

So much has changed since Caldwell himself competed in the 1952 Olympics, where a lack of television coverage required family and friends seeking results to await the newspaper the next day.

"That was back in the dark ages," he says only half-jokingly. "When I was racing, nobody knew much about cross-country, and people hardly knew we were there. Everything is much, much better than it used to be. All this ease of communication has helped."

Caldwell has helped, too—by turning his lowest point of adversity into a lifetime of achievement.

Some Vermonters may remember his Oslo Winter Games as the ones where Rutlander Andrea Mead Lawrence became the only U.S. woman to win two skiing gold medals. But while the late female legend experienced the thrill of victory, Caldwell felt the agony of defeat.

"I was on the combined team—cross-country and ski jumping—but I was poorly prepared."

Born in Detroit in 1928, Caldwell had moved to Putney with his family in 1941. When his high school needed a cross-country racer for the 1946 state championships, he strapped on his sister's wooden alpine skis. Continuing on to Dartmouth College, he borrowed his coach's slats before the school bought him a pair.

Caldwell tried out and made the 1952 Olympic team. But knowing little about proper training, he toured too many Norwegian bakeries beforehand. The onetime 145-pound athlete weighed 170 by the time he dressed for his event. But that wasn't why he needed help buttoning his shirt—his shoulders ached from falling so often in practice.

The rest is history—just not Olympic history.

"That really inspired me to help better prepare athletes so they wouldn't be so flummoxed, overwhelmed and thoroughly thrashed."

Caldwell started by coaching at his alma mater, the Putney School, where he worked with such up-and-coming skiers as Bill Koch, the first U.S. Nordic athlete to win an Olympic medal (silver in 1976). That, in turn, led him to help the American team in a succession of Winter Games.

Off the job, Caldwell befriended Brattleboro publishers Stephen and Janet Greene.

"They said, 'Are there any books on cross-country?' I said no."

Soon there was one—his simply titled "The Cross-Country Ski Book"—which he updated until its eighth and final edition in 1987.

Caldwell also nurtured the sport by helping found the New England Nordic Ski Association and by forging a family with his wife, Hep, and their four children: Tim competed in the Olympics in 1972, 1976, 1980 and 1984. Peter raced undefeated in college. Jennifer made the U.S. ski team. And Sverre coached the Americans in 1988 and fathered the latest generation of family champions, Sophie.

John Caldwell has been waking in the dark the past two weeks to drive to Putney's Caldwell Sport—owned by his nephew Zach, who's assisting U.S. skiers in Russia, and wife, Amy—to watch live Sochi races that, because of the time difference, have started as early as 4:15 a.m.

"I'm a Luddite," he says, "but I emailed Sophie before the sprint and said, 'Go fast.'"

Caldwell then cheered her sixth-place finish (the best U.S. women's Olympic cross-country result ever) before, a week later, she ended up eighth in the team sprint.

Seen the way skiers collapse after a race? "I joke with them, 'Are you suffering?' I spell and say it 's-u-f-f-a-h.' It sounds masochistic, but that's the way it is. When you

do it you hurt, but you feel great afterward—like when you stop hitting your head against the wall. All of us must be nuts, but it's a lifestyle, a culture."

It's the same for the spectator back home. "It takes me a long time to recover from these early mornings," the grandfather says.

Even so, after rising this past Wednesday before dawn, Caldwell still stayed up for his weekly 7 to 10 p.m. bridge game. Then on Saturday, he was set to watch grandson Patrick, a freshman at Dartmouth College, compete in the Eastern Intercollegiate Ski Association championships in Middlebury.

The grandfather of 10 still takes a turn himself. But the cross-country pioneer says he's going downhill fast—as an alpine season pass holder at Stratton.

"A guy who's 88 and I go over together. It's slow getting the strength back. I got a new hip in May and two new knees in October. I have a plastic heart valve and fake shoulder, too."

So goes life. So much "s-u-f-f-a-h-ing." So much satisfaction.

"I'm bionic—and still plugging along."

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT LARNER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, those who call the Green Mountains home know that Vermonters value hard work and community in equal measure. The two often go hand in hand when individuals give back to the institutions and communities that played roles in their success. Today I am honored to recognize both an outstanding individual and an exceptional institution for their respective roles in supporting the future of medical excellence in Vermont.

Dr. Robert Larner and his wife, Helen, recently donated \$66 million in a bequest to the University of Vermont, UVM, medical school, which has since been renamed in honor of the 1942 alumnus. The Robert Larner, M.D., College of Medicine at the University of Vermont will continue to provide a first-class medical education while encouraging groundbreaking research in the medical field, from cancer to infectious diseases, to neuroscience and beyond.

Born in Burlington's Old North End in 1918, Robert Larner is the youngest of seven children, and the only one among his siblings to go to college. He attended the University of Vermont after receiving a scholarship for winning a Statewide debate competition and finished his undergraduate studies in just 3 years. After completing college in 1939, he pursued his medical degree at the UVM College of Medicine and graduated in 1942. Dr. Larner then served in World War II before settling in southern California to establish his own medical practice.

Though he remained in California for many years, the Vermont native credits his home State's flagship university for providing the education he needed to succeed. To ensure that future generations also receive a similar experience, regardless of personal finances, Dr. Larner and his wife have made a number of generous contributions to his alma mater. For example, the Larner Scholars Program has created a

culture of giving by encouraging alumni to support current and future medical students. In 2012, the Larners contributed \$300,000 for the purchase of five cardiopulmonary simulators for the UVM/Fletcher Allen Clinical Simulation Laboratory. These are just some of the contributions that in 2013 led the university to recognize Dr. Larner with the UVM Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award.

It is through the generosity of Vermonters like Dr. and Mrs. Larner that ensure bright futures for Vermont's students and the patients they ultimately will serve. Combined with the excellent education offered by the University of Vermont, the Larners' contributions create opportunities for first-class physicians and researchers who will undoubtedly go on to transform the medical field.

RECOGNIZING CONCEPT2 OF MORRISVILLE, VERMONT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont's business landscape boasts dozens of cutting-edge startups and successful small ventures. True to this entrepreneurial and independent spirit found throughout the Green Mountains, Concept2, based in Morrisville, VT, has once again put our small, rural State on the world stage.

Concept2 is a manufacturer of rowing equipment, founded in 1976 by two brothers, Dick and Pete Dreissigacker, dedicated to the sport of rowing. There, they first designed and started selling composite racing oars. Many years and many innovative models later, these Concept2 products have become an integral presence in the rowing community and have unmistakably changed an international sport.

Propelled by these lightweight, Vermont-crafted Concept2 oars and sculls, 32 Olympic rowing teams recently brought home medals in the summer 2016 Olympic Games regatta in Rio de Janeiro. Bob Beeman of Morrisville was sent to Rio as a representative and on-site technician for Concept2. As a trusted and true employee, Beeman, too, was recognized with a medal and certificate from the International Olympic Committee for Concept2's continuous and fair support of the athletes and their equipment.

With a nod to Vermont's core values of ethical business standards and giving back to our communities, the mission of Concept2 is to support the international rowing community and create equal opportunity for all. Regardless of nation or team flag, the crew has worked with rowing teams from around the world to combine Concept2 technology with human skill and training. Characterized by honesty, fairness, and integrity, these values of Concept2 embody the true Olympic spirit to level the playing field and allow the best team to win. As Vermonters, we are proud to see such a passionate and committed company rise to the global platform and help

athletes accomplish their Olympic dreams.

My grandson, Roan, and I still talk of our visit to Concept2 when he was on his high school rowing team.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the September 2, 2016, article, "Concept2 Oars Used in Majority of Olympic Rowing Wins," from the Stowe Reporter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Stowe Reporter, September 2, 2016]

CONCEPT2 OARS USED IN MAJORITY OF OLYMPIC ROWING WINS

(By Kayla Friedrich)

With the help of Concept2 oars and sculls, 32 rowing crews—76 percent of all medal-winning crews at the Olympic regatta—were able to step onto the platform in Rio de Janeiro to receive their awards this year.

Nine of those medals were gold.

Concept2 is one of the world's most prominent manufacturers of lightweight oars. They're built by former U.S. Olympian Dick Dreissgacker and his brother Pete in Morrisville.

The company also produces an indoor rowing machine, and all of the athletes have trained on the Concept2 Indoor Rower to build their fitness to Olympic caliber.

The company produces 80 to 90 percent of the world's market of competition oars, and it sends an accredited technician—Bob Beeman of Morrisville—to the Olympics to make any equipment repairs the athletes need.

Sometimes oars are damaged in transit, practice or a race, and Beeman is able to provide replacement parts and adjustments if requested.

Thanks to his decades of work at the company, Beeman became a five-time Olympian this year, not competing, but helping teams—regardless of what country they represent.

"Everything we do is free of charge," Beeman said. "It's all part of the service when using Concept2 oars."

"Some of the athletes look at me like I'm Santa Claus. There are 70 countries in rowing, and we try to even the playing field. One team didn't have good oars to use at the Olympics, so we lent some out."

Beeman has been the on-site technician for Concept2 at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996; Sydney, Australia, in 2000; Beijing, China, in 2008; London in 2012; and now Rio.

As a result, he's known some of the athletes for many years.

"Athletes want to know that there is nothing wrong with their equipment, and they rely on me. It makes me so proud," Beeman said.

U.S. rower Gevvie Stone was at the Concept2 tent every day, not because she needed repairs, but because it gave her a place to relax. Beeman said Stone's father thanked him profusely. Stone took silver in the women's single sculls using Concept2 oars.

Beeman also was able to wear a gold medal at this year's events. The gold-medal winning team from New Zealand, Eric Murray and Hamish Bond, returned to the tent following their men's pair final. Murray took off his gold medal and placed it over Beeman's head for a photo-op.

"Just to be around this level of athlete is amazing," Beeman said. "They train daily, many of them two or three times a day at a few hours each time. They train like that not just for months, but for years."

For Beeman, Rio was the best of the five Olympics that he has been to. Everything worked well logistically, there were over 200 volunteers assisting at the rowing venue, and he had a chance to watch some of the other events, including water polo and table tennis.

"It was great to be right in the middle of it all," Beeman said.

This was also the first Olympics at which Beeman was officially recognized for his work. Even a senior adviser thanked him, and "that was a big deal," he said.

Before leaving Brazil, Beeman received a thank-you medal and a certificate from the International Olympic Committee for Concept2's support of the athletes and their equipment.

The next Summer Olympics will be in Tokyo in 2020, and Beeman looks forward to being a rowing-equipment technician for the sixth time.

"I'm also super excited to go to some of the other international regattas," Beeman said. "One is in Serbia this year, and Switzerland. The World Rowing Championships will be in Florida."

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, American historian and author Wallace Stegner called our national parks "the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst." The National Park Service turned 100 on August 25, 2016. I wish to celebrate a century of recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs.

Congress created the agency in 1916 for the specific purpose of caring for America's special places. The National Park Service was given the responsibility not only to conserve and protect parks, but also to leave them "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." The job got bigger as parks expanded in number and type. In the 1930s, military parks and national monuments were added. Then came national parkways and seashores, followed by urban parks in the 1960s. During the next decade, the National Park System nearly doubled with the addition of 47 million acres in Alaska.

I am proud of the national parks and programs in Maryland's backyard. Maryland is home to 18 national parks, which attract 6,443,376 visitors every year. This national park tourism generates \$216,700,000 in economic benefit.

I am proud of the range of parks in the State, from national battlefields such as Antietam and Monocacy in western Maryland to Assateague Island National Seashore, which offers visitors sandy beaches, salt marshes, maritime forests, and coastal bays on the edge of the continent.

I am especially proud of the recently established Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historic Park in Maryland's Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot Counties. The vision for the Tubman National Historical Park is to preserve the places significant to the life of Harriet Tubman and tell her story through interpretive ac-

tivities, while continuing to discover aspects of her life and the experiences of those who traveled on the Underground Railroad through continued historical and archaeological research and discovery.

Unfortunately, few of the structures associated with the early years of Harriet Tubman's life remain standing today. The landscape of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, however, is still evocative of the time when Harriet Tubman lived there. Farm fields and loblolly pine forests dot the lowland landscape, which is also notable for its extensive network of tidal rivers and wetlands that Tubman and the people she guided to freedom used under cover of night. If she were alive today, Ms. Tubman would recognize much of the landscape that she knew intimately as she secretly led freedom-seekers of all ages to the North. This park helps connect people today to America's history while establishing an important destination for tourists to come visit, learn, and experience Maryland's Eastern Shore.

For 7 years I worked with my colleagues, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator SCHUMER, Senator GILLIBRAND, and Senator Clinton to establish the first national historical park to honor an African American woman. Harriet Tubman is an extraordinary American, and Marylanders are extremely proud to have her as a native daughter. In 2014, I was so proud to finally get our legislation enacted, and I am pleased that development and planning for this park is well underway.

Only recently has the National Park Service begun establishing units dedicated to the lives of African Americans. Places such as Booker T. Washington National Monument on the campus of Tuskegee University in Alabama, the George Washington Carver National Monument in Missouri, the National Historic Trail commemorating the march for voting rights from Selma to Montgomery, and, most recently, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial on the National Mall are all important monuments and places of historical significance that help tell the story of the African-American experience.

In a similar, overdue spirit, the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture will be opening this Saturday. I attended the grand opening weekend of this extraordinary addition to the National Mall. The National Museum of African American History and Culture is the only national museum devoted exclusively to documenting African American life, history, and culture.

On August 25, 2006, the 90th anniversary of the National Park Service, then-Secretary of the Interior—and former Senator—Dirk Kempthorne launched the National Park Centennial Initiative to prepare national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment. Since then, the National Park Service asked citizens, park partners, experts, and other