

how a thirst for new experiences can fill a lifetime. My wife Barbara and I send our condolences to her beloved children, her son Ira and her daughter Carol, her grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren. We do so with the sure knowledge that the joy of Belle Lipman's life will over time ease the pain of her passing, leaving the warmest of memories to sustain family and friends.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING GEORGE OTT

• **Mr. DORGAN.** Mr. President, a friend of mine, Walt Jacobs, from New England, ND, writes a column in his local newspaper titled "Around The Pot." On August 28, 2009, he wrote a wonderful column about a courageous man named George Ott and his service to our country as an Air Force pilot in World War II. I wanted to share it with my colleagues. The column is as follows:

Today, as I sit with pen in hand, my thoughts are with a good friend, George Ott, who is spending his days at Hawk's Point in retirement in Dickinson. My first recollection of George is when he was in high school at St. Mary's with his sister, Clara in the 30's, a time when there were no crops, low prices, land was blowing and the future was dismal for everyone.

Crops were better in 1939, and we experienced good weather and a prosperous economy in the early 40's was enhanced by the war in Europe and the United States entry to the conflict in December of 1941. George interrupted his college and volunteered for duty in the Air Force in 1940 and became a bomber pilot. George bombed a Japanese submarine off the west coast of Washington, one of the first of the war. Stationed in England in 1943, his bomber was chosen to fly a secret mission for the State Department which directed him to fly with a courier to Accru, Africa and from there to Brazil, South America and then to complete the secret mission to Washington, D.C. The three-day trip was met in Washington and the military cover and secrecy convinced the pilot of the mission's urgency and its military importance.

He was sent back to England and continued the daylight missions over Europe as squadron commander until Black Friday, the last day of the day-light raids over Germany until the Air Force could provide aerial cover for the bombers. Until that raid on the 14th day of October, the air cover from England had to turn back over Germany when they reached their fuel limit, leaving the bombers to provide their own firepower for defense. As the planes were shot down from their defense formation, the squadrons were left to the mercy of the German planes. On that Friday, George left England, commander of the bomber group to bomb the ball-bearing factory at Schweinfurt. He, in his leading plane, was hit by defensive German anti-aircraft fire before he reached the target and fell out of formation. (As were 87 percent of the American bombers shot down on that day on the Schweinfurt raid.) He continued at a slower pace with the loss of motors, but dropped his bombs and turned his plane for home in England. George determined it was best for the crew to bail out of the lumbering air craft over northern Germany, but he continued with one of the four

engines running and hoped to make the coast of England. As he flew the plane alone, he spotted a Messerschmitt fighter alongside and gave George a friendly thumbs down sign and George left his plane. As he floated to the earth in his parachute, he saw his bomber shot from the sky.

George landed in a potato patch and as he scrambled to bury his chute, he heard a sound behind him and there stood a civilian home-guard with a pointed gun. George said the bore looked big enough to crawl into with the statement, "For you the krieg bist fertig." (For you the war is over.)

As George walked around his prison camp he reached through the fence and daily brought the tufts of grass to his stalag and replanted the grass until he had a lawn by his barracks, 4x8. As that farm boy spent his time in his prison, the spirit of his farming heritage wanted to lie on the grass while waiting for the war to end.

So, today George is waiting once again, but he is not lying on the grass by his stalag in enemy land, but at Hawk's Point with the comfort he deserves so much.

So on Wednesday we will honor George on his 90th birthday. Thank you, George, a good and honorable servant.●

2009 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARD

• **Ms. LANDRIEU.** Mr. President, as we focus on improving the workplace and enhancing benefits for employees throughout the Nation, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight an outstanding group of law enforcement officers from Louisiana.

For the last 8 years, our country has been at war. Thousands of Americans left their usual workplace to honor their commitment to the armed services. America's employers have done an outstanding job of supporting our National Guard and Reserve members both in and outside the workplace. Currently, almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of National Guard and Reserve members. This support for our "Citizen Soldiers" allows them to continue their invaluable service to our country.

Each year Guard and Reserve members and their families nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees. This year, Sheriff Andy Brown and the Jackson Parish Sheriff's Department in Jonesboro, LA, have been selected as one of the 15 employers to receive the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. This award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. As an added honor, Sheriff Brown has been selected as one of the attendees to speak on behalf of these 15 recipients at the 14th Annual Awards Ceremony on September 17.

The Jackson Parish Sheriff's Department led by Sheriff Andy Brown was selected out of more than 3,200 nominees from across the Nation. Sheriff Brown and his employees went beyond the call of duty to extend employment support to employees who have volun-

teered to serve in our Nation's Armed Forces.

The Jackson Parish Sheriff's department employs seven part-time service-members. Among the benefits that the Jackson Parish Sheriff's department provides its National Guard and Reserve employees is full pay for service-members called away on duty for more than 12 months. The department also provides continuous health care, dental, and life insurance benefits to ensure coverage and support for service-members' families while the member is on active duty.

Sheriff Brown has fostered a supportive work environment for service-members by requiring every supervisor and employee in his department to thoroughly understand and implement the servicemember rights outlined in the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Act. His positive attitude and accommodation for our citizen soldiers demonstrates an unwavering support that exemplifies the spirit of the Employer Support Freedom Award.

I offer my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Sheriff Brown and the entire Jackson Parish Sheriff's Department. The Employer Support Freedom Award is a tremendous honor and a fitting recognition of Sheriff Brown's commitment to our troops and his service to Louisiana and our Nation.●

COMMENDING CAROLE ROPER PARK VAUGHAN

• **Mrs. MCCASKILL.** Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to my friend and former colleague, as well as an outstanding woman of service, Carole Roper Park Vaughan. From 1977 through 1994, Carole represented the 51st District of Missouri, which includes the home of President Harry S. Truman, in the Missouri House of Representatives. On September 18, Carole will celebrate her 70th birthday, and I just want to take a few minutes today to honor her and the contribution she made to so many lives in Missouri.

Carole was born to Rudy and Rose Roper of Sugar Creek, MO, both children of Croatian emigrants. Carole's father served as the mayor of Sugar Creek for 40 years, from 1940 until 1980, so she came by her political acumen naturally. In fact, while other little girls were playing with dolls, stuffed animals, or having teas, Carole was with her father learning the art of making a deal, a skill she would later take with her to the State legislature.

Though politics was in her blood, her dedication to public service did not begin with elected office. After graduating from the University of Missouri-Kansas City with a bachelor of arts degree in education, Carole pursued a teaching career in the Kansas City school district. For 12 years, she taught elementary education in some of the poorest school districts in the Kansas City area. It was here that she fully realized the importance of community involvement. Her students