contributions.

As great as President Ford was, he was always the first to acknowledge his wonderful spouse, and I would be remiss, if I did not say a few words about Betty Ford. She was such a model of grace and dignity, inspiring us with her love and devotion to her family. Betty Ford was a bold First Lady, candidly sharing with the Nation her struggles with cancer and chemical dependency. She did not, however, stop there but turned those struggles into a crusade to help others. She served as cochairman of the Susan G. Komen Foundation when it was founded in 1982. Each year, she presents the Betty Ford Award from that foundation to a champion in the fight against breast cancer. The Betty Ford Center, which she founded in 1982, is today one of the leading treatment facilities in America, perhaps the world, and Mrs. Ford continues to serve as its board chairman.

As recently as last week, Betty and her four children, Steve, Mike, Jack, and Susan, showed us their tremendous devotion and kindness as they stood in the Capitol Rotunda for hours on end greeting every visitor who came to pay their respects to President Ford. Even in the face of tragedy, Betty and her children are gracious.

President Ford believed that most people were mostly good most of the time. That optimistic attitude led him once to say that while he had many adversaries in his political life, he could not remember having a single enemy. When he took the oath of office on Au-

gust 9, 1974, he offered not an inaugural address but what he called just a little straight talk among friends. He made a commitment, a compact, with his fellow Americans, in which he said:

You have not elected me as your President by your ballots, he said, and so I ask you to confirm me as your President with your prayers . . . I have not sought this enormous responsibility, but I will not shirk it . . . Our Constitution works; our great republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here the people rule . . . God helping me, I will not let you down.

Those words so reflected the character and vision of President Ford that they were printed in the opening pages of the commemorative program distributed when the Gerald R. Ford Museum was dedicated in September 1981 in Grand Rapids. It is there, along the Grand River, that thousands of Americans, many waiting for hours in the cold, paid a final tribute to our 38th President. And it is nearby, in the city he loved and that loved him, that President Ford was laid to rest.

Gerald Ford did not let us down. It is fitting that on the gravestone of this remarkable man, this distinguished public servant, this healer of our Nation, are the simple words: Lives Committed to God, Country, and Love.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, President Gerald Ford had a distinguished career of public service marked by his exceptional personal qualities, and his passing is a sad moment for all Americans.

President Ford was born in Omaha, NE in 1913 and grew up in Grand Rapids, MI. As a student at the University of Michigan, Ford was an allstar football player and became an assistant football coach at Yale University while he earned his law degree. During his service in World War II, he attained the rank of lieutenant commander in the Navy.

President Ford was first elected to Congress in 1948 and served for 25 years, eight as the minority leader. He was selected to serve as Vice President and became President because he was a man who could restore integrity to the Presidency, hope in America, and bridge partisan divides in Congress.

I first met Gerald Ford when he was the House minority leader and I was chief of staff for Congressman John Y. McCollister from Omaha. I have never met a person in politics who was a more decent and more complete individual than President Ford. He earned the trust and confidence of the American people through his character, competency and common decency.

I had the honor of attending his Capitol memorial service in the Rotunda last week with my daughter, Allyn, and son, Ziller. I am grateful and proud that they had the opportunity to hear President Ford remembered and eulogized with eloquence, grace, and honesty. America is a better place because of President Gerald Ford. He will be greatly missed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL MATTHEW JOSEPH STANLEY

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay special tribute to U.S. Army CPL Matthew Joseph Stanley of Wolfeboro, NH. Tragically, on December 16, 2006, this courageous young soldier and two of his comrades gave their last full measure for our Nation when their Army vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Taji, Iraq, north of Baghdad. At the time of this hostile action Corporal Stanley, a cavalry scout with C Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, based in Fort Hood, TX, was serving his second tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Matthew was a 2002 graduate of Kingswood Regional High School where he was wellknown and liked by his teachers and fellow students. Classmates remember Matthew as fun, always laughing and having a smile on his face. Family and friends say he was one of the nicest guys you would ever want to meet and remember his fondness for hunting and fishing.

Sensing a call to duty, and because of his desire to protect his country, in December 2003, Matthew joined the U.S. Army. Upon completing basic training at Fort Knox, KY, in the spring of 2004, he reported to Fort Hood, TX. The awards and decorations that Corporal Stanley received over the succeeding months are a testament to the strong character of this man. They include the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, two Army Commendation Medals, Army Good Conduct Medal, Combat Action Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and Expert Rifle Qualification Badge. He was posthumously promoted to the rank of corporal.

Patriots from the state of New Hampshire have served our Nation with honor and distinction from Bunker Hill to Taji—and U.S. Army CPL Matthew Stanley served and fought in that same fine tradition. During our country's difficult Revolutionary War, Thomas Paine wrote "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." In these turbulent times Matthew stood with the country he loved, served it with distinction and honor, and earned and deserves our love and thanks.

My sympathy, condolences, and prayers go out to Matthew's wife Amy, his parents Lynn and Richard, his brothers and sisters, and to his other family members and many friends who have suffered this most grievous loss. All will sorely miss Matthew Stanley, a 22-year-old patriot who was proud of his family, proud of where he lived, and proud of what he did. In the words of Daniel Webster—may his remembrance