

Jewish settlers arrived on our shores hundreds of years ago, they saw a land of promise and liberty. With hard work and determination, these individuals helped build our country and strengthen our values. Their commitment to religious freedom and their belief in democracy have enriched our society and helped make our country a beacon of hope for all.

Many Jewish Americans have served in our military with valor and distinction in times of war and peace. We pay special tribute to all those who stepped forward when our country needed them most. These American heroes confronted grave dangers to protect our Nation.

During Jewish American Heritage Month and throughout the year, we honor Jewish Americans who played an integral role in shaping the cultural fabric of our Nation. Their spirit and talents have helped America succeed and prosper, and their efforts continue to remind us of the many blessings of this great country.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2008 as Jewish American Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor Jewish Americans across the country.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:26 a.m., April 30, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 1.

Proclamation 8249—National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, 2008

April 29, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Health and fitness are personal responsibilities and important national goals for our citizens. During National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, we highlight the benefits of exercise and the value of participating in sports.

It is important for all Americans to participate in activities that help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Outdoor activities such as walking, running, swimming, and biking are good for the mind, body, and soul. Regular physical activity and healthy eating habits can help reduce stress and lower the risk for many chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and depression.

My Administration is committed to encouraging all Americans to remain physically active. Through the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, the National President's Challenge allows participants of all ages to set a fitness goal and keep track of their progress as they work to achieve it. To get more information, or to sign up to participate, people can visit presidentschallenge.org. By getting involved and exercising for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, Americans can improve their health and happiness and set a positive example for others.

During National Physical Fitness and Sports month and throughout the year, I encourage all Americans to make physical fitness a priority in their lives.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2008 as National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. I call upon my fellow citizens to recognize the importance of exercise and participate in athletic activities. I also encourage individuals, schools, and communities to celebrate this

month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:26 a.m., April 26, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 1.

Remarks Honoring the 2008 National and State Teachers of the Year

April 30, 2008

The President. Good morning. Good morning. Welcome to the White House. Welcome to the Rose Garden. We're walking out of the Oval Office, Mike turns to me and says, "I like what you've done with the place." [Laughter] All I did was mow the lawn. [Laughter] Glad you're here.

I'm really glad to be taking a part of an event that honors America's teachers. It's a tradition that started with Harry Truman. It's a tradition that Laura and I have really enjoyed carrying on. She's not here unfortunately. She sends her best. You know, I like to tell people that, you know, one of the interesting questions you get in my line of work is, "Can you name a teacher who had influenced you?" I said, "Yes, my wife." [Laughter]

But she and Jenna are out promoting a new book that they wrote called "Read All About It." I'm not suggesting that people buy it, of course. That would be unseemly here in the Rose Garden. [Laughter] But it is a book where they're attempting to promote literacy. She sends her love. She understands what it means to be a teacher. We were so honored that our little girl chose to be a teacher as well. It made her dad feel really well. I'm sure—I just hope you know the influence you have on children. I suspect you do; that's why you're such a good teacher.

Good teachers hear a call. Good teachers are empathetic souls. And really, the best

teachers have a special intuition and, I suspect, a little potential, and so the ability to see potential and the ability to have the patience necessary to watch it grow. I want to thank you for nurturing young minds. I thank you for providing such wonderful examples. And I thank you for inspiring the imaginations and unleashing the talents of our Nation's young.

I'm up here with not only the Teacher of the Year but with Margaret Spellings, the Secretary of Education. I do want to welcome Senator Gordon Smith and Senator [Congressman]* Greg Walden. Turns out they're both from the State of Oregon. [Laughter] I wonder why you're here? But anyway, I'm glad you're here. Thank you for being strong supporters of the teachers in your State.

I welcome the State Teachers of the Year. I really enjoyed seeing you in the Oval Office. It's fun for me to be able to greet you and say thank you. And I can't thank you enough for serving as such great role models for other teachers in your States. And we're sure glad you're here.

I do want to thank the National Teacher of the Year finalist: Lewis Chappale, who is with us—thank you, Lewis—from California; June Teisan, from Michigan; as well as Tommy Smigiel, from Virginia—that would be Norfolk, Virginia.

I am obviously up here with the Teacher of the Year. I'll spend a little time talking about Michael in a minute, but I am so proud that his mom and dad have joined us, as is he. Thank you for coming. I know it brings you great pride to have raised a son who is dedicated to helping others. His wife is with us, for whom I'll say something else a little later; son and daughter is with us, as well as brother. Thanks for coming.

Finally, we got Ken James, president-elect, Council of the Chief State School Officers, who administers the Teacher of the Year program. Thanks for coming. And the rest of you are welcome here too. [Laughter]

One of the things that Margaret and I have tried to do is help teachers be able to set high standards and achieve accountability. And that was the spirit behind passing No

* White House correction.