

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ADEN SPENCER PERRY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 659, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 659) honoring the memory of Aden Spencer Perry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 659) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE ON THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE NORMAN Y. MINETA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 660, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 660) expressing the condolences of the Senate on the death of the Honorable Norman Y. Mineta.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 660) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

THE RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE SHUL MURAL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to recognize the Ohavi Zedek community and former Vermont Governor and U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland Madeleine Kunin for their efforts to preserve and restore the Shul Mural. Painted in 1910 by Ben Zion Black, the mural was commissioned by Burlington's Lithuanian Jewish community, who had come to Vermont from the town of Kovno and its environs to escape Russian pogroms.

The immigrants founded the Ohavi Zedek Synagogue in 1885 and the Chai Adam Synagogue 4 years later. It was at the latter synagogue that the Shul Mural was painted. Stretching from floor to ceiling, it depicts the Tent of the Tabernacle, as described in the Book of Numbers. The style in which it was painted was well-known to the members of Chai Adam, as it could be found in synagogues throughout Eastern Europe. Now, the Shul Mural is one of the few remaining examples of this style of painting in the world. The works which inspired it were destroyed, as part of the burning of synagogues and the extermination of millions of Eastern European Jews by the Nazis, including the decimation of Lithuania's Jewish population.

In Burlington, the Ohavi Zedek and Chai Adam synagogues merged in 1939. Chai Adam was sold. The building went through multiple uses and in 1986 the mural was covered with a false wall to protect it at the urging of Jeffrey Potash, a historian and Ohavi Zedek's archivist.

In 2012, the building was sold once again. The new owner agreed to donate the mural to Ohavi Zedek and efforts began to move the mural, a massive undertaking that was successfully completed in 2015. Since then, work has been underway to fully restore the painting.

The relocation and restoration of the mural were a significant undertaking, with costs exceeding \$1 million. The funding came from foundations, historic preservation groups, arts organizations, and individuals.

Governor Kunin, herself a Jewish immigrant, lent her leadership skills to the effort, chairing the Friends of the Mural Board. Governor Kunin's parents were German Jews who fled to Switzerland, where her father died. Her mother brought Madeleine and her brother, Edgar, to the United States to escape the Nazis when Madeleine was 6 years old and Edgar 10. Although her immediate family survived the Holocaust, Governor Kunin lost extended family in the concentration camps. She is fond of saying both she and the mural are survivors.

Despite having arrived in the United States at a time of rising nativism, racism, and anti-Semitism, the families which had originally arrived from Lithuania continued to encourage their friends and former neighbors to follow them. At its peak, the community had

more than a thousand members in Burlington. That community produced leaders in a number of fields, including Robert Lerner, a physician who treated soldiers at Guadalcanal and Okinawa, and for whom Vermont's only medical school is now named, and Ed Colodny, the former CEO of U.S. Air.

While the story of Burlington's Lithuanian Jewish community is unique, it is also a perfect example of what immigrants have brought and continue to bring to the United States. They enrich our country and society by sharing their art, their culture, and their experience.

The story of the Shul Mural, the people who commissioned and created it, and those who ensured its preservation for future generations, is a Jewish story, an immigrant story, and a quintessentially American story.

RECOGNIZING EARTH PRIME COMICS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have long told the story of my love for Batman comics dating back to my younger years growing up in Montpelier, VT. When I was 4 years old, I would race to the Kellogg Hubbard Library in Montpelier with my latest Batman comic. As a child, reading comic books allowed me, like so many others, to broaden the expanses of my imagination. While Spider-Man and Superman are fine, I have always preferred Batman. His values, his pursuit of justice, his balance of human strength and vulnerability have always resonated with me.

I would like to take a moment today to recognize a store where I have bought more than my fair share of "The Dark Knight," an institution foundational to the comic-loving community in Vermont: Earth Prime Comics.

Founded in 1983, Earth Prime Comics was one of Vermont's first comic book stores. It began as a shared venture between Christine Farrell and John Young, first operating out of John Young's attic in Burlington, VT. In that attic, John and Christine's extensive collection of comics quickly garnered a surprisingly large following. Earth Prime Comics soon moved into a real retail space: a converted Victorian house on Bank Street in Burlington. Requiring even more space for its growing business, Earth Prime moved to a storefront on Church Street in Burlington in 1989, a location where it has remained for 33 years.

Over the past few decades, Earth Prime Comics has drawn comic book fans from across Vermont and forged a comic-loving community where all were welcome. Christine still owns Earth Prime Comics, and it has been great to see how she and her team have continued to build and shape their community to keep pace with the ever-changing comic landscape. In the years to come, I have full faith that comic lovers of all ages will continue to

thumb through the pages of comics in Earth Prime Comics, as I have on so many occasions.

Earth Prime Comics was recently featured in an article published earlier this year in "Seven Days." I ask unanimous consent that excerpts from the article, titled "Origin Story: How Burlington's Earth Prime Comics helped unite Vermont's comic lovers," be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Seven Days, Mar. 2, 2022]

ORIGIN STORY: HOW BURLINGTON'S EARTH PRIME COMICS HELPED UNITE VERMONT'S COMIC LOVERS

(By Chris Farnsworth)

I was 10 years old, staring at a strange house on Bank Street.

It was late summer, and my mother was inside the Burlington Square Mall shopping, so my brother Pat and I were cut loose to investigate the comic book shop across the street. Shadows from the trees in the yard cast the house in a mysterious darkness, making it resemble some Jungian archetype of a cave.

Pat and I were no rubes, despite our ages—Pat was 9. We'd been to the comic shops in New York City. We had a growing collection of X-Men and The New Mutants comics inherited from family friends. Hell, we had the Longshot miniseries, something we were rather proud of—and continue to be 30 years later.

Still, the house didn't look like a comic shop, and we climbed the porch stairs with trepidation. We'd only been Vermonters for a little while, and when you're the new kids in town, caution is a defense against disappointment.

I heard Pat gasp and followed his gaze to a poster taped inside the window. Staring out was the ferocious visage of Wolverine, leaping at us with adamantium claws drawn. Our hero.

This was the late 1980s, more than a decade before Hugh Jackman's Wolverine and the rest of the X-Men ushered in the age of superhero films dominating multiplexes. Back then, you wrote letters by hand to the publishers of comic books—and sometimes they answered. Comics fandom in the '80s was a club, and Pat and I were pledges standing before the clubhouse.

Steeling our nerves, we entered the store and breathed in the smell of newsprint and cardboard, the telltale musk of a good comic shop. Posters on the walls depicted more of our favorite characters, alongside many we had yet to discover. The mystery of these strange heroes and villains filled us with tension, a curiosity that had to be satiated.

But the real treat was the comics themselves. Even before we got to see the back-issue room, we salivated over the sheer number of books on display.

A bearded, longhaired man with a knowing grin looked at the two kids who'd wandered in with wide eyes.

"Well," I remember him saying, almost smugly, "looks like you found your place."

Our place, as the shopkeeper called it, was Earth Prime Comics. One of Vermont's first comic book shops, Earth Prime has been a center of the state's comic community since it moved out of original co-owner John Young's attic and into that Bank Street house-turned-shop in 1983. The shop has remained a polestar in its current home on the bottom block of the Church Street Marketplace, where it moved in 1989.

"Not many places downtown have been around longer," said Bill Simmon, who man-

aged Earth Prime from 1989 to 1998. "Old Gold, Pure Pop, maybe a few others? You can count them on one hand, I bet. Earth Prime is an institution."

In its 39 years, Earth Prime has fostered generations of local comic fans, helping some of them go on to become comic artists themselves. The store has survived and thrived through the excitement of the underground comics explosion in the '80s, through the crisis and near collapse of the industry in the '90s—all the way to the modern epoch when movies and shows based on Marvel and DC Comics monopolize pop culture and, some say, draw interest away from their source material.

The little shop on Church Street is driven by the passion of its mysterious proprietor, Christine Farrell, who is rumored to have one of the largest and oldest private collections of comics on the planet. While Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) may be Vermont's most famous Batman fan, she's said to have been collecting Bruce Wayne's exploits from the very beginning.

Farrell's store has been as much a clubhouse for the comic community to celebrate groundbreaking independent creators as a place to pick up the latest issue of Iron Man. It's no longer the only comic store in Vermont—many have come and gone over the decades, and the state is currently home to Barre's Wonder Cards and Comics and Rutland's newly opened Night Legion Comics. But Earth Prime has a special status for veterans of the scene.

"I have to give all due respect and honor to Earth Prime," Stephen Bissette said. The Duxbury native is one of Vermont's most influential and respected comic artists, having established himself with a seminal run in the early 1980s on Saga of the Swamp Thing with Alan Moore. He has taught for 15 years at the Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction.

Earth Prime has "outlived every Vermont comic shop I've ever been to," Bissette said. "Long may that continue."

IT CAME FROM THE UNDERGROUND

Earth Prime's arrival in the '80s was perfectly timed, as the world of comics was undergoing a revolution on the national stage. Meanwhile, in Vermont, the store united a ragtag crew of comic fans into a community.

"I find, with people like us, it's inevitable, right?" said John Odum, who hosts a podcast about all things geek called "Open World Chat." "It's part of being a comic fan. Eventually, we all start finding each other. It's just a question of where."

Odum is the Montpelier city clerk and a freelance writer for comics sites such as Bleeding Cool. He grew up during the independent comics revolution of the '80s, when artists like Bissette and Veitch started pushing back against the censorship of their youth, working with writers far removed from the kid-friendly scripts of Stan Lee.

Moore's Watchmen series and Miller's dark, noir-tinged work on Batman and Daredevil changed the mainstream superhero books. The arrival of titles such as Cerebus and Elfquest marked the rise of the underground.

"The 1980s changed comics," Odum said. Veitch agrees.

"The '80s for comics were like the '60s for music," he said. "For a short time, before the moneymen caught on, the inmates got control of the asylum."

Earth Prime was at the forefront of that movement in Vermont. Its reputation drew fans from all over the state.

DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK

As the 1980s wound up, the scene changed at Earth Prime. Amidon left for Massachusetts. Many of the first-generation Earth

Prime kids grew up and either moved away, as Pat and I did in 1989, or simply lacked the time they once had to hang out at the shop all day.

"The family atmosphere kind of changed," Simmon said. "It was still fun to be there and talk comics, but look, we weren't kids anymore. Life tends to get more serious, even at comic shops."

In the spring of 1989, Farrell bought out Young's half of the business and moved Earth Prime to its current spot at 152 Church Street. Though none of the original gang wanted to go into details, they implied that some sort of schism occurred between the two founders of Earth Prime. Young opened Comics City at the other end of downtown Burlington, before moving eventually to Winooski. Customers were split; many, like Rovnak, switched over to Young's new store.

Within a few years, the entire comics industry was rocked like never before, as its own increasing cultural legitimacy sent it into a boom-and-bust cycle. Collectors started snapping up "big event" books such as The Death of Superman and Batman: Knightfall, creating a bloat in the speculator market that coincided with a disastrous decision by Marvel to bypass the distributors and form its own distribution wing. When the market crashed, the company was stuck with multiple printings of variant issues that were meant to be "collectible" but are now the exact opposite.

What kept Earth Prime afloat while all the other boats sank? Farrell herself seems to have been a major factor. Her clear vision of how to create communities of like-minded fans would serve her well, as one industry faltered and another emerged.

In 1989, Farrell opened Quarterstaff Games directly above Earth Prime. With its medieval-tavern vibe, it's Vermont's longest-lived gaming shop. Like its sister store, Quarterstaff has fostered a long-marginalized community and given them a home—another tribute to Farrell's dedication.

Farrell's tenacity was rewarded as the century came to a close and the fortunes of comics changed once again. Though superheroes had made their mark on cinema in the past, notably with Tim Burton's Batman and Richard Donner's Superman films, the 2000s saw the rise of Marvel as an entertainment business. In 20 years, the company went from barely surviving bankruptcy to being a multibillion-dollar juggernaut that dominates Hollywood. Disney would buy it in 2009.

For Giordano, that process started at Earth Prime, where the future illustrator would draw all day at a table beside the back issues.

"I would never have become an artist if I didn't have somewhere like Earth Prime," he said. "People there would see me drawing, whether it was cowboys or customers, and gave me positive feedback. There's power in that—I started to think, Hey, maybe I'm not a total piece of shit. Maybe I have some value. I owe everything to that experience."

TO BE CONTINUED

I remembered Giordano's words as I stared down the front door of Earth Prime a few weeks ago. I hadn't been inside in years, but knowing that the store was there hung on me like a weight, like a gift I couldn't dare take for granted.

I walked inside, unsurprised by the posters this time. The staff were helping customers or reading comics as hip-hop played softly over the speakers.

I thought of Shady, the black cat who used to guard the boxes of comics with a lazy swipe of her paw. I thought about how I've skipped every school reunion I've ever been

invited to and how none of them would have felt as much like an authentic reunion as being inside Earth Prime did at that moment.

A man roughly my own age walked in, flanked by several children. One of them, a young girl wearing a white-and-pink Spider-Gwen hoodie, had a list in hand. She bounced on the balls of her feet as she browsed from shelf to shelf, humming quietly.

I looked away, overcome by a rogue wave of emotion. I seemed to see a thread stretching back through time, connecting Bissette, Veitch and Farrell hunting the comics racks to misfits like Giordano and Simmon finding family at a fledgling shop. That thread reached all the way to the girl in the hoodie, humming to herself in her happy place. Earth Prime was hers now more than mine, and I loved that so much that I felt a strange, damp sensation at the corners of my eyes.

As I walked away from Earth Prime, I made a mental note to text my brother. I wanted to say something reflective of the strange epiphany I'd had standing in the shop. In the end, though, I decided to keep it simple.

"Dropped by Earth Prime," I texted Pat. "Still the same."

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

IRAN

• Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing examining the current negotiations around restoring the JCPOA and our Nation's Iran policy. However, because I contracted COVID-19 and am following CDC guidance to isolate, I was not able to attend this important hearing. But I do want to state, for the record, that I believe preventing a nuclear-armed Iran through hard-nosed diplomacy is of the utmost importance to our Nation.

I am under no illusions that the deal currently being negotiated by the Biden administration would be perfect or that Iran is a good-faith negotiating partner. But when it comes to preventing a nuclear-armed Iran and creating a monitoring and verification regime that ensures Iran is sticking to its commitments, it is the only option.

Maximum pressure didn't work; more sanctions only led to Iran reconstituting its weapons program and growing its nuclear stockpile and more nefarious behavior in the region. A military response would be even worse; Iran would undoubtedly retaliate and be incentivized to ratchet up its nuclear program as it has done when its nuclear facilities and officials have been attacked in the past. Neither option achieves our goal of preventing a nuclear-armed Iran.

The only viable option is to continue negotiations on a nuclear deal. Doing so doesn't mean foregoing all of our other concerns with Iran. The U.S. never should and never will acquiesce in Iran's violations of international law and human rights and should continue to use all of our tools to combat its malign actions. But it would be a grave mistake to effectively green

light an Iranian bomb if we are unable to convince Iran's leadership to renounce all of Iran's other bad behavior as well.

A nuclear-armed Iran would be catastrophic for the region and the world by emboldening a belligerent nation, setting off an arms race, and undermining the broader nuclear order. I urge my colleagues to join me in giving the administration the space and flexibility it needs to restore a deal that prevents such an outcome.●

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this coming Monday is Memorial Day, the day we set aside to honor the more than 1.1 million Americans who have given their lives in military service to our Nation.

It is a solemn day of remembrance and has a special resonance in my state. One of America's first Memorial Day ceremonies occurred in Illinois. It was April 1866—barely a year after the end of America's terrible Civil War.

Three returning veterans from that great conflict were waiting for services to begin at a church in Carbondale when they saw a young woman with two infants approach a small, unmarked grave in the church cemetery, place flowers on the grave, and kneel in prayer. The veterans, deeply moved, collected wildflowers and placed them at all of the veterans' graves in the churchyard. They then arranged to host a parade of veterans to honor the war dead resting in the town's cemetery.

More than 200 veterans showed up for that parade—one of America's first Memorial Day parades. Among the marchers was General John Logan, a Civil War hero and proud son of Illinois. The following year, General Logan was appointed the commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic. One of his first acts as commander in chief was to call for a national day of remembrance to honor the soldiers who sacrificed their lives so that America could receive a "new birth of freedom."

In the Army's General Order No. 11—the "Memorial Day Order"—General Logan wrote of his hope that the day of remembrance would be "kept up from year to year, [as long as] a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades."

On this Memorial Day, more than a century and a half later, we remember all of the American patriots who have fallen in battles—from Antietam, to the Argonne Forest, to Afghanistan. General Logan called their deaths "the cost of a free and undivided republic."

In these fractious times, when our Nation sometimes feels, again, like a house divided, may we remember the price those fallen heroes paid to preserve our Union. And may we also remember the duty we each bear to preserve the priceless gift for which they gave their lives—this Nation, free and undivided.

On a related note, I want to take a moment to wish a belated happy birthday to an American hero who returned from war. Sgt. Victor Butler is that last surviving Tuskegee Airman in his home State of Rhode Island and one of the last of that legendary Band of Brothers in our Nation. Last Saturday, May 21, Mr. Butler celebrated his 100th birthday.

When he was a young man, he and the other members of the Tuskegee Airmen helped to save the world from the tyranny of fascism—and he helped to loosen the grip of racism on America. In the weeks before his 100th birthday, Mr. Butler told family and friends all he wanted for his centennial celebration was a card. He didn't want folks to make a fuss or go to any great expense.

One of his nieces posted his wish on social media—and word spread. He thought he might receive a few cards. At last count, Mr. Butler had received more than 40,000 cards and video greetings from people in every State in the Union and as far away as Japan, South Korea, and Germany.

Last Saturday, on his birthday, his hometown held a parade in his honor. And he received a signed football and a jersey with the number "100" on the back, hand-delivered by the owner of his favorite football team, the New England Patriots—a well-deserved tribute to a real-life hero.

Like the tradition of Memorial Day, the Tuskegee Airmen have a special connection to my State. The first airfield where they trained—before Tuskegee—was Chanute Field in Rantoul, IL, near Champaign. The spot where that airfield stood is marked proudly today with signs that read "Birthplace of the Tuskegee Airmen." And in 2016, Illinois renamed a stretch of Interstate 57 on the South Side of Chicago as the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Trail. It is a fitting tribute, given how many Tuskegee Airman had roots in the Chicago area.

African-Americans have fought and died for America's freedom since Crispus Attucks became the first American to fall in our War for Independence.

As the first African-American aviators ever to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps, the Tuskegee Airman occupy a special chapter in our Nation's history. They fought in World War II, at a time when the U.S. Armed Forces were still segregated, and our Nation was still riven with racially discriminatory laws and attitudes. Their original mission was to serve as escort pilots for other American flyers, to protect them from enemy fire. The Tuskegee Airmen also flew bombing missions themselves.

Officially, they were known as the 99th Pursuit Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group. But the pilots whose flights they protected gave them a nickname. They called them the Red Tails, or the Red-Tailed Angels, due to the distinctive color on their aircraft