

build the U.S.-Ukraine strategic partnership at the grassroots level. This Birmingham-Ukraine relationship began in 1997 within the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation's U.S.-Ukraine Community Partnerships Project, which was funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, with the strong support of Congress.

It is almost impossible to comprehend the positive impact the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation's Community Partnership Program has had all across Ukraine and the amazing collateral benefits it has brought to U.S.-Ukrainian relations. And, with Scotty Colson's leadership the Birmingham-Krasnodon partnership exemplifies the very best of what America has to offer—American volunteers, Americans giving of a helping hand, and Americans demonstrating their commitment to a better world.

Through the relationship fostered by the Community Partnership Project, Birmingham and Krasnodon worked together to enhance citywide development. Birmingham shared its health experience with Krasnodon enabling the city to make substantial improvement to its outdated medical system. Due to the installation of mini-boilers in city buildings, the city of Krasnodon significantly reduced costs during the 2000-2001 winter season. Coming from the top-down control model of the Communist system but learning from citizen participation in Birmingham, Krasnodon established public committees on health care and city beautification, public hearings on government performance and future plans and a roundtable discussion on housing and neighborhood communities. Transparent government with genuine citizen involvement flourishes. To help enable future growth Krasnodon established a one-stop office to register businesses.

Through Scotty Colson and the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation's relationship with Birmingham, other associations and contacts developed for the foundation in and out of Alabama for the purpose of developing U.S.-Ukraine related technical assistance projects. These associations have all assisted the foundation in its mission to aid Ukraine in the development of democratic institutions, economic development and human rights. It is my understanding that one of the favorite slogans within the U.S.-Ukraine Community Partnerships Project, which was officially funded from 1997 to 2007, came from Birmingham's neighborhoods: "You don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood."

Thirteen other cities across the United States partnered with Ukrainian communities to work on strategic planning, economic development, citizen participation, and communal services. There are many success stories. Hundreds of citizen diplomats from the U.S. communities, who volunteered their professional services at a value of over \$5 million to aid Ukraine, rep-

resented their own communities and offered the best of America through this program.

Four mayors from Birmingham, as well as many other community citizens, and officials, actively participated in this program during the period of 1997-2007. As I have said, these personal and voluntary efforts represented the best of America.

The people of Birmingham, AL, who continually develop their own community, are sharing their experience and giving confidence and hope to cities and towns in Ukraine, that they too can have a better future and that they don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood. I am proud to call the recognition Scotty has received from Ukraine to the attention of my Senate colleagues. This recognition of Scotty, really on behalf of the fabulous contributions of the volunteers from Birmingham, AL, has contributed greatly to the advancement of our country's foreign policy interests and specifically to our strategic interests with Ukraine.●

#### CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is rare these days to see one couple make it to 65 years of marriage. It is even more rare to see two couples, who are best friends, make it to that rather remarkable milestone at the same time. This weekend in Murdo, SD, Harold and Pat Thune and John and Virginia Parker will both celebrate 65 years of marriage.

When Harold Thune and John Parker graduated Murdo High School together in the spring of 1937, neither realized how entwined their lives would become over time. After high school graduation John moved to California. Harold went on to become a basketball star at the University of Minnesota and then a fighter pilot during World War II. Harold returned to Murdo with his young wife Patricia when the war ended to take over the family business at the request of his father who was in poor health.

It was the summer of 1951 when John returned to Murdo with his wife Virginia and reconnected with his high school classmate, who by this time had three young children. In the intervening years since high school, John had found real purpose in his life through his Christian faith. Anxious to share that faith with his high school friend, he began a small Bible study in that summer of 1951. Through that Bible study, first Pat, then Harold made a profession of faith that has served as their life's foundation to this day. They would be the first to tell you that it is hard to imagine them celebrating this blessed occasion absent that life-changing experience.

We honor both couples on this occasion of 65 years of marriage, for staying true to their God, to each other, and to their families. Their example of stead-

fast commitment and devotion is a powerful witness and inspiration to those who have come after about what a Christian marriage should be. Congratulations to the Parkers and the Thunes on this milestone 65th wedding anniversary.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations to the Committee on Foreign Relations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:28 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the amendment to the Senate to the bill (H.R. 5690) to remove the African National Congress from treatment as a terrorist organization for certain acts or events, provide relief for certain members of the African National Congress regarding admissibility, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2245. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Wenatchee, Washington, as the Elwood "Bud" Link Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

H.R. 4264. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs spinal cord injury center in Tampa, Florida, as the "Michael Bilirakis Department of Veterans Affairs Spinal Cord Injury Center".

H.R. 4918. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Miami, Florida, as the "Bruce W. Carter Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

H.R. 6052. An act to promote increased public transportation use, to promote increased use of alternative fuels in providing public transportation, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 163. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress in support of further research and activities to increase public awareness, professional education, diagnosis, and treatment of Dandy-Walker syndrome and hydrocephalus.

H. Con. Res. 195. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that a National Dysphagia Awareness Month should be established.

H. Con. Res. 365. Concurrent resolution honoring the life of Robert Mondavi.