

I am happy to share with my colleagues Michelle's outstanding winning script by entering it into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

DEMOCRACY—ABOVE AND BEYOND

(By Michelle Fortier)

Ever since I was a little girl, I can remember being told exciting accounts in American history, but it wasn't until recently that I began contemplating how these long and inevitable struggles have influenced my own life. Democracy must be the most powerful word in the English language, and so often I have taken it for granted. This word affects everything that I do, but I hardly ever noticed it. To the citizens of these United States, democracy is a way of life, but to people of foreign lands, it is a hope, a dream.

Now that I've almost reached voting age, I realize how much Democracy has meant to my life. In just one short year, I will take on the awesome responsibility of making decisions affecting my country. That is truly a wondrous privilege.

I used to wonder why people would be willing to fight and die for the principles we hold so dear today. It wasn't until I was older that I realized exactly what those people had been fighting for. Those early Americans were fighting for the rights of future generations to not have to live in fear. They fought for me, and I realized how much I had not acknowledged. All the choices and privileges I have come with a price, and it was paid through the blood and sweat of Americans, past and present. Americans who have gone above and beyond the call to duty. This preservation of rights has been the basis for all of America's conflicts ever since the footprints of pilgrims imprinted the sandy shores of Plymouth, Massachusetts because democracy is a never-ending process. Every decision we make or every right we engage in is a continuation of the ideals expressed so long ago.

Every time I turn on the news I hear stories of people of foreign nations struggling to gain their independence or even a single basic right, and I think, "Would I be willing to die for the sake of freedom for future generations? Would I fight to keep my country free? Would I go above and beyond what was dutifully expected of me? I'm sure all Americans who have seen war or conflicting times, such as depression or civil strife, have contemplated these questions. But to live in a country whose basis was founded on the dreams and visions of the brave men and women who came searching for more than their own personal gain and has been kept alive through the sacrifices of those willing to risk life and limb to preserve our nation's freedom is to have a proud heritage. We've seen endless accounts of this throughout this great nation's history. The horrors of Gettysburg, the friendlessness of the World Wars, to the struggles of the immigrants who came to America searching for opportunity and independence. They have all contributed to the dignified heritage I display as my own. It is truly an honor to have been born in a land that serves as a beacon of modern democracy.

From the recent free elections in Bosnia to the new democratic societies of the former, Soviet Union, we can see that democracy is growing like a virus. It infiltrates a group of people with such fury that it spreads to anyone close enough to experience it. More and more each day I realize that the voice of democracy can be silenced no longer. It screams in the souls of imprisoned people, and it's echoes can be heard all over the earth. People are standing up for their inalienable right to be free. People are finally going above and beyond.

IN HONOR OF THE HARMONIA-
CHOPIN SINGING SOCIETY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the 95th anniversary of the Harmonia-Chopin Singing Society. Since its inception in 1902, this organization has interacted with leading artists and performers and has participated in countless significant musical events. Among many other significant contributions to the city of Cleveland's cultural scene, in 1946, the society used concert proceeds to purchase and install a bust of Frederic Chopin in the Polish garden of Cleveland's Cultural Garden.

The Harmonia-Chopin Singing Society has remained committed to Cleveland's "Warswaza" community through participation in numerous events and through continued investment in the community as a whole. The dedicated members of the society have kept Polish culture and tradition alive and celebrated in the Cleveland area.

Once again, I salute and congratulate the Harmonia-Chopin Singing Society for 95 years of preserving, promoting, and sharing the Polish culture to people of all nationalities and races in the Cleveland area. I wish the group continued success.

MARY CHALFANT: DEDICATED TO
PRESERVING MORRIS COUNTY'S
HERITAGE

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to my constituent and friend Mary Chalfant. Mary recently retired after 21 years of dedicated service to preserving the heritage of one of our Nation's most historically important counties, through her work on the Morris County Heritage Commission.

Mary first became involved with the Morris County Heritage Commission when she became interested in one of the county's many Revolutionary War Era historical sites, the Lewis Condict House—home to the Women's Club of Morristown. She quickly became indispensable, serving as executive secretary of the commission. As current Heritage Commission Chairperson Nancy Knapp noted, "They don't make them like Mary any more." "She has been the heart and soul of the commission", added Frances Pingeon, a former chairperson of the commission. Mary's total dedication and deft communications skills made her an irreplaceable asset.

Throughout her years of service, Mary was instrumental in the Heritage Commission's most important projects. These include the commission's historic marker program, the wonderful tour brochures of Morris County municipalities, the 39 volume "Morris County Historic Sites Survey," and the "Highlights of History: 300 Years in Morris County" slide show, not to mention the many other brochures and annual publications on Morris County's rich history and fascinating historical sites.

A resident of Morristown since 1950, Mary Chalfant has devoted her efforts to other organizations as well, including Morristown Memorial Hospital, the Morris County bicentennial committee, and the Morris County Historical Society. Mary remains involved in the Woman's Club of Morristown and Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, also in Morristown. Anyone who has worked alongside Mary knows how her enthusiasm and warmth have touched thousands of people in Morris County and New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Mary Chalfant for all her efforts with the commission and so many other organizations. She is a tireless worker, dedicated, compassionate and so very loyal to all she serves. I wish Mary all the best in her retirement from the Heritage Commission knowing that her work there with so many commissioners has assured that Morris County's rich heritage will be better preserved.

GARY KARNOPP: DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE AWARD, SAN DIEGO
BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION
TRADES COUNCIL

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gary Karnopp, an exemplary representative of the San Diego region. Mr. Karnopp is being honored with the Distinguished Service Award by the San Diego Building & Trades Council for his dedication to working Americans.

Mr. Karnopp is a carpenter and skilled tradesman, and as such has represented his brothers and sisters of the Carpenter's Union in a wide variety of positions, always working to promote higher standards of employment for building trades workers.

He has been a member and leader of his union during his entire career. For the past 24 years, he has been a business representative and office in a local union. He served 17 years as financial secretary for Carpenters Local 2398, and earlier this year was elected financial secretary of local 547. He has been a delegate to the San Diego District Council of Carpenters for 15 years. He has served both as a delegate to the Southern California Conference of Carpenters and to the Southern California-Nevada Regional Council of Carpenters. He is currently business representative for the southern California-Nevada region.

In addition, Mr. Karnopp is a long-time member of the East County Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Committee, the San Diego County Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Committee, and the Southern California Carpenters Overall Joint Apprenticeship Committee. He has served for two decades as a delegate to the San Diego Building Trades Council, 10 years on the executive board. He is also a 20-year delegate to the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council.

His service extends to the greater community, as chairman of the personnel commission for the city of El Cajon, the east county advisory board for United Way, and a member of Masonic Lodge No. 576.

I want to sincerely congratulate Gary Karnopp, his wife Cynthia and their two children, Lindsey and Alyssa—and I want to recognize his contributions to San Diego County and his achievement in receiving the Distinguished Service Award from the San Diego Building & Construction Trades Council.

BECTON DICKINSON & CO. 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Becton Dickinson & Co.—along with all of its employees and their families—on the 100th anniversary of the founding of this global medical technology company. Becton Dickinson is one of the largest and most important employers in my district. It is more than just a major economic force, however. It is a company whose products have saved the lives and improved the health of millions of people around the world. It is also a shining example of the proverbial good corporate citizen, playing an active role and making important contributions to all the communities in which it does business.

Becton Dickinson was founded after Maxwell W. Becton—a medical supplies salesman—and Fairleigh S. Dickinson—a stationery salesman—met on a sales trip in 1897. The two traveled together, became friends, and decided that fall to form their own company to import medical devices from Europe. The choice of medical devices as their line of business was simple—Dickinson realized that Becton's small satchel of thermometers was easier to carry than his heavy sample cases of stationery.

From those early days up to the present, Becton Dickinson has built a reputation for quality. Dissatisfied with the reliability and quality of imports, the partners soon began to manufacture their own syringes and clinical thermometers. The company quickly outgrew its New York City home and, in 1907, moved to a new factory in East Rutherford, N.J., beginning its long association with the Garden State. When World War I halted medical imports from Europe, Becton Dickinson began to set the standard for all-glass syringes.

During World War II, the company geared up for war production and produced innovative new products such as the first sterile disposable blood donor kits for the Red Cross and a new device to collect blood in glass tubes. Other Becton Dickinson innovations included machines to manufacture syringe needles automatically rather than by hand, syringes with interchangeable parts, and the ACE bandage.

Following the war, control of the company passed to the founders' sons, Fairleigh S. Dickinson Jr. and Henry P. Becton. On a personal note, I can testify to the high standards of personal character and integrity that Dick and Betty Dickinson and Henry "Hank" Becton brought to the business community and philanthropic and civic communities of northern New Jersey. Product lines were broadened and new businesses acquired as the company expanded nationally and internationally. The sons took the company public in 1962 to ob-

tain financing for huge investments in equipment to produce sterile disposable medical products as part of the "disposable revolution" in medicine.

Becton Dickinson grew rapidly, diversifying from the 1950's through the 1980's to enter many aspects of the health care industry, including diagnostics, while continuing to lead the medical device market.

Over the years, Becton Dickinson has demonstrated a strong commitment to corporate social responsibility, funding basic research and higher education, health care assistance in developing nations, and support of community based health, social service, civic and cultural organizations. Its products have played major roles in the fight to end polio and the development of crash test "dummies" to improve the safety of automobiles.

Sales for the company have grown dramatically, from \$2,639 in the first year of business to \$2.8 billion last year. Approximately 18,000 workers are employed in 80 locations in 40 countries. Research and development in 1996 amounted to \$154 million while the company made \$3.6 million in contributions to charitable organizations, not including significant product donations to disaster and humanitarian relief both in the United States and overseas.

Throughout a century of growth, Becton Dickinson's commitment to raising the quality of health care worldwide has remained constant. Its founders' passion for excellence is still reflected in the dedication and hard work of its employees. Becton Dickinson brings the miracles of modern medicine to millions of people around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank this leading company for the contributions it has made to the world of medicine and to our community in northern New Jersey. Under the leadership of Chairman Clateo Castellini, we can rest assured that this dedication and commitment will continue. I wish Becton Dickinson many years of continued success.

WEBSTER HOSE, HOOK AND LADDER COMPANY HONORED

HON. JAMES H. MALONEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the U.S. House of Representatives to pay tribute to the outstanding and courageous service of past and present Ansonia Webster Hose, Hook and Ladder Company firefighters. Since 1897, generations of Webster volunteer firefighters have put their lives on the line, time and time again, on behalf of the Ansonia community. They've responded with only a seconds notice to save the lives of others without even contemplating the threatening dangers awaiting them. This kind of selfless and courageous work on behalf of the fellow citizens must be honored to the highest degree.

Knowing that during this anniversary year many will focus on the factual history of the Webster Hose Company, I want to honor each and every firefighter who has so generously given of his or her body and heart to the city of Ansonia. The historical collective effort by which the company was started is the best demonstration of the tremendous dedication

Ansonia residents have always had toward their community. At that time, buildings were illuminated and heated in ways that dangerously exposed families and businesses to fires. Residents wisely recognized the need for more firefighters and signed petitions actually offering themselves as volunteers for this new company. Because of the people's true commitment and dedication, the Webster Company was officially incorporated on January 7, 1897.

Since responding to their first fire on Factory Street that August with only one 550 hose cart, the company has since extinguished hundreds of fires, including the massive blaze at the Blake Bus Co. in the 1950's and the arson of the Arnold Building in 1987 and 5-7 Jewett Street in 1995. They've had tremendous success at saving people's homes, retrieving thousands of irreplaceable belongings, and most important, rescuing hundreds of Ansonia residents.

Mr. Speaker, as a State and a nation, we can truly learn a lot from past and present Webster volunteers. Their dedication and selflessness on behalf of the greater Ansonia community is symbolic of an older time, when cities and towns were more rooted and people knew their neighbors. We must learn from their example, embrace volunteerism, and in turn create stronger communities across our State and Nation.

THE RETIREMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN STATESMAN F.W. DE KLERK AND THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF USIA'S INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, just yesterday, the South African National Party elected a successor to F.W. de Klerk, who has served for many years as the head of the party. Mr. de Klerk is the former President of South Africa. In 1990, he rejected his party's policy and his country's laws which established the vicious apartheid system, freed Nelson Mandela, and began negotiations which led to the generally peaceful transformation of South Africa from a racist society to one that is moving toward a pluralistic, multiethnic, open society. In 1993, Mr. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize—an award that was an appropriate honor to Mr. de Klerk's statesmanship, foresight, and commitment to principle.

Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Mr. de Klerk's role in the transformation of South Africa. He now retires from public life to have the time to chronicle the significant changes that he has both witnessed and helped to bring about. Mr. de Klerk gave his farewell address to the South African parliament on Tuesday, and I join his colleagues in the parliament in paying tribute to him.

Commentators around the world have reacted to Mr. de Klerk's announcement by taking note of the key role he played in ending apartheid and moving his country toward democracy. I have no doubt that change eventually would have come to South Africa, even without Mr. de Klerk's efforts; justice cannot