

school, then awaiting their father, who had left teaching to take an engineering job at a General Electric plant in nearby Burlington.

"He would get home around 6 p.m. and we'd be waiting to get out there," said Bob, who became a physician after his amateur and professional ski racing career ended. "My mom would give my dad something to eat, and then he'd go fire up the old gas-powered engine that ran the rope tow."

Gates would be set on the hill, and if there were not enough gates, saplings cut from the adjacent woods would be used instead.

"It would hurt hitting those saplings," said Marilyn, 62. "But you couldn't get us off that hill. We'd be out there five nights a week, and the only way to get us to go to bed was to flip off the lights."

When Marilyn and Barbara Ann, who was 11 months younger, began winning regional and national-level races, their celebrity spread in the pastoral remote villages of northern New England, but they remained something of a curiosity at the extravagant Alps resorts that hosted the top international ski races. That was true even after they each won a medal at the 1970 world championships.

"I recall the Europeans saying: 'Who are these Cochrans? From where?'" Marilyn said. "But you know, they started thinking of us as kids to be reckoned with."

Their father was their coach and, they said, an innovator. Relying on his engineering background, he introduced scientific methods to racing tactics, turning a mountain descent into a conversation about vectors and ski path velocity. He taught his children to chart the number of gates in a racecourse and to memorize it using visualization techniques. He was also a master sports psychologist, an underappreciated part of coaching at the time.

"He was a teacher at heart, and he knew how to keep you focused on your performance and not the outcome," Bob said. "He was years ahead of his time."

If there is a shared trait from generation to generation of Cochran Olympians, it is the powerful benefit of basic homework, or time on the snow in ski racing parlance. The emphasis has always been on the value of dedicated, enthusiastic preparation, even in modest circumstances. The Cochran race training course is far from steep and only several hundred feet long. But Cochran racers for multiple decades have completed lap after lap, smiling as they go.

"There was never pressure on us," said Ryan Cochran-Siegle, who is now racing at the highest levels of the World Cup circuit, a path his cousins blazed before him. "I never felt any expectations. I wanted to do well, but winning was never the central goal. We were urged to just get better and better."

Marilyn, who became a World Cup giant slalom champion, recalled that her father always deflected questions about success, even as it became common to the household.

"Acknowledging medals and things like that seemed arrogant to him," she said recently, sitting with her sisters and brother. "Although I know he was proud of us."

Marilyn then explained that her parents could not afford to attend the 1972 Sapporo Olympics, where three of their children competed, but they stayed up late to watch the races from Japan. The living room scene, just feet from the backyard rope tow, was later recreated for her.

"My father cried twice in his life—when his mother died and when this one won the gold medal," Marilyn said, tapping the shoulder of Barbara Ann.

"I didn't know that," Barbara Ann said, turning with a look of surprise. "Now I'm going to cry."

Marilyn said, "Me, too."

#### MORE ROOM TO TEACH

The Cochran's Ski Area of today has moved about 150 yards from the original home, which has remained in the family. An adjacent 140-acre parcel of land, bought years ago for \$4,000, allows more room to teach beginners, which comes in handy with more than 700 students enrolled in after-school programs.

Hundreds of local youth and Vermont high school racers also train and compete on the main trail next to a busy T-bar.

"It's just an extension of when the local parent-teacher organization came to my mom and asked if she would teach the kids on our hill," said Barbara Ann, who heads the current instruction program. "Mom always said skiing was the best way to keep parents and their kids together in the backyard."

On a bluff overlooking a dirt and cinder parking lot, the Cochran lodge is festooned with dozens of numbered racing bibs from championship races. The oldest are from New England in the mid-1960s and the newest were proudly spirited home from top international competitions last winter.

The skis Barbara Ann used to win her gold medal hang from the ceiling, and photos celebrating the careers of nearly every Cochran are tacked to the walls, which takes up a lot of room given the breadth of the accomplishments. From Bob's 1973 win in the famed Hahnenkamm combined in Austria to Lindy's top American finish for a woman in the 1976 Olympic slalom and giant slalom, to N.C.A.A. championships by the grandchildren, the Mickey and Ginny Cochran racing pedigree is long and full. And all of it from a hill that is a miniature of a major ski resort.

Simplicity and unpretentiousness have remained hallmarks of the Cochran way. So has affordability. A junior weekend lift ticket is \$14. Children pay about \$40 for a season of after-school lessons \$90 with rentals.

"And we give scholarships if someone can't afford that," Lindy said. "If you really want to learn to ski, you won't be turned away."

The ski area may have registered as a nonprofit organization only after Mickey's death, but as Ginny told her children at the time, "It was always a nonprofit."

#### VIABILITY AND AVAILABILITY

The current ski area, with its gaggle of instructors, coaches and lift operators, is overseen by a board that has had to raise money for improvements like top-to-bottom snowmaking. The bills are paid, the lodge picnic tables overflow in the winter with excited, red-cheeked children, and warm food is doled out of a tiny kitchen. But donations are continually sought to keep Cochran's Ski Area viable and available to the next generation.

On a stormy Friday four days before Christmas, rain pelted the tin roof of the Cochran lodge and gusts knocked out the electrical power. Man-made snow was on the slopes, but the downpour threatened the anticipated opening of the ski area the next day.

The four children of Mickey and Ginny Cochran, who live not far from Richmond, happily gathered inside the lodge nonetheless, reminiscing and finishing each other's sentences as if they were at the dining room table in 1960.

They discussed the Olympics and world championships like run-of-the-mill high school events. When shown black-and-white pictures of their Olympic media appearances, the Cochrans hardly seemed impressed; they were too busy teasing one another about their 1970s hairdos.

One by one, recollections from decades past were summoned with ease and spontaneity, and almost every story began with a

Cochran turning and pointing at the ski trails beyond the lodge window and saying:

"We were on the hill. . . ."

The weather that day may have been cold and blustery. The Cochran memories are forever warm and genuine.

After a few hours, the siblings departed wondering when the ski area—a Vermont cultural landmark—might open for another winter.

"If it stops raining, we've still got a chance tomorrow," Lindy said.

The next day, the rain had ceased but the snow beneath the T-bar lift was too irregular for Cochran's to open as scheduled.

About 25 youngsters from the weekend race program showed up anyway. So did some coaches and the three Cochran sisters. Pulling into the muddy parking lot, they got out of their cars to gaze uphill at the swath of good snow that remained on the central trail.

A procession soon began hiking up the hill carrying skis. Gates were set in the snow. Racers skied down.

Smiling, they walked back up the hill. Over and over.

It snowed soon after. Three days later, Cochran's Ski Area officially opened for another winter.

#### RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF JENKINS, KENTUCKY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I stand before you today to recognize and salute the city of Jenkins in Letcher County, KY, as they celebrate 100 years of rich State history.

Jenkins's roots reach back before its official incorporation. Four smaller communities combined to form the city of Jenkins when Consolidation Coal Company purchased 100,000 acres of coal lands in eastern Kentucky. Consolidation Coal's director, George C. Jenkins, became the city's namesake in 1912 when it was officially founded. The communities that joined together, Dunham, Burdine, Jenkins, and McRoberts, helped build the new city, which grew quickly. On January 9, 1912, the Commonwealth of Kentucky recognized Jenkins as a city of the sixth class, and by April 20 of the same year, its government was established.

The people of Jenkins had an important role to play in the State—mining the "Cavalier" coal that earned the reputation as the best coal in Kentucky. The success and importance of their work further facilitated the expansion of the city, and within a few years a bank, grocery store, sawmill, brick plant, hospital, bakery, drug store, post office, jail, hotel, recreation center, and a few churches and schools all opened to serve the population of the area.

Today, citizens of Jenkins enjoy the incredible Appalachian heritage as much as the beautiful mountains and scenery that surround them. The picturesque surroundings of the southeastern Kentucky mountains, and the Pine Mountain area, are on display in Breaks Interstate Park, known as "The Grand Canyon of the South," and in places like the Raven Rock Golf Course. Set in this environment is "Jenkins Homecoming Days" and the

Zegeer Museum, which celebrates the history and culture of the town. These highlights speak to the hard work and dedication of the citizens of Jenkins in the past century, especially their pioneering work in the coal mining and railroad industries, which the Zegeer Museum details wonderfully.

At this time, I would like to ask my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to join me in honoring the city of Jenkins as we look back in appreciation on their storied past, and recognize the diligent work of the residents to keep up the traditions and build a bright future.

I also ask unanimous consent that an article from the Mountain Eagle noting Jenkins's rich history be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Mountain Eagle, June 13, 2012]

100 YEARS OF MINING HISTORY DISPLAYED AT JENKINS MUSEUM

(By Marcie Crim)

With the City of Jenkins celebrating its centennial this year, there is much to learn about the town's history, and the David A. Zegeer Coal-Railroad Museum is a good place to begin.

In the fall of 1911, Consolidation Coal Company purchased 100,000 acres of coal lands in Pike, Letcher, and Floyd counties from the Northern Coal and Coke Company. A site was selected for a town to be named in honor of George C. Jenkins, one of the leading citizens of Baltimore and a director of Consolidation Coal. By the time Jenkins was incorporated in 1912—containing the communities of Dunham, Burdine, Jenkins, and McRoberts—construction of the town was booming.

Consolidation Coal built Elkhorn Lake to supply water to run the turbines in a power plant. The company constructed several businesses to serve the new residents of Jenkins—a bank, grocery store, sawmill, brick plant and a hospital that was built in 1915. Also built were a bakery, drug store, post office, jail, hotel, recreation center, churches and schools.

Jenkins was a town built to serve one purpose—to mine the “Cavalier” coal that was to become known as the best coal in Kentucky—and its history is on display at the Zegeer Museum located on Main Street in the old train depot.

The museum is named in honor of a former employee of Consolidation Coal and its successor in Jenkins, Beth-Elkhorn Coal Corp. Zegeer joined Consol in Jenkins in the late 1940s. When the company sold its Letcher County operations to Bethlehem Steel in 1956, Zegeer became division superintendent. He retired as manager of Beth-Elkhorn in 1977.

In 1983, Zegeer was confirmed as Assistant Secretary of Labor for the U.S. Department of Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) in 1983, until retiring in 1987. According to Lois Greer, the current curator of the museum, Zegeer was “a company man, but he really cared about the people in this community.”

Zegeer also became interested in the history of Jenkins, and in conjunction with another resident of Jenkins—Marshall Prunty, president of Roberts and Schaeffer Co.—compiled a videotape of the history of Jenkins based on 145 photographs taken during the years of 1911 through the early 1930s and various publications and interviews with some

of the oldest living residents. The documentary, entitled “Birth of a Mining Town, Jenkins, Ky.,” is available for purchase at the museum.

Many pieces of Jenkins history can be found at the museum, from photos of the town's construction to various examples of mining equipment—everything from hard hats to breathing devices, dinner buckets, head lamps and more. Also on display is the sword of “Bad” John Wright, also known as “Devil John,” an infamous former resident of Letcher County. Many of the exhibits in the museum are on loan from current and former residents of Jenkins.

Lois Greer is a friendly woman who has called Jenkins home for many years. She loves to talk about the history of the town and tell stories of the people and buildings that once called Jenkins home. She's more than happy to walk visitors through the various rooms at the museum, pointing out photographs that show coal camp houses, community centers that no longer exist, and grand buildings that were later taken by fire. She said attendance has been down at the museum lately, but she expects it will pick back up come August when the celebration begins in earnest.

As Jenkins prepares to celebrate its 100th birthday, the museum is the perfect place to dive in and begin exploring the history of coal mining in Letcher County. You can leave with DVDs to watch at home, folk art made from lumps of shiny black coal, and postcards showing photos of the town's construction and subsequent boom years. You'll also walk out with enough knowledge to make you want to start Googling the history of Jenkins to find out more.

Jenkins is a proud town with a singular story to tell—a story of building a town from scratch, digging it out of the earth to be settled solely for the purpose of mining coal.

To contact the museum, phone 606-832-4676.

#### TRIBUTE TO TONY WHITAKER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, it is my honor to stand before you today to recognize an esteemed Kentuckian, Mr. Tony Whitaker, on the occasion of his recent retirement from the position of CEO of First Federal Bancorp this past December. I speak for the communities that Mr. Whitaker has served and worked in during his career when I say that his desire to help others, work diligently and contribute to the lives of those around him are certainly deserving of our respect and honor.

Tony has worked as a banker in Richmond, Louisville, and most recently in Hazard, KY, where he held the position of chief executive officer of First Federal Bancorp. According to Mr. Whitaker, his best years of the four decades spent in banking were spent at First Federal, something that the people of Hazard would no doubt confirm. His move to Louisville is motivated by a desire to be near family, but his assurance that he will miss calling Hazard “home” is represented by his fond memory of the welcoming community he found upon his arrival in the 1990s.

Tony has been an indispensable presence both in Hazard and at First Federal, and his strong leadership has prepared the bank to thrive, allowing those he has invested in to continue his legacy. He will continue to stay involved by serving as the chairman of

Kentucky First Federal Bancorp. He genuinely wants to positively impact others, offering to be just a phone call away to anyone who needs his help.

At this time, I would like to ask my fellow Senators to join me in honoring Mr. Tony Whitaker. This well-known and well-respected man is a model citizen, and represents the best of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We are grateful for his input and impact on his community, and I ask unanimous consent that a newspaper article highlighting his achievements be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Hazard Herald, December 20, 2012]

WHITAKER STEPPING DOWN AS FIRST FEDERAL CEO

(By Cris Ritchie)

HAZARD.—In less than two weeks, Tony Whitaker will step down as CEO of First Federal Bancorp, the parent company of First Federal Savings & Loan of Hazard, and during a reception on Thursday he expressed his admiration and appreciation to the city of Hazard, where he has made his home for the past 15 years.

Whitaker, who also served several years as president of the local chamber of commerce, will remain chairman of the company's board of directors. Don Jennings, the current CEO of the company's Frankfort location, will take on Whitaker's role as chief executive officer, while Lou Ella Farler will become CEO of the Hazard First Federal bank, a job for which she has been transitioning for the past few months.

First Federal in Hazard hosted a reception for Whitaker in the bank's lobby on Thursday, during which he noted that the best of his four decades of experience in the banking business were spent in Perry County.

“My best years have been with this bank here in Hazard, and living in this town the last 15 years or so,” Whitaker said.

Whitaker plans to move to Louisville to be close to his daughter and grandchildren, but will remain active with the company as board chairman. The transition once he steps down in Hazard will be seamless, he added, and for the customer there shouldn't be any difference as the bank will continue to offer the same service and products. And he expects the bank to continue to thrive with Farler serving as its CEO.

“Through the year I've transitioned, and Lou Ella pretty much got hands on and made most of the decisions,” he said.

He added that were his family not living in Louisville he'd likely remain in Hazard, and he expressed his appreciation to the people here for welcoming him into the community when he arrived in the 1990s.

“I appreciate the good town I've had the opportunity to live in, the boards that I've had and the people I've been able to work with,” he said, “and most of all our customers.”

Whitaker will step down as CEO on December 31.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the problem of gun violence in America. Every day we lose over 30 men, women and children in violent shooting deaths. More than 11,000 Americans are murdered with guns each year. That is more deaths