

convened an international conference on sustainable village development, attended by over 350 people from 34 countries. It was an extraordinary success.

In May, 2006, Colorado State University awarded Dr. Albertson an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters in recognition of his exceptional contributions to industry and developing nations. This was a well-deserved honorary degree for Dr. Albertson.

Mr. President, I am proud the Senate has recognized the many accomplishments of Dr. Maury Albertson, a distinguished professor and true humanitarian.●

HONORING MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of the 366th Fighter Wing at Mountain Home Air Force Base in my home State of Idaho. The Gunfighters at Mountain Home earned the Air Force Meritorious Unit Award for the 17-month period from January 1, 2007, to May 31, 2008. The award is presented to active duty, Reserve and Guard units for exceptionally meritorious conduct in several areas, including outstanding services for at least three months during military operations against an armed enemy, outstanding devotion to duty and superior performance of exceptionally difficult tasks setting them apart from other units with similar missions. This award was established following September 11.

According to the 366th Fighter Wing Commander, COL James S. Browne, the Gunfighters earned this prestigious honor for exceptional conduct in direct support of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, which include the historical deployment of Mountain Home AFB's F-15E Strike Eagles to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, as well as its direct support of 600 close air support missions over the Iraq. I offer my congratulations to all members of the 366th, and commend them on a job that continues to be extremely well done. Idaho is very proud of her Air Force personnel, and remains honored to be the host of these men and women who make Idaho home during their military service. The Gunfighters' outstanding accomplishments in earning this reward reflect well on them, their units, their families and their adopted state. This award demonstrates, yet again, the outstanding commitment that our Mountain Home Air Force Base airmen have to their mission, their excellence in support and execution of the strategic goals of our military mission overseas and their unwavering defense of our Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO RETIRED BRIGADIER GENERAL KENNETH M. TAYLOR

● Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, all of us know what happened at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. We have seen and

read about the brave men and women who fought that day. Today, I rise to pay special tribute to one of those men, Kenneth M. Taylor a retired U.S. Air Force brigadier general, a fighter pilot, war hero, and, of course, a Sooner.

Seventy years ago, Ken Taylor graduated from high school in Hominy, OK, and entered the University of Oklahoma, as a pre-law student. Like many college students in 1938, he was enjoying life with his fraternity brothers but could not avoid thinking about what was happening in Europe, the South Pacific and Asia. He believed America would be going to war in the next year or two and wanted his first choice should his country go to war. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1940 and graduated from the U.S. Army Air Corps Training Center at Brooks Field near San Antonio, TX, on April 25, 1941. Second Lieutenant Taylor requested to fly fighters and, in June 1941, he was assigned to the 47th Pursuit Squadron at Wheeler Army Airfield in Honolulu, HI.

After arriving at Wheeler Field, Lieutenant Taylor met another pilot, George Welch, from Wilmington, DE, and they became close friends. Taylor and Welch were both assigned to fly the Curtiss P-40B Warhawk, a single-engine, single-seat, fighter and ground attack aircraft. On the ground, they were seen as goof-offs and a nuisance to West Pointers. However, the commander of the 47th Pursuit Squadron, Captain Gordon Austin, said he immediately recognized their extraordinary skills as pilots and made them flight leads.

About 3 a.m. on December 7, Taylor and Welch were just returning from their Saturday evening on the town. Just before 8 a.m., Taylor was awakened by low-flying planes and explosions. He jumped out of bed, quickly put on his tuxedo pants from the night before, and ran into the street to see Japanese planes firing and dropping bombs on the base. He called Haleiwa Auxiliary air field where 18 P-40B fighters were located and, without orders, he told the ground crews to get two P-40 fighters armed and ready for takeoff. Enroute to Haleiwa, Taylor and Welch were strafed by Japanese aircraft as they made their 10 mile trek to Haleiwa in Taylor's new Buick. At the airstrip, they climbed into their Curtiss P-40B Warhawk fighters and headed towards Barber's Point at the southwest tip of Oahu. Unfortunately, the aircraft only had .30-caliber gunnery practice ammo.

Initially, Taylor and Welch saw an unarmed group of American B-17 Flying Fortress bombers who were arriving from the mainland but then spotted twelve Japanese torpedo dive bombers near Ewa Mooring Mast Field, a Marine base near Pearl Harbor. Lieutenant Taylor shot down two dive bombers and was able to damage another before running out of ammunition and returned with Welch to Wheeler Field to rearm with .50-caliber bullets. On the ground at Wheeler, several senior offi-

cers climbed up on the wings of their aircraft and told them to disperse their aircraft and do not go up again. Luckily, as Lieutenant Taylor explained later, a second wave of Japanese aircraft flew over and "the brass" ran for safety. With fuel and ammo, Taylor and Welch took to the air again straight into the wave of Japanese aircraft attacking Wheeler Field.

As Taylor headed for a group of Japanese aircraft, he found himself in the middle of a line of Japanese planes. A bullet from a plane behind him came through his canopy about an inch from his head, hit the trim tab, went through his left arm and exploded. One piece of shrapnel went through his left arm and another piece went into his leg, ruining his tux pants. Taylor reflected on the injuries in a 2001 interview, saying "It was of no consequence; it just scared the hell out of me for a minute." A few years after the interview, he received two slugs from his crew chief that had been found behind his seat. Welch saw Taylor's predicament and shot down the plane on his friend's tail, likely saving his life. Both pilots continued their aerial combat until they had chased the Japanese planes off the north shore and again were out of ammunition.

Fourteen different American pilots were able to take off during the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor and recorded 10 Japanese aircraft kills. Lieutenant Taylor was credited with two kills and two probables. On December 13, 1941, the U.S. War Department named Lieutenants Taylor and Welch as the official first two heroes of World War II and both were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on January 8. When asked about his actions that day, Taylor reflected, "I wasn't in the least bit terrified, and let me tell you why: I was too young and too stupid to realize that I was in a lot of danger." Lieutenant Taylor went on to a record total of six career kills, designating him as a flying ace.

Ken Taylor served for 27 years of active duty before joining the Alaska Air National Guard in 1967. He has commanded at all levels, retiring as a brigadier general in 1971. His Pearl Harbor experience was portrayed in the 1970 film "Tora! Tora! Tora!" and the 2001 film "Pearl Harbor." Ken passed away on 25 November 2006 just a few days shy of his 65th birthday. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

I am honored to be able to present this small tribute to an American hero whose leadership and bravery ensured our Nation and its people remain free and strong. We must never forget the sacrifices of those who have gone before us as well as those who are sacrificing today. I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to Ken Taylor and his family for his service to our great Nation.●