

Scouts. I commend her commitment and dedication for the betterment of her life, her community, and her country.

CRYSTAL BELL AWARD  
RECIPIENTS

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to commend seven exceptional teachers from Northwest Indiana who have been recognized as outstanding educators for their peers for the 2007–2008 school year. These individuals are: Sheri L. Doffin, Tracy Kohler, Kathleen R. Krum, Karen A. Semancik, Nancy J. Smith, Thomas R. Sufana, and Vicki Weber. For their outstanding efforts, these honorees will be presented with the Crystal Bell Award at a reception sponsored by the Indiana State Teachers Association. This prestigious event will take place at the Andorra Restaurant and Banquets in Schererville, Indiana, on Wednesday, May 7, 2008.

Sheri Doffin, a first grade teacher at Lake Village Elementary School, has been in the teaching profession for an astonishing 31 years, 30 of which have been with the North Newton School Corporation. Throughout her tenure, Sheri has always made a point of bringing innovative ideas to her classroom to make sure her students remain interested and actively involved in their studies. Involved in many committees and programs at Lake Village, including the PTO and PL221 team, which is geared toward the improvement of the school, Sheri's dedication is matched only by her constant concern for her students.

Tracy Kohler, from the Crown Point School Corporation, has been a role model and a true inspiration to her students since arriving in Northwest Indiana in 2004. Currently an eighth grade honors algebra and pre-algebra teacher at Colonel John Wheeler Middle School, Tracy is well known for her creativity in the classroom, regularly bringing real-life situations into her lessons. Also recognized for her skills with teaching struggling learners, Tracy was selected to teach a pilot program aimed at improving math scores on the ISTEP exam. Tracy has also shown her unwavering commitment to her students through her service as the sponsor of the Academic Bowl Team and as a volunteer at athletic and after-school events.

Kathleen Krum, this year's recipient from the Hanover Community School Corporation, has been a teacher for an astounding 38 years. A fourth and fifth grade teacher at Hanover, Kathy has received many awards and honors throughout her lifetime of service. Involved in numerous extracurricular activities and special programs with her fourth graders, Kathy has always taught with the goal of making learning fun. With this goal in mind, one of Kathy's greatest sources of pride was the construction of an outdoor learning lab at Lincoln Elementary School, which has helped many young students gain first-hand experience with nature.

Karen Semancik, this year's recipient from the Lake Central School Corporation, has had an outstanding teaching career, which has

spanned 29 years. Karen is currently a fifth grade social studies teacher at Clark Middle School, where she is widely known for the unique and interesting activities she brings to her classroom. One example of such an activity is that she provided her students with the opportunity to contact the International Space Station. Additionally, Karen's peers and students have always been impressed with her patience and her ability to adapt her lessons to the individual needs of her students.

This year's recipient of the Crystal Bell Award from the School Town of Munster is Nancy Smith. Nancy, of Wilbur Wright Middle School, has been a seventh grade language arts teacher in Munster for the past 35 years. The passion Nancy has for teaching and for her students goes far beyond the classroom. Through her efforts on the Broad Based Planning Committee, the language arts gifted and talented program has made great strides, allowing these exceptional students the opportunity to enhance their student careers. Furthermore, Nancy has been a true role model to teachers new to the classroom, allowing them to learn from her vast experience and to share her passion for educating young people.

This year's recipient of the Crystal Bell Award from the Tri-Creek School Corporation is Thomas R. Sufana. Tom has been nurturing young minds for an astonishing 32 years and currently serves as the art teacher at Lowell Senior High School. In addition, Tom has served as the Assistant Drama Director for the past 14 years. Throughout his illustrious career, Tom has not only received recognition as a great teacher, but his work has been seen in many public events, both locally and nationally. Because of his love for art, Tom is responsible for bringing many beautiful pieces to Northwest Indiana, many of which are proudly displayed in the halls of Lowell High School today.

Vicki Weber, this year's recipient from the School Town of Highland, is known for her ability to challenge her students in a way few other teachers can. Vicki, currently a third grade teacher at Warren Elementary School, also serves in many other capacities, including: Spellbowl coach, intramural volleyball coach, mentor, mentor faculty facilitator, and as a member of the building school improvement plan steering committee. A testament to Vicki's ability to connect with her students, she has coached two Spellbowl teams that have advanced to higher level competitions.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join me in commending these outstanding educators on their receipt of the 2008 Crystal Bell Award. Their years of hard work have played a major role in shaping the minds and futures of Northwest Indiana's young people, and each recipient is truly an inspiration to us all.

SAFE AND COMPLETE STREETS  
ACT

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2008.

This needed legislation is based on the principle that our Nation's transportation system

should be safe and accessible to all people. Motorists, bicyclists, transit users, pedestrians, the disabled, and the elderly all use our country's transportation network each and every day. The Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2008 will ensure that the needs of all of these users are accommodated during the transportation planning process.

Complete streets are an essential part of well-designed communities that are livable for children, families, the elderly, and people of all ages and abilities. By providing our constituents with sidewalks on which to walk, well-lit transit stations in which to wait for the bus or light rail, clear lanes in which to drive, and bike lanes in which to ride, we can encourage them to utilize alternative modes of transportation. This can make our transportation system most effective and useful.

Madam Speaker, our constituents are struggling to deal with the skyrocketing cost of gas. As their pocketbooks are hit increasingly hard at the pump, many Americans are turning to alternative methods of transportation. In my hometown of Sacramento, where gasoline is nearly four dollars per gallon, my local newspaper recently reported on the growing number of my constituents who are riding their bicycles to work because of the prohibitive price of filling a car up with fuel.

For these reasons, Americans around the country are eager for transportation alternatives. The Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2008 is a strong step toward a future where travelers are presented with a range of transportation options. By requiring States and metropolitan planning organizations to accommodate the needs of all users of the transportation system in their planning processes, this legislation will broaden access to the streets that tie our communities—and our Nation—together.

Incorporating these kinds of complete streets principles will help us move away from the kinds of transportation planning that causes seniors to avoid walking to the store because of the lack of sidewalks. It will help usher in a day when commuters feel safe riding to work on their bicycles because the streets now accommodate bikes. It will ease the fears of parents across our country who hesitate to allow their children to walk to school because of the danger posed by so many cars driving near sidewalks. It will reduce the risk posed to disabled Americans who are forced to deal with a transportation system short on painted crosswalks and audible walking signals. And it will encourage people to take public transit because they will no longer have to wait for the bus at a stop that is nothing more than a pole in the ground.

Complete streets also have a number of non-transportation-related benefits. In a country where nearly one-third of adults are obese and the number of overweight children has tripled since 1980, giving people options to walk or take public transit can play a major role in reducing these disturbing trends. In terms of fighting global warming, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommends as a key climate change mitigation strategy the shifting of travel modes from driving to walking, taking transit, and bicycling. There is ample room for complete streets to help bring about this needed paradigm shift in the way we travel—65 percent of trips in the United States under one mile are now made by automobile. In one Colorado city, local efforts to