

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	9 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Barnhart, Berger, Dembrow, Hicks, Holvey, Hoyle, Jenson, Kennemer, Garrett
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Erin Seiler, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: In memoriam: Kenneth Allen Jernstedt, 1917-2013

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Mr. Jernstedt's never-ending willingness to do something for his fellow man
- Contributions of Mr. Jernstedt to community of Hood River and State of Oregon
- Military service and tenure with Flying Tigers
- Recognition of Mr. Jernstedt's heroics as an aviator

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Kenneth Jernstedt was born July 20, 1917 to Fred and Mae Jernstedt in Carlton, where he spent his childhood years on a farm on the Yamhill River. He graduated from Yamhill High School in 1935 and Linfield College in 1939. He then enlisted with the Marine Air Corps where he gained his aviator's wings in 1941. He subsequently volunteered for the American Volunteer Group (AVG), where he was a squadron leader with the original Flying Tigers, a section of the AVG. The AVG was a private air force formed with the covert approval of President Roosevelt and then hired by Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek to protect China against invasion by the Japanese. The AVG patrolled an area that stretched from Kunming to Rangoon, approximately the distance between Portland and San Diego. In one of his missions in that area, Mr. Jernstedt came upon 15 enemy bombers. He decided to "make a run at them by myself." During one pass, a bullet broke the windshield, whizzed by his head and slammed into the armor plate behind him. With glass in his left eye, Jernstedt said he was "lucky enough to land the plane," even though he did much more than simply land the plane. By the time the AVG disbanded, the group had destroyed 286 planes and Mr. Jernstedt had 10.5 aerial kills. He was Oregon's First Air War Ace. After his time in the AVG, Mr. Jernstedt served as an experimental test pilot for Republic Aviation in Long Island, New York. During his years as a test pilot he flew nearly every fighter plane of that era, including his favorite - the rugged P-47.

In 1946, Mr. Jernstedt and his young family returned to Oregon and settled in Hood River. He entered the soft drink business, operating Mid-Columbia Coca-Cola until 1968. Mr. Jernstedt first served as mayor of Hood River in 1959. He was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives in 1966 and to the Oregon Senate in 1968. He served five terms in the Oregon Senate. Mr. Jernstedt was elected mayor of Hood River for the second time in 1989. For more than 65 years Mr. Jernstedt was a proud, and well-loved, resident of the Hood River Valley. In 1996, the Department of Defense recognized Mr. Jernstedt and 16 other surviving AVG pilots by awarding them the Distinguished Flying Cross. In June 2001, the Port of Hood River formally changed the name of the local airport to Ken Jernstedt Airport in his honor. Kenneth Jernstedt died on February 5, 2013 at the age of 95. He is survived by many family members and countless friends.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.