

woman, one American, one vote, that is what we stand for. Those are our values. That is why this is an important issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Florida for allowing me to do this before his final remarks of the evening.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEETING HOUSE FARM CENTENNIAL

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Vermont has always been a farming State, and it is the dairy, livestock, vegetable, and fruit farms to which we owe thanks for the open pastures and spectacular vistas that Vermonters and all those who visit our State cherish. None is more beautiful than Meeting House Farm in Norwich, owned by Deb and Jay Van Arman. The farm, located on a hill outside of the village, with an expansive view down the beautiful Connecticut River Valley, has been in the family since Deb's and her brother David Pierce's grandparents arrived in a Sears, Roebuck & Company wagon from Quechee in 1914.

On Saturday, August 2, Deb, Jay and David hosted a centennial reunion for a grateful crowd of family and friends who came from as far as California, Holland and South America. The reunion was a celebration of farming, family, and community for those who grew up on or visited the farm over the years. They shared stories of haying and collecting maple sap with Deb and David's father "Bub," riding the tractor and collecting eggs, and sitting around the kitchen table sharing one of their mother Janet's bountiful meals. Janet ran a day care at the farm for local children and later became Norwich's beloved town clerk.

The dairy herd was sold in the 1980s, but the haying goes on. There are goats and Deb's big vegetable garden, and half a dozen Holstein cows from another farm graze the hillside. Meeting House Farm represents the best of Vermont, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the Pierce-Van Arman family for keeping it a farm all these years.

I ask unanimous consent that an article about the centennial on the front page of the August 3rd Valley News be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From The Valley News, Aug. 3, 2014]

#### A CENTURY OF FARMING IN NORWICH: FAMILY MEMBERS FLOCK FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO MARK ANNIVERSARY

(By Aimee Caruso)

NORWICH.—A Norwich family marked 100 years of farm life yesterday with hayrides, games and dinner, photographs, storytelling and socializing.

Meeting House Farm, owned by Jay and Deb Van Arman, has been in the family for a century, and the trend is set to continue into the future.

Yesterday, however, was all about celebrating the crop of longtime friendships and family bonds the Union Village Road farm has produced over the decades. Wearing name tags, people of all ages mingled yesterday, snacking and sharing memories. Milling near a table laden with pies, candy-studded cookies and other goodies, they described the farm as a warm and lively place.

Jeff Bradley, who grew up just down the road, was in 4-H with the Van Armans' children and spent many days on the farm, tossing hay bales and collecting sap for maple syrup. He longingly recalled the yeast doughnuts and dill pickles, both of which were eaten dipped in maple syrup, made by Deb's late mother, Janet. And he remembered something else that left a big impression on him.

"No matter what, you stopped by and they had time for you," said Bradley, who now lives in Massachusetts with his family. "Time for a story, time to sit down and have coffee."

People have always dropped in and visited the farm, said Deb Van Arman, seated under a large white tent set up for the occasion. "It's been important to encourage that so we have a sense of community. We have that, and we're very grateful."

Yesterday's gathering, months in the making, drew about 240 people from across the country and beyond, including 26 of 27 first cousins. The 27th wanted to come, but couldn't make it because his wife was sick, Deb Van Arman explained.

The Van Armans' children and their families came in from New York state, Chile and Holland. One family friend came from Taipei, Taiwan; others made the trip from Hamburg, Germany. In addition to relatives, the group included people who had worked on the farm, neighbors, and former neighbors, "people who have helped us over the years," Deb said, choking up. "It's just great."

Some spent the night on the farm; others bunked with neighbors who had opened their houses for the occasion and provided food and beer, said the Van Armans' son, Tom. "It's like Airbnb on steroids."

The 116-acre farm, established in the 1780s, is thought to be the town's oldest working farm. It's named for the timbers in the original barn. When Norwich's first meeting house was torn down, the farm's owner, Constant Murdock, bought the beams for his barn, said Nancy Hoggson, president of the Norwich Historical Society. Initially a subsistence farm, it would eventually grow into a dairy business.

Deb Van Arman's grandparents, Charles and Lucy Pierce, bought the property in 1913 and moved there from a small farm in Quechee. The Pierces' son, Charles "Bub" Pierce, and his wife, Janet, lived with them on the farm, where Janet ran a day care and Bub farmed until he became ill in 1970, the same year the Van Armans married. Bub died the following year, and Janet farmed with the neighbors' help until later in 1971, when Jay took over. They expanded their herd and carried on with the dairy business until 1986.

With three children to put through college, a farmer's pay wouldn't cut it, so the couple

took part in a federal herd buy-out program, selling their dairy cows. Both are officially retired—Jay was a mail carrier in Norwich, and Deb, a physical therapist, worked at the VA. But their work on the farm didn't end. Deb keeps up the grounds, including the vegetable, herb and flower gardens. Jay runs a composting business and makes hay—he puts up and sells about 14,000 bales a year, their main income. They also depend on the state's current use plan to reduce taxes, he said. "If it wasn't for current use, we wouldn't be here."

Theirs is one of eight farms featured in Cycles of Change: Farming in Norwich, now on display at the historical society. The exhibit, comprising photographs, video, oral histories and text, will run through next spring.

Farming has seen big changes over the past several decades, and rolling with the times has taken perseverance, financial investments and plenty of hard work. New federal regulations in the mid 1900s meant expensive upgrades for dairy farms, Hoggson said. "A lot of small farmers couldn't adjust to those changes, so they had to close up shop."

She called the fact that the same family has owned Meeting House Farm for a century "extraordinary."

"Keeping that land together has been really, really important to the whole family," she said. "It's very unusual, I think, and a real credit to them as individuals and to their commitment to the land, the importance of family, and place that they have been able to do this."

Yesterday's event was, in part, a tribute to that effort.

"We wanted to celebrate all the happiness (the farm) has brought and all the hard work my parents have done through thick and thin," said daughter Emily Myers. "It's not easy, having a lot of property. . . . It can be very expensive, especially with taxes, and they have been able to make it work."

As with most farm kids, summers and the hours after school found the Van Arman children tending to chores. Growing up on the farm has had a lasting impact on them, Myers said. "It gave us great morals, great values and always a sense of home."

On display yesterday was the Sears and Roebuck wagon Deb's grandparents bought to travel to the farm with their young children. The family had hitched their cows to the wagon, and on the way, one gave birth on Christian Street. Her father retrieved the calf the following day. Their move from Quechee to the farm, made in mud season, was quite a journey, Deb Van Arman said.

Within the next few years, a similar, if much more modern, trek will take place, as the Van Armans' daughters, Kate and Emily, plan to return to the farm with their families.

"The only thing I ever knew was this farm," Deb Van Arman said. Knowing her children will carry on the tradition "is very special."

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, today we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act, a landmark piece of legislation that continues to improve the lives of millions of women, their families, and the communities that support them. I was proud to cosponsor this legislation when it was originally enacted in 1994, led by then-Senator, now-Vice President BIDEN. And I was proud to fight for its reauthorizations in 2000, 2005,