

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ST. THOMAS  
MORE PARISH SCHOOL

**HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honor a school in my district for their academic excellence in being named a Blue Ribbon School.

The schools are selected based on one of two criteria: schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; or schools whose students regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests or in the top 10 percent of the nation on nationally-normed tests.

St. Thomas More Parish School met the criteria for this award because it ranks in the top 10 percent of the nation in ITBS scores. This is the first time this Catholic school has received this honor.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to honor the students of St. Thomas More Parish School as recipients of the No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 517, H.R. 3085, To amend the National Trails System Act to update the feasibility and suitability study originally prepared for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail and provide for the inclusion of new trail segments, land components, and campgrounds associated with that trail, and for other purposes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING THE SERVICE OF CORPORAL ANGELO VACCARO TO OUR COUNTRY

**HON. JOHN L. MICA**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Corporal Angelo Vaccaro, 23, who died in a heroic effort to aid his fellow comrades while serving our Nation in Afghanistan.

Prior to joining the Army, Angelo was born in the Bronx, NY, and spent his childhood living in Deltona, Florida, attending Timbercrest Elementary, Galaxy Middle and Deltona High schools. His dream was to become a physician's assistant. His mother remembers him affectionately as someone who liked to make people smile and laugh.

Angelo enlisted in the Army in March 2004 and was assigned and deployed to Afghanistan with Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, out of Fort Drum, NY. He was the head medic for his unit and took pride in serving our country.

We should all remember Angelo's heroic courage and his ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. The freedom we enjoy and the liberty in the world for which he fought are part of the great legacy that Corporal Angelo Vaccaro leaves behind. He is buried in Deltona, Florida.

To Angelo's wife, Dana; his parents, Ray and Linda; and his entire family, we extend our deepest sympathy.

Mr. Speaker, because of Corporal Angelo Vaccaro's sacrifice for our country, I ask all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in recognizing his service in our Nation's Armed Forces and remembering both his life and his dedication to the United States of America.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHARLES  
CLARK AS "FRIEND OF YOUTH"  
HONOR

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Charles Clark for his commitment to the students, faculty, and alumni of Trinity High School of Euless, Texas, where he has served as Lead Custodian for over 14 years. I also congratulate Mr. Clark on being recognized as a true "Friend of Youth" by the Mid-Cities Optimist Club in the 26th District of Texas.

Mr. Clark began working for the Hurst-Euless-Bedford School District as a night custodian, and began his own custodial business to provide for his son's college education. After his son graduated from college, Mr. Clark closed his business and took a position as Lead Custodian to make a difference in other students' lives.

A caring and honorable man, Mr. Clark serves as a role model and mentor for all those who pass through Trinity High School. He supports the school by attending students' athletic and fine arts events. When students visit years after graduation, they continue to seek out "Uncle Charles."

Mr. Clark has been honored with the H-E-B School District's "Extra Mile Award," given to school district support personnel who go above and beyond what their job requires of them.

After Hurricane Katrina devastated his boyhood home in Mississippi, Mr. Clark organized a collection drive at the school for water and cleaning supplies, and delivered them personally to Mississippi. Mr. Clark and his wife Ellen of 37 years have raised a deeply spiritual, loving family in Fort Worth, Texas since 1967.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent a man so selfless and dedicated to serving youth as Mr. Charles Clark. Congratulations to Mr. Clark for being recognized as a "Friend of Youth" by the Mid-Cities Optimist Club.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN  
PICCARELLA

**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the accomplishments of one of my constituents, Stephen Piccarella of Jackson Heights, New York. I wish to recognize Stephen for his Short Story, Silver Award win in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2006 contest, sponsored by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. The Alliance was established to promote artistic development and expression in middle and high school students throughout the Nation in cooperation with schools. This year's competition recognized the work of over 1,400 students and invited award recipients to a workshop hosted in New York designed to introduce students to the professional world of art.

Mr. Speaker, I join to wish Stephen best wishes and good fortune in his future projects.

IN HONOR OF THE COMMISSION ON  
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY ACTION

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Commission on Catholic Community Action's 25th Anniversary of the Peace and Justice Awards Dinner.

Established in 1969, the Commission on Catholic Community Action continuously pursues their mission to protect and promote human dignity, with a special focus on poor and disenfranchised groups. Seeking to empower the voiceless, CCCA achieves their goals through education, consciousness-raising, organization, mobilization, and advocating for change.

CCCA also promotes peace and justice through the Annual Peace and Justice Awards Dinner. For a quarter of a century, the dinner has been an opportunity to reward the people of the Cleveland community who have dedicated their lives to the causes of peace and justice for all. These men, women, and organizations play a pivotal role in the rebirth of Cleveland. I would like to join CCCA in recognizing this year's recipients: Duane Drotar, Lida Roman (posthumously), the Christ Child Society, Sr. Mary Louise Trivson, S.N.D., and the Women's Re-Entry Network.

In addition, keynote speakers at these events have educated the public on issues such as racial discrimination and interfaith understanding. Generating community awareness throughout Cleveland, the CCCA has provided participants with a new appreciation for celebrating multicultural diversity within the city. Speaking at the Awards Dinner this year is Sr. Mary Sujita Kallapurakkathu, S.N.D., sharing her experiences of working with the poor.

Congratulations to the CCCA on their constant pursuit of peace and justice. We can conceive of peace as not simply the absence of violence but the presence of the capacity for a higher evolution of human awareness, of

respect, trust, and integrity. We can conceive of peace as a tool to tap the infinite capabilities of humanity to transform consciousness and conditions that impel or compel violence at a personal, group, or national level, toward creating understanding, compassion, and love.

My fellow colleagues, join me in honoring the Commission on Catholic Community Action, as they celebrate the 25th anniversary of their Annual Peace and Justice Awards Dinner.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL MELE AS HE CELEBRATES HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join family and friends in wishing Michael Mele the very best as he celebrates a remarkable milestone—his 100th birthday! Marking a century of hard work and dedication, today's celebration will give Michael, or Ozi Mike as he is affectionately known by family and close friends, and his loved ones the opportunity to reflect on the many accomplishments he has achieved throughout his life as well as how he has touched all of their lives.

A gifted vocalist, dedicated husband and father, devoted parishioner, army veteran, and professional technician, Michael is a man of many talents that he has shared with hundreds over the course of his life. Born and raised in New Haven, Connecticut, Michael has led a fascinating life. Upon graduating from high school, he studied voice for ten years during which time he became an accomplished tenor. Michael sang in productions of such classics as *The Barber of Seville* and *Pagliacci* and, though the relocation of the production to California prevented him from taking the part, he even won a lead role opposite Betty Grable in the movie musical *Down Argentine Way*. During his time with the theater, Michael also won roles in several New York productions, including *An American Comedy* and *The Family Portrait*.

After marrying his wife, Carmel, in 1942, the couple raised two children, sons Michael and Robert. He served in the United States Army during World War II where he received training as a dental technician, a profession in which he was employed until he was hired by Winchester/Olin as a lab technician, retiring in 1971. Throughout his life, Michael has held a unique devotion to his faith and his church. Michael shared his gift for singing with a variety of Catholic churches throughout New Haven. He directed glee clubs, choirs, and sang as a soloist at St. Ann's, St. Rose's, St. Brendan's, St. Donato's, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Hamden. In fact, his lifetime of dedicated efforts were recognized by the Church when Archbishop Daniel Cronin awarded him the prestigious Saint Joseph Award—the archdiocesan medal of appreciation for outstanding parishioners.

An active and inspiring retiree, Michael has continued to dedicate his time to his church as well as a new found passion for horse-riding.

What began—at age seventy-seven—with a gift certificate for riding lessons and later—at age eighty—a saddle, has blossomed into a beloved hobby. In fact, for a decade after he began riding, he spent his summers at the Bitter Root ranch in the mountains of northwest Wyoming. At 100 years old, Michael is a living treasure—he still rides, drives a car, maintains his own home, attends daily Mass, serves on the altar, and is finishing his twenty-sixth year as a fourth grade religious education teacher. He is even working on his autobiography which I have no doubt will be a real page-turner!

Today, as Michael celebrates his 100th birthday, I have no doubt that he will look back in wonder at the fascinating events that have brought him to this moment. In the last century he has witnessed some of the most important moments in world history and, through his own efforts, has left an indelible mark on the lives of all those who have known him. It is my privilege to rise today to join his sons Michael and Robert, as well as the many family and friends who have gathered in extending my heartfelt congratulations to Michael Mele on his 100th birthday. This is a very special day for all of those fortunate enough to know Michael. My very best wishes for many more years of health and happiness. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

RECOGNIZING WWII VETERAN AND POW RAY KNISLEY, JR. OF CHIEFLAND, FLORIDA

**HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a Prisoner of War from World War II, Ray Knisley, Jr. Born in Massachusetts, Mr. Knisley served in the U.S. Army and was captured by the Nazi Army.

Mr. Knisley served as a medical aid man with the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. While encamped near the German border of Alsace Lorraine on New Year's Eve, 1944, his entire unit was overrun and he was taken prisoner. For the next several months, Mr. Knisley was transferred between several prisoner camps, finally being rescued by the Russian Army on April 28, 1945.

Following World War II, Mr. Knisley raised his family in Massachusetts. He and his wife have five children, nine grand children and six great grand children. In 1985 Mr. Knisley moved to West Palm Beach, where he worked as a volunteer at the local Veterans Affairs Hospital for twenty years. He specialized in working with fellow prisoners of war; eventually assisting more than two hundred former POWs receive a one hundred percent disability rating. He recently moved to Chiefland about a year ago.

Mr. Speaker, prisoners of war like Ray Knisley, Jr. should be recognized for their service to our nation and for their commitment and sacrifices in battle. With thousands of World War II veterans passing a way each year, it is incumbent on all Americans to hear their stories and preserve their memories. Ray Knisley, Jr. should know that we truly consider him one of America's heroes.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO WILLOW CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honor a school in my district for their academic excellence in being named a Blue Ribbon School.

The schools are selected based on one of two criteria: schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; or schools whose students regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests or in the top 10 percent of the Nation on nationally-normed tests.

To receive this recognition, Willow Creek Elementary School has had in each of the past three years over 90 percent of its' students perform at "Proficient" or "Advanced" levels in math and reading. Willow Creek also received this prestigious honor in 1999.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to honor the students of Willow Creek Elementary School as recipients of the No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Award.

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT GRAY

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2006*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Robert Allen Gray who passed away after 90 glorious years on Friday, September 22, 2006.

Mr. Gray will forever be remembered by family and friends as a man of integrity and strong values. In his lifetime, he experienced many of the major events in the last century, including the Great Depression and as a soldier in the United States Army during World War II.

In his civilian life, Mr. Gray was an engineer. He was interested in working on cars as well as watching the Indianapolis 500. Mr. Gray's enthusiasm for engineering was closely followed by a passion for gardening. His love of nature was given to him by his father, a florist. Mr. Gray has passed this passion on to his children and grandchildren.

As a family man, Mr. Gray will always be remembered as affectionate and caring. He was the caregiver for many of his elderly aunts and helped his wife as she struggled with Alzheimer's disease. As a father, Mr. Gray was committed to teaching his children and grandchildren the importance of respecting and caring for others.

I extend my sympathies to his family and friends. May this man, whose displays of compassion and love touched the hearts of so many, be an inspiration to us all.