

FROM THE COMMUNITY THAT GOT
HIM STARTED

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the success of local events is directly the result of the commitment of individuals who want to make sure that the events do succeed. The people of Bay City have been most fortunate to see the success of the annual Bay City Fireworks Festival, and this success is due in large part to the outstanding support the Festival has received from Thomas LaPorte.

In 1995, learning that the Bay City Fireworks Festival was in a grave financial condition and that the event might not go forward, Tom LaPorte came forward with more than \$70,000 to insure that the event would take place in 1996. This was a wonderful act, but it was something the people of Bay City had come to expect from Tom. He has given money to accident victims, loan money to other small business facing difficult times, and providing emergency transport to stranded or hardship cases in his corporate plane. And throughout these efforts, he has also had the strong support of his wife Mary, and his sons, Jon and Patrick.

Tom LaPorte and his brother Larry ran their family shoe store for over twenty-five years in downtown Bay City. He started Mortgage America almost fifteen years ago in a small room in his home, and has now grown that operation to two buildings with 180 employees. They have been a major source of support and a force for growth of a significant number of local efforts, including the Logan Gaza Fund, the Bay Arts Council, the Bay City Clock Tower Committee, the Try City Cyclist Club, the Downtown Management Board, the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, the Kent Huber Scholarship Fund, Created for Caring, the Bay County Women's Center, and many, many more.

The Bay City Fireworks Festival has been restored to its former greatness by the continuing support from Tom LaPorte, including over \$200,000 in cash in and in-kind gifts over the past three years, plus promotion of other fund raisers for the event.

People may wonder why an individual does so much. When he was asked about it one day, Tom LaPorte said "I want to give back to the City I love and the community that got me started." Mr. Speaker, that is an attitude that deserves to be applauded and emulated as often as possible. I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in thanking and congratulating Tom LaPorte for his community spirit, his kind generosity and his enlightened leadership.

ANDRE NICHOLSON, DISTRICT OF
COLUMBIA WINNER 1977-98 VFW
VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLAR-
SHIP COMPETITION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its La-

dies Auxiliary sponsor the Voice of Democracy audio-essay scholarship competition. The program is now in its 51st year and required high school student entrants to write and record a three to five minute essay on an announced patriotic theme. "My Voice in our Democracy" was this year's theme, and more than 100,000 students participated in the program nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud to report to this body that Andre R. Nicholson, a senior at Ballou Senior High School has been named a National winner in the 1998 Voice of Democracy Program and recipient of the \$1,000 Department of Nevada and its Ladies Auxiliary Scholarship Award. Andre is the son of Robin and Jane Nicholson and he plans a career in marketing. Andre participated in the program as a project of his government class. I am pleased to acknowledge his teacher, Paul Charles and his principal, Kenneth Jones, Ph.D.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the reflections of the Members in this hallowed hall Andre Nicholson's award winning essay.

"MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY"

Good afternoon Honorable Judges and members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

As a young man in high school, it is an honor and pleasure for me to participate in the VFW Voice of Democracy Scholarship Program. I hope that not only my voice in our Democracy will be heard but other voices young and old, as we enter the twenty-first century.

In Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address he stated "that this government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

The basic premise of democracy cries out that each individual's worth and dignity must be recognized and respected by all of society at all times; regardless of race, religion, or station in life.

Dr. King once said he had a dream, and that dream was that one day this nation would live out the true meaning of its creed, we hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal.

The concepts of democracy go on to insist all men should be equal before the law and by way of opportunity; that the majority should rule restrained by minority rights. It also states that we must compromise to find a satisfactory solution and that the freedom of one individual should not infringe upon others.

This has been an experiment in government, and like all experiments it's been a trial and error process, good times and bad times, sunshine and rain.

However, if we the people of the United States are to form a more perfect union; we must be willing to grow along spiritual lines. On the back of one of our most prized possession (the dollar bill) is the statement "In God We Trust." If we would try more diligently to seek and do God's will, we as human beings would exhibit more God-like characteristics such as honesty, consideration, tolerance, forgiveness, faith, patience and concern for others.

By doing this I think the democratic process would run smoother and we would form a more perfect union.

Will my voice be heard in our Democracy? Yes, I believe that my voice, as well as other young adults will be heard. In order to have a unified democracy to improve our country, it is vital that the voices of the young and the old go together in order to make this a better world.

Too many individuals, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and James

Madison, put in countless hours of work in order for us to have a good constitution in a democratic society. We must continue and push hard. I know we can make it work.

CORRECTION OF OMISSIONS AND
SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO
LANCE FELLER

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, after the class of House Pages from the Fall Semester of 1997 left Washington, the names of several Pages were omitted from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I rise today to correct this unfortunate oversight.

Additionally, I would like to personally recognize Lance Feller of Del Norte County, California, in my Congressional District. Lance is an excellent student who recently exhibited his own leadership skills by winning election to the post of President of the California Association of Student Councils (CASC) Region 1 for the 1998/1999 school year. Region 1 includes 184 high schools and covers a land mass larger than several states.

Congressional Pages are an important part of the day-to-day operation of the United States House of Representatives. Many former pages now serves as Members of this House, while others have gone on to be leaders in business and other pursuits. Mr. Speaker, I expect that Lance Feller will put the skills and experiences learned in the Page program to good use, not just in the near future, but throughout his entire life.

I also would like to recognize some of the other Pages who served with Lance, but who were not recognized previously. They are: Brook Burns, Shayla Canty, Katie Crocker, Erin DiGiglia, William Haliburton, Anne Metz, Moremi Oladeinde, Aja Sims, Kimbrell Smith, Summer Smith, Colleen Deegan and Demarcus Ward. I am sure they will all take the lessons learned as Pages here in Washington, D.C. and apply them throughout their lives as they, too, strive to be leaders in their hometowns.

TRIBUTE TO FOSTER
GRANDPARENTS

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor some wonderful foster grandparents in Lenawee County who recently received recognition for their fifteen years of service. It's my pleasure to offer my congratulations and best wishes to three foster grandparents in particular—Mickie Diebel, Theta Luscomb, and Marie Schwalm.

Since January 1983, Maxine (Mickie) Diebel has provided love and support for children with special needs. These youngsters, first at the Adrian Training School and currently at McKinley Elementary School, have flourished due in large part to Mickie's nurturing and guidance. Mickie has been a magnificent role

model and mentor to the young girls who have looked to her for help and support. Mickie, thank you for your dedication so much of your time and effort to improving the lives of kids.

Theta Luscumb has been a foster grandparent since 1983. She began at Michener Elementary School but since 1991, Theta has worked at the Onstead Middle School. She is a wonderful source of advice and support to the children who have the privilege to look to her as a role model. An accomplished horsewoman, Theta shares that skill with her kids. Theta, I salute you for your dedication to area children.

Marie Schwalm has been a foster grandparent since 1993. At the Blissfield Elementary School, Marie has demonstrated commitment, compassion, and wisdom in her dealings with young people. Even though she has some trauma in her personal life, nothing has obstructed her determination to serve as a voice of support for kids. Marie, thanks for your dedication.

Those who make an extra effort to help nurture kids and nudge them in the right direction undertake a public service that benefits us all. We owe these women and the many other foster grandparents in Lenawee County and across the nation a debt of thanks.

HONORING BRUCE IRA LEVENBERG

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the Association of Jewish Professionals is conferring a well-deserved Leadership in Education award on Bruce Ira Levenberg. Bruce has been a close friend since our days in college together and over the years he has garnered much praise. He has been honored by the American Red Cross and the N.A.A.C.P. He works as a volunteer with AJP Scholarship, the Assisi Project, Holocaust Generations, and is affiliated with Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity. He has been an educator at all levels of schooling and an advocate for children for 28 years. He has earned the praise being given him for his many achievements in education and for helping children. I join his parents, Irving and Sylvia, his wife, Barbara, and their children, David and Jessica in congratulating him.

150 YEARS OF INSPIRATION

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the strength, stability, and inspiration provided by one's church is one of the most reassuring things in our lives. The congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Frankenlust Township have had the benefit of their church for the past 150 years, and will this Sunday observe their Sesquicentennial as part of their year-long celebration.

St. Paul Lutheran Church was founded by Rev. Ferdinand Sievers and fourteen Bavarian Lutheran immigrants on June 22, 1848 in the barn of Gerhard Dierker near what is now

Saginaw. St. Paul was the first Lutheran congregation in present day Bay County. A log cabin church was dedicated on the present church cemetery site on Squaconning Creek in Frankenlust Township on November 21, 1849, until a frame church was dedicated on October 4, 1857. The present church was dedicated on December 17, 1905, and has undergone a major renovation in 1977, and significant repairs to the roof, steeple, and entrance following a fire caused by lightning in 1984. The church edifice and cemetery were listed in the Michigan Register of Historic Sites on June 5, 1997.

St. Paul Church has also operated its elementary school since 1848, when Pastor Sievers served as the teacher of five students. The current school, the third in the Church's history, has 101 students ranging from pre-school through the eighth grade.

Since 1848, St. Paul has been served by eleven pastors who have helped to bring the teachings of the church to thousands of people over the past 150 years. Many families have had the privilege of looking back at the importance of St. Paul at moments of joy and others of sadness to themselves and their families. The current pastor, the Rev. Paul D. Theiss, provides spiritual guidance to a baptized membership of one thousand, carrying on a history of sanctuary and encouragement.

Mr. Speaker, we should never underestimate the power of prayer or the influence of one's church. The sesquicentennial of St. Paul Lutheran Church is a special event, and one we wish for so many other places of worship. I ask that you and all of our colleagues join me in wishing Rev. Theiss and the congregation of St. Paul the very best on this occasion, with our fond wishes for many more anniversaries to come.

HONORING CASEY SMITH AND NANCY STRIPPEL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize two young students from Colorado who best exemplify the spirit of learning and of academics that we pride ourselves upon on the Western Slope. Their names are Casey Smith and Nancy Strippele and they are both Presidential Scholars from Grand Junction, Colorado. They are the only two from our State, and both attend the same high school, Grand Junction High School, which makes their achievements all the more remarkable. They visited our nation's capital this week in order to receive their Presidential Scholar medallions which were presented to them by the Speaker of the House.

Mr. Speaker, as you also know, the United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by Executive Order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our Nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1970, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts. Each year, up to 141 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the Nation's highest honors for high school students. The Scholars are

chosen on the basis of their accomplishments in many areas—academic and artistic success, leadership, and involvement in school and the community. The Scholars represent excellence in education and the promise of greatness in young people. In honoring the Presidential Scholars, the President of the United States symbolically honors all graduating high school seniors of high potential.

The Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 3,700 Presidential Scholars for over 30 years. All these distinguished young people have demonstrated leadership, scholarship, contribution to school and community, and accomplishments in the arts, sciences, or other fields. The work of the Commission on Presidential Scholars reaffirms, on behalf of the President, the Nation's commitment to education that enables people to lead lives of challenge, accomplishment, and fulfillment.

I would also like to commend the work and dedication of Lorena Thompson, their teacher who deserves a great deal of credit for the success of these two scholars. Her devotion to teaching and evident ability to inspire the youth of Colorado, is truly what education is all about. I thank her for her labor on behalf of her students. I also want to congratulate the faculty and staff of Grand Junction High School who also deserve our thanks for the work they do.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying that I am very proud of the accomplishments of Nancy and Casey, and know that they will achieve even greater success in the next stages of their already remarkable lives.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JACK AND MARCHETA OWEN

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the House of Representatives about two very special people from my Congressional District, Jack and Marcheta Owen of Del Norte County, California. It is especially appropriate to single them out for recognition today, as they approach a milestone in their lives: Jack and Marcheta will be celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary on July 11, 1998.

Fifty years can be a long time, but in their case it's just the blink of an eye. They are a busy couple. They have always taken an active interest in their home community of Gasquet and in the affairs of Del Norte County in general.

Del Norte County is a predominately rural region, hundreds of miles from the nearest major city. In communities like these, people rely more on their neighbors than elsewhere. The people of Gasquet and Del Norte County have come to see Jack and Marcheta Owen as people they can depend on to make a lasting and positive contribution. The North Coast of California is a much better place to live, work and raise a family because of Jack and Marcheta Owen. I know the many people whose lives they have touched join with me in wishing Jack and Marcheta well as they prepare to celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Over the years, their advice to me personally has been invaluable and their friendship