

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 35

BY SENATOR LUNEAU

A RESOLUTION

To commend and congratulate Sara Simmonds on her many outstanding accomplishments.

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that the citizens and the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana recognize the numerous accomplishments of Sara Simmonds; and

WHEREAS, Sara Simmonds of Alexandria, Louisiana is ninety-eight years young and has accomplished so many remarkable and outstanding things throughout her life; and

WHEREAS, Sara is smart, loyal, adventurous, giving, positive, and optimistic and she displays all of her great qualities in all that she does; and

WHEREAS, she initiated the reintroduction of Whooping Cranes to Louisiana, and at eighty-eight she traveled to Bhutan to learn about cranes; she was the initial private funder of the efforts to restore Whooping Cranes to Louisiana and remains a major donor; and

WHEREAS, she also helped fund research at Louisiana State University that was necessary for the approval of the reintroduction of the Whopping Cranes by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, she has served as an ambassador for the state of Louisiana and has hosted dozens of out of state scientists from South Korea, Zambia, and Russia, always the consummate host providing guests with an indelible image of Louisiana hospitality and hope for a better world; and

WHEREAS, it was brought to Sara's attention several years ago that some soldiers leaving and arriving at the airport in Alexandria, Louisiana did not always have the means of getting lunch nor were they treated with the respect and honor they deserved; and

WHEREAS, Sara made it her personal mission to change the culture of the airport by pulling together several of her friends and began a plan of action, that every soldier leaving or arriving from the Alexandria, Louisiana airport 24/7 was greeted with an apple pie, soft drink, hugs, and love from Sara and her friends; and

WHEREAS, in Sara's humble apartment are flags and heartfelt mementos from soldiers all over the United States expressing their appreciation for the simple acts of kindness that were exhibited by Sara and her friends; and

WHEREAS, Sara Simmonds was made an honorary general by Fort Polk for her efforts and acts of kindness and numerous dignitaries throughout the United States, including the governor of Idaho at the time, Jack Kempthorne, who traveled to Alexandria to thank her for making sure all soldiers traveling in or out of Alexandria were properly honored; and

WHEREAS, she was also responsible for acquiring funds to build ten prison chapels in our state prisons, she also has paid for buses to take at-risk kids, along with their probation officer, to Angola to learn from the inmates about the dangers of inappropriate behavior, in addition she has supported out-of-state field based courses for graduate students who are in the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Resources so they can learn about wetlands and wildlife issues in those regions, thereby strengthening their education; and

WHEREAS, at eighty-eight, Sara went on a cruise to the North Pole and, upon their arrival many of the Europeans jumped into the Arctic Ocean for the Arctic Plunge but none of the younger Americans on the trip would, so Sara said she could not have America shown up and bailed off the boat into the water, at ninety-five she went on a two week camping trip (in tents) across Mongolia and last year provided a video of her zip lining across a large lake at the Wesley Center in central Louisiana, and she is currently planning a skydiving trip in the next couple of months; and

WHEREAS, at ninety-six, Sara asked a friend if she would write her a reference letter for a spiritual development program that was two years in length, the friend did and she was accepted and has blown everyone there away, with her character and wit; and

WHEREAS, Sara Simmonds is a light and an inspiration to others and her story and deeds deserve to be recognized by the Senate of the state of Louisiana and to be used as a guidepost to others finding their purpose and inspiring others; and

WHEREAS, the success of the state of Louisiana, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of American society depend in great measure upon people like Sara Simmonds who lead by example and make the world a better place for all our future generations, a true Louisiana hero, and an inspiration to all who are fortunate enough to

know her.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and congratulate Sara Simmonds on her many outstanding accomplishments and wish her much success on all of her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Sara Simmonds.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE