

"And we were supposed to go in behind the first wave of troops in to Japan and evacuate POWs."

Fortunately, the cover of the first wave of troops was not needed, as the two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, effectively ending the war.

The war was over, but Barkwill's duties on the recovered personnel outfit were still needed, and he was sent to POW camps in Japan to look for soldiers, check out graves for information and report back.

"It was interesting work," he said.

From there, Barkwill was sent to a different unit—this one in Cebu City in the Phillipines—for some more interesting work. He was to investigate claims that the Filipinos made in regards to G.I.s' stealing items.

"It was interesting," he said. "They come in to our office. We set up an office down in Cebu City, and they come in and file applications with their claims. We had a bunch of Filipinos working for us, and they'd fill out their forms for them, and then we'd have to go out and investigate. Try to figure out whether they were legitimate or not. That was fun."

Everything from stolen chickens, cows and bicycles was investigated, as best he could, by Barkwill and his men. He was there for only about a month before finally coming home in February of 1946.

For Barkwill, his military experience, while not always pleasant, was beneficial.

"I . . . can't say I enjoyed it, but it was something I'll never forget," he said. "It was . . . an education. Quite an education. To this day, I don't think it hurts anyone to spend some time in the military. I feel it's quite an enlightening education."

That experience is also one that is not easy to share with a stranger. Barkwill said that it's a difficult topic for many veterans to share, with even their own families.

"I've enjoyed talking to a lot of old guys like myself around," he said. "We've talked about things that happened. You get to talking about what happened here and there, and you talk about things you haven't thought about for years and things you never told your kids. My daughter from Colorado, it was just a couple of years ago, found out a little bit about my military history. She was asking me questions and so I sat down and told her a little bit about what had happened. It was interesting overseas to see what the Japanese had done, what they were doing and how they had dug in. They were there forever. They found some of them in recent years still living in the hills still thinking the war is on."

It's also interesting, he said, how your memories work. Barkwill's wife, Mary, joked that he could remember his time in the military with such clarity, yet he doesn't remember what he did yesterday.

"Yeah, some of it comes back, Mary," he laughed. "It's amazing how your memory works."

Many of the memories came to Barkwill without any trouble as he recalled specific incidents. Being caught in a typhoon in Japan, finding a place for a haircut and a shave over there, and most of all arriving back in the United States after serving.

"Anybody that goes into the military, you get what you can out of it," he said. "You go and serve your time and hope that you get home. I tell you, that's a thrill. When you get on a ship and come back under the Golden Gate Bridge and see that bridge up there and see that harbor and that ship pulls up to the dock and you know you're back on terra firma in the United States. That was very, very exciting for me."

For Barkwill, it all started with a young man building models . . . and after the

hobby managed to lead him into the military, it also brought him to the Boone & Scenic Valley Rail Road in 1983, where he joined the Boone Railroad Historical Society and designed and oversaw the construction of the depot for the new railroad. His reason for doing so? Model trains.

It's amazing where a love for a simple hobby can take you, and the stories that follow as a result.

I commend Ken Barkwill for his many years of loyalty and service to our great nation. It is an immense honor to represent him in the United States Congress, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING NATIONAL SPELLING BEE CHAMPION, FINALISTS, AND PARTICIPANTS

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2010

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1494.

Our nation's future rests on the shoulders of our youth, and the exceptional dedication and intelligence displayed by all of the students who took part in the 84th Scripps National Spelling Bee earlier this year gives me great confidence that our future will be a bright one.

As the largest and longest-miming educational promotion in the United States, this year's Scripps National Spelling Bee brought together 273 spellers from all over the United States and across the world. The rigorous preparation and diligence required by these students to compete at this international level is truly incredible.

I would specifically like to recognize Shantanu Srivatsa, a student at Cheney Middle School in West Fargo, North Dakota, for tying for second place in this competition. This was Shantanu's third consecutive appearance at the Spelling Bee, and I was impressed to learn that his favorite subject in school is in fact mathematics, and that in addition to his participation in the spelling bee, he also represents his school at regional and state mathematics competitions.

When reviewing the words Shantanu correctly spelled to make it to the highest levels of the competition, I am astounded by his command of the English language. Though I represent a state with a large sugar beet industry, I must admit that I did not know that a cossette was part of the sugar refining process—and I certainly did not know how to spell it. Thanks to Shantanu, I now know that it is cossette, C-O-S-S-E-T-T-E.

Lest this example lead one to suspect that Shantanu's vocabulary was limited to the geographically proximate—his correct spelling of schlieren, that would be S-C-H-L-I-E-R-E-N, clearly demonstrates that the breadth of his knowledge includes subjects, or more precisely substances, that would be exceedingly rare in North Dakota due to the geologic history of the northern Great Plains.

Students like Shantanu and all of the other participants in this competition not only represent the best students in our nation, but also exemplify the ideals of hard work, dedication, and poise that are an inspiration to us all.

Please join me in supporting all of the Scripps National Spelling Bee participants who

have demonstrated the highest levels of academic achievement by supporting this resolution.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MAYOR LEN AUGUSTINE TO THE CITY OF VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2010

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today and invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing one of my constituents, Vacaville Mayor Len Augustine, who is retiring after a lifetime of public service, having served in the military for 28 years followed by serving the City of Vacaville for 18 years.

United States Air Force Colonel (Ret.) Len Augustine is a Vietnam veteran who served in a number of important command and staff positions during his military career, including assignments in the Pentagon, Australia, Germany, and at Travis Air Force Base in California where he commanded a C-141 flying squadron. He completed his 28-year military career as Commander of the 89th Airlift Wing at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, DC, where his unit was responsible for Air Force One. Len is a veteran pilot, having flown a variety of military aircraft including the Learjet C-21, Gulfstream III, C-141, C-123 and KC-97 and also UH-1 helicopters.

As mayor of Vacaville, Len saw many major projects through to completion. Most notably among these are the development and expansion of the region's biotech industry with Genentech, which made its Vacaville plant the world's largest bio-manufacturing facility; the expansion of the Kaiser Medical Center and development of the Kaiser Hospital; and the revitalization of Vacaville's Historic Downtown, including the Creekwalk Plaza, downtown library, and the popular Town Square in the heart of town, a concept Len brought home from a visit to Poland.

During his tenure as mayor, the city moved forward on the redevelopment of the Nut Tree property, creating much needed economic growth for the region. Len also worked on the State Compensation Insurance Fund office project and entitlements for Lagoon Valley, and he was instrumental in securing funding for the Leisure Town Road Overcrossing. His work on the Vacaville Strategic Plan process will continue to direct development and growth for generations.

In addition to Len's work on behalf of the City of Vacaville, his many professional memberships include the League of California Cities (Member and two-term Chair of Employee Relations Policy Committee), North Bay Division of the League of California Cities (past president), Association of Bay Area Governments (Executive Committee), Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (member), Solano Local Agency Formation Commission (member), Solano Economic Development Corporation (member), Solano County Mayor's Conference (past chairman), Travis Regional Armed Forces Committee (past Chair), Solano Transportation Authority (past Chair), Solano County Water Agency (past Chair), Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management Board (member),