

for social, mental, and physical development, but also has maintained a consistent adherence to community service. As one of the first 50 YMCAs chartered in North America, this institution, whose humble beginnings originated in the basement of the Second Presbyterian Church on Monument Circle, has grown to tremendous proportions. Currently serving more than 140,000 Hoosiers, the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis has partnered with over 120 churches, schools and other community groups to reach out to both the urban community along with the surrounding counties. In 2003, 4,688 volunteers, under the direction of the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis, donated their valuable time and energy to provide nearly 98,000 hours of service. Additionally, YMCA branches in Indianapolis presented almost \$4 million for scholarships, program subsidies and varied community services.

I am pleased to take a moment to acknowledge the outstanding efforts the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis has afforded for the past century and a half, and I look forward to their future leadership in building stronger families and a stronger community.●

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL ED EBERHART

● Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, today I would like to praise a man who for more than 36 years has served his country with honor and distinction. General Ralph E. Eberhart, or Ed his friends call him, will soon be retiring from the United States Air Force. He embodies that which we most value in our military leaders—visionary leadership, unwavering dedication, and mission accomplishment.

I would like to personally thank General Eberhart for his service to our great Nation. Not only do I remember our many discussions pertaining to national security, but I fondly recall sharing stories about Colorado. You see, General Eberhart started his long journey at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. As fate would have it, he will soon be finishing his career where he started—in the great state of Colorado.

In the Spring of 1968, Ed Eberhart was sworn in as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. Since that day, General Eberhart has successfully mastered nine aircraft and totaled more than 5,000 flying hours in the cockpit. His service spanned tours of duty in Vietnam, Germany, Japan, and perhaps the toughest, at the Pentagon. General Eberhart's career was highlighted with numerous awards and decorations, and he has successfully attained four stars in the United States Air Force. In every job that the General has held, he has successfully fulfilled his obligations and made the advancements only a select few of his peers have made.

In February 2000, General Eberhart's success awarded him the honor of lead-

ing a combatant command for the United States, and he was soon confirmed as a triple-hatted commander. He was given the awesome responsibility of commanding not only the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, but also U.S. Space Command and Air Force Space Command.

During his tenure as Commander of U.S. Space and Air Force Space Command, General Eberhart successfully led military space into a new era. The United States relies upon our space superiority and without it, we cannot maintain dominance of the battlefield. General Eberhart guided our spacelift operations to a 100 percent success rate, thus maintaining our assured access to space. Additionally, when he took command of U.S. Space Command, the United States had just begun to appreciate the value that space-based capabilities bring to the fight—especially after our air campaign in Kosovo. Because of General Eberhart's direction in the space arena—specifically regarding precision guided weapons—we were able to increase the effectiveness of our present capabilities by further integrating space capabilities with air, maritime and land assets. U.S. Space Command's contributions were later seen as the hallmarks of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, which traces directly back to General Eberhart and his vision for the full integration of space and terrestrial units.

The general was also at the focus of our post-September 11 world while in command of NORAD. In 2001, Operation Noble Eagle saw NORAD go from having 14 military aircraft on alert around the Nation to more than 100 in a very short period of time. The response was necessary to protect our skies from internal threats that had manifested themselves in the most horrible of weapons—airliners filled with unsuspecting travelers. General Eberhart soon saw himself having to support continuous combat air patrols, including all the supporting logistics such as tankers and integrating NATO AWACS into that mission.

Ultimately, that fateful day of September 11 triggered not only a change in the focus of NORAD missions, but also showed the need for a unified command that focused on protecting our homeland. And who did the President of the United States trust to lead this new command? General Ed Eberhart. So again, Colorado was fortunate enough to be called home by General Eberhart as he began the challenge of building Northern Command while continuing to lead NORAD. As the combatant command charged with the defense of the homeland, Northern Command reached full operational capability ahead of schedule. Under General Eberhart's leadership, we have seen this unified command continue to fulfill its duties of protecting the American homeland.

It is apparent that while leading these commands, General Ed Eberhart

exemplified visionary thinking. He tackled transformation in the space arena by stressing joint integration of space capabilities and then transformed the way the U.S. military defends our borders and supports civilian agencies with Northern Command.

I cannot express enough gratitude to General Eberhart for his service to our country while in the United States Air Force. We in Colorado were proud to host him as a cadet at the Academy, and continue to be proud when he took command in our great State nearly 30 years later. It was in these roles that I was thankfully given the opportunity to know Ed Eberhart on a personal and professional basis. As General Eberhart prepares to fly off into the wild blue yonder of retirement, I would again like to thank him for his 36 years of blood, sweat, and tears to our Nation, and I wish him and his wife, Karen, the very best in the future.●

RICHARD D. "DICK" LLOYD

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, there is a standing joke among longtime Alaskans that visitors who come to Anchorage to view our glittering skyline, set off against the grandeur of the Chugach Mountains and the placid beauty of the Cook Inlet, haven't seen the "real Alaska."

Whether one agrees with this observation or not, all will agree that one does not have to travel far from Anchorage to experience our unique natural beauty and abundant wildlife. About 45 minutes from downtown Anchorage, easily accessible on paved roads, there is an oasis in Chugach State Park called the "Eagle River Nature Center."

The Eagle River Nature Center nestled in the Chugach Mountains is home to interpretive programs all year around. It is the starting point for miles of well-groomed hiking trails from which one can view moose and occasionally encounter bear. It has been described in terms like "glorious, enchanting and captivating." A place to view snow covered mountains in hues of pink and orange illuminated by the alpenglow sunset. It is a place where John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt would feel right at home.

Born as the Chugach State Park Visitor Center, the facility was in danger of being lost to budget cuts. By 1996, the budget had dwindled to a mere \$14,000 from \$185,000 in 1981. The center needed a savior.

Then along came a remarkable individual, Richard D. "Dick" Lloyd. Dick recognized that volunteers can accomplish things that government agencies cannot and organized the existing volunteers into a non-profit organization to operate the facility. Dick and his wife Carole and Asta Spurgis formed the Friends of the Nature Center which took over and revitalized the visitor center and turned it into the world-class nature center it is today.

I have the sad duty of informing the Senate that Dick Lloyd passed away on