

Francis Touchette was both a dedicated public servant and a humanitarian.

Francis started his career when he was elected to the office of Democratic precinct committeeman when Franklin Roosevelt was elected President of the United States. In addition to serving as a Democratic precinct committeeman for many years, Francis was elected Centreville Township supervisor and was elected to serve as a member of the county board from Centreville Township. On two separate occasions during his career on the county board, his colleagues saw fit to elect Francis to serve as their chairman.

In addition to being one of the leading Democrats in southwestern and southern Illinois, Francis was one of the leaders in providing health care and other services to the underprivileged and the poor throughout the region.

Francis was the founder of Centreville township Hospital—later renamed Touchette Regional Hospital in Centreville, IL. As Centreville Township supervisor, he recognized that the underprivileged and the poor were not receiving adequate health care services and therefore called upon the people of the township to construct a hospital for people in the Greater Centreville area. He was a charter member of the East Side Health District and founded the Southern Illinois Health Care Foundation.

Very few people have touched and improved the lives of so many as Francis Touchette. His service to the people of the St. Louis region and of southwestern Illinois will live on—and his friendship that he extended to me and many others will never be forgotten.

My colleagues, I ask you to join me in paying tribute to a great friend and a great leader.

WORKLINK

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 1997

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of St. Peters for the successful implementation of WorkLink, the first telecommunication center in the State of Missouri and the entire Midwest. Opening in July 1996, WorkLink was designed as a community-based telecommunications center equipped to provide individuals, businesses, and organizations with a wide array of advanced telecommunications and related services. WorkLink promotes telecommuting as an efficient way of doing business and helping employees better balance their time between work and family.

WorkLink offers an alternative to many companies and employees to maintain and encourage performance and productivity; assists companies in cutting expenses by consolidating office and parking space; improves employee moral by accommodating work and family needs; and helps the community by reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

Currently, two-thirds of the available space at WorkLink is equipped with offices and workstations with the advanced technology and interconnectivity to handle most advanced office telecommunications functions. The facility houses many business types, including

engineering, financial, computer consulting, computer programming, sales/marketing, healthcare, publishing, distance learning, and charitable professionals.

By stepping out onto the cutting edge of telecommuting, the city of St. Peters is offering those in their community a tremendous opportunity. I am sure WorkLink will serve as a model for other communities, and I commend Mayor Tom Brown and Helen Robert, WorkLink manager, for their vision and hard work.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AIR FORCE

HON. VAN HILLEARY

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 1997

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an Air Force veteran and a major in the Air Force Reserve to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force.

When we look at today's Air Force, with all its cutting-edge technological advances and global superiority, it's amazing to think how far we have come in this century. It's certainly a far cry from the military's first airborne activities—the Army's use of balloons for reconnaissance during the Civil War and Spanish American War, and the use of its first aircraft against Pancho Villa in Mexico in 1916.

From these humble roots, military aviation grew and matured from being a part of the Signal Corps in 1914, to becoming the Army Bureau of Aircraft Production and the Air Service in 1918, to the Army Air Forces and the Army Air Corps in the 1920's.

As military aviators distinguished themselves in World War I and World War II, support for a full-fledged, independent Air Force grew. More and more people came to realize that the Air Corps was more than just a part of the Army: It was a highly specialized branch of the military which should stand on equal footing with the Army and the Navy.

Finally, in 1947, the National Security Act, which created an independent U.S. Air Force, was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Harry S Truman. Fifty years later, we celebrate the contributions the Air Force has made over the past five decades, and we look forward to the many more contributions which the Air Force will make in the decades and centuries to come.

I know Air Force veterans and members at installations around the world will mark this 50th anniversary with great pride and honor. At Arnold Engineering and Development Center [AEDC] on Arnold Air Force Base in my congressional district, a celebration was recently held in observance of this milestone, and I'm sure similar events have been held at many other bases.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would like to once again thank the U.S. Air Force for all it has done for our great country, and I would like to insert into the RECORD a poem written by Tennessee's poet laureate Margaret Britton Vaughn, in honor of this wonderful anniversary. This poem was read publicly for the first time by Maggie Vaughn at the AEDC 50th anniversary commemoration.

AIR FORCE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Nineteen forty-seven, fifty years ago
The vision would not rest

Until the Air Force was born,
And the Bird left its nest.
A Bird with metal wings
A cockpit for an eye
Pilots gave it heart and soul
With grace of a butterfly.
America's fields grow barracks
And long, gray runways.
Seas of blue uniforms
Blended with the amber waves.
Above the patterned clouds
We watched fliers in formations,
Vapor trails left behind
Sent a message to all nations.
The large Bear of the U.S.S.R.
Shoot with disbelief,
The Eagle soared above its head
Bringing West Berlin relief.
Red Communism was no match
For men and women in blue,
MIGs could not compete
Where the Sabre flew.
From Korea to Vietnam
To Desert Storm of Iraq,
The Air Force was there
And brought the banner back.
Yesterday a playful boy
Spread his arms in flight,
Dreamed one day he'd fly
In his sleep at night.
The boy fulfilled his dream
High above the barren ground.
And woke up a tired God
"When he broke the speed of sound"
Today boys and girls
Share that same dream.
One day to take the oath
Join the Air Force team.
A half century has come and gone
Since Truman took the pen.
Signed aboard his "Sacred Cow"
Our Air Force to begin.
For those who served our country
In peace and war time,
For those who gave their lives
So freedom bells could chime.
For those who serve the Seal
Eagle, thunderbolt, stars and cloud
And wreath of six folds
Make our country proud.
The symbol of the Eagle
Facing the future without sorrow,
The United States, Air Force
Yesterday, today, tomorrow.

JOSEPHINE HINMAN'S GARDEN

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 1997

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an outstanding citizen in my community. Josephine Hinman, of Fallbrook, CA devotes her life to attacking hunger. Josephine grows and then donates some 12,000 bags of fruit and vegetables a year to feed the poor, all from her own garden. For 64 years, Josephine Hinman has selflessly given both her time and energy so that others may benefit.

Growing up during the Depression, Josephine learned early on how hard it can be to keep food on the table in tough times. Helping her family maintain a large garden, they grew enough to get by and help others in the neighborhood. Today, Josephine is still taking care of her garden, and still taking good care of the less fortunate in her community.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is beginning to rediscover the power of local solutions. For far too long, the Washington bureaucrats have insisted that the only way to help those in need