

Mr. President, I am proud to join my esteemed colleague, Senator DOMENICI, as a cosponsor of this resolution, and I urge each and every Member of this Chamber to do the same.●

THE MEMORY OF JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

● Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, today in my State and around the country we recognize the traditional anniversary of emancipation for millions of African-Americans. On this date, June 19, in 1865, slaves in the American frontier, especially in the Southwest, finally received the word that President Lincoln's great cause of freedom had finally been won. Since that date, throughout the American Southwest African-Americans have informally celebrated Juneteenth Independence Day.

As with so many important cultural traditions in America, the meaning of Juneteenth was handed down from parent to child as an inspiration and encouragement for future generations. Earlier this year, the U.S. Congress recognized that tradition when it unanimously passed a resolution honoring the faith and strength of character of those in each generation who kept the tradition alive—a lesson for all Americans today, regardless of background, region, or race.

Mr. President, Juneteenth Independence Day is an important and enriching part of our country's history and heritage. The history it represents provides an opportunity for all Americans to learn more about our common past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped our Nation.

I join my colleagues in both Houses of Congress in honoring those Americans past and present to whom it has meant so much.●

TRIBUTE TO HOVIE LISTER

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a man whose name has become synonymous with gospel music, Mr. Hovie Lister. On July 19, 1997, a group of Georgians will recognize his contributions to the music field at the Civic Center in Atlanta.

Hovie was born into music. At the age of 6, he began studying the piano and later attended the Stamps Baxter School of Music. He often accompanied his family group, the Lister Brothers Quartet, around the piano.

His professional career began when he joined the famous Rangers Quartet and later the popular LeFevre Trio. In 1945, he came to Georgia and was the pianist for the Homeland Harmony Quartet heard over WAGA and WGST Radio in Atlanta.

In 1948, he organized the world famous Statesmen Quartet. The Statesmen steadily rose in popularity and became the premier gospel group in the nation. Hovie, as the group's manager and pianist, soon emerged as the chief spokesman and head of the rapidly growing gospel music industry.

Hovie was also an accomplished director and producer of radio and television shows. He became the first gospel artist to sign a national television contract and successfully directed and produced syndicated television shows for Nabisco, as well as scripted and starred in the company's commercials.

In the early 1980's, Hovie brought together five performers who came from the top four groups in gospel music to form the Masters V. In 1982, this group won the prestigious Grammy Award and in 1986, Hovie was inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame.

Mr. President, I ask that you and all our colleagues recognize Hovie Lister, not just for the contributions he has made to the music industry and my own State of Georgia, but for bringing gospel music to the attention of all Americans.

RETIREMENT OF LT. COL. JAMES A. LAFLEUR, COMMANDER OF FORT RITCHIE

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, it is my distinct pleasure today to recognize the Commander of Ft. Ritchie, Lt. Col. James A. LaFleur, who will retire on Tuesday, June 24th, after 20 years of distinguished service for his country.

A highly decorated soldier and respected leader, Lt. Col. LaFleur also has set standards in an area in which the Army does not give any awards, the Base Realignment and Closure process. With great diplomacy, sensitivity and vision, Lt. Col. LaFleur has presided over this very painful process at Ft. Ritchie, a place rich in history that has proved instrumental in the defense of the United States. Like my colleagues from Maryland and nearby Pennsylvania, I was very surprised and disappointed by the inclusion of Ft. Ritchie in the 1995 round of BRAC closings. The base has provided many good jobs for our constituents and we are all saddened by the Army's departure.

Under Lt. Col. LaFleur's leadership, however, the BRAC process at Ft. Ritchie has progressed as smoothly as possible. His understanding of the connection between the base and the civilian community led him to work with Washington County, the surrounding areas, and the Local Redevelopment Authority to establish a partnership that has facilitated the transition for Ft. Ritchie's employees. He has reduced the closure time by 50 percent, at the same time that his obvious concern for the base's employees has boosted morale. Lt. Col. LaFleur's efforts in this regard have been recognized by BRAC-affected communities across the nation, as well as by the Army and the Department of Defense.

The successful redevelopment process has culminated in the decision by the PenMar Development Corporation to turn Ft. Ritchie into a high-tech conference and training facility, where organizations like the International Masonry Institute will use Ft. Ritchie as an international training center, bring-

ing at least 200 good jobs to Washington County. I.M.I. is even considering building a conference center at this bucolic mountain lake park.

It is quite fitting that the man whose stewardship made much of this possible is the same man who will take the site into the 21st century. I was gratified to learn that, rather than leaving Ft. Ritchie, Lt. Col. LaFleur will dedicate himself to the success of the new PenMar Tech Park, serving as its deputy director. Thus, while the Army is losing an effective administrator and a courageous soldier, Washington County is retaining a respected friend committed to the welfare and economic success of the area.

Lt. Col. James LaFleur began his military service in 1977 with the 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Carson, Colorado, where he was a platoon leader and battalion officer. Since then, he has served in countries across the globe, including both Iraq and Kuwait, during the Gulf War. For his distinguished service, he earned the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with second oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with fourth oak leaf cluster, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, and Humanitarian Service Medal.

Mr. President, Lt. Col. LaFleur's service in the field is matched only by his service to Washington County. His determination and spirit has turned a painful base-closing into an opportunity for economic development, all the while engendering a lasting friendship between Ft. Ritchie and the civilians who live and work in its shadow. "Patriotism," said Adlai Stevenson, "is not the short and frenzied outburst of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime." Mr. President, Lt. Col. James A. LaFleur is a true patriot. I congratulate him on his distinguished military career, and look forward to his continued success as a leader in Washington County, Maryland.●

RECOGNITION OF REV. JOSEPH P. MCLAUGHLIN

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, this Sunday, numerous students, parents, and alumni of my Alma Mater, Archmere Academy in Claymont, DE, will be gathering to honor the Rev. Joseph P. McLaughlin, O. Praem. who, during his 26 years as a teacher and headmaster at Archmere, has been more than a pillar of the academy. He has been a vital part of Archmere's spirit, and a tremendous influence in the lives of thousands of young women and men.

One of the clichés that teenagers hear again and again is how their teen years are "the best years of your lives". Well, with all due respect, for most kids, it is not that simple. Too many adults have forgotten how those years are often filled with uncertainty and discomfort, as teenagers undergo

tremendous physical and emotional changes, have their values frequently called into question and their judgment tested beyond their experience, and must make major decisions which will impact the course of their entire lives and careers. At no other time in their lives are they forced to make so many major choices with so little experience and information upon which to base those choices. It is a time when guidance, understanding, and friendship are critical.

For more than a quarter-century, young men and women of Archmere Academy, have counted upon Father McLaughlin for that guidance, understanding, and friendship. And he has always been there for them, guided by his own deep faith, sincerity, and lifelong experience in dealing with young people. Of course, we will never know many of the specific instances of Father McLaughlin's intervention, because he is the soul of discretion and modesty, but there are countless Archmereans who will tell you that when they needed an advisor, a mentor, a friend, Father McLaughlin was there for them.

I graduated from Archmere before Father McLaughlin arrived, but my two sons attended the school during his tenure, and my daughter is currently an Archmere student. Each has had the utmost respect for his commitment, his wisdom, and his generosity of spirit, and all have benefitted from his years of dedicated service.

Having been involved with the school as an alumnus and as a parent, I have seen firsthand Father McLaughlin's tireless efforts result in Archmere's becoming one of the premier high schools—not only in Delaware and the surrounding region, but nationally. It is obvious that he has succeeded splendidly. The school is truly the academic beacon on the hill envisioned by the school's founders, the Norbertines. Archmere historically has attracted students of all backgrounds, and turned out promising young scholars, and, most importantly, fine young men and women with solidly-rooted values and well-placed priorities.

In the longstanding tradition of the late Father Justin E. Diny, Headmaster Emeritus, Father McLaughlin has long recognized that a school's success can not be measured solely by the test scores of its students, or by the number of graduates moving on to prestigious universities—though by either of those standards Archmere is unquestionably an unqualified success—but also by the character of the young men and women who pass through its gates. With his keen sensitivity for the Academy's rich history and tradition—"The Archmere Way", as it is known on campus and throughout the community—Father McLaughlin saw to it that Archmere graduates were solid, civic-minded citizens with commitment and compassion as well as being outstanding scholars.

As headmaster, Father McLaughlin has been admired for his personal de-

cency, his quiet and gentlemanly way, his ability to listen to all sides before coming to a decision, and his vision for Archmere's mission and its future. He has long recognized that Archmere's future lies in its past, in terms of both history and tradition. In his belief that Archmere alumni—those who have had such a tradition imbued in their characters—should play a vital role in sustaining and nurturing the Academy's atmosphere, Father McLaughlin has uniquely enriched the lives of all those students who attended Archmere during his tenure. As a result of Father McLaughlin's genuine commitment to maintaining the unbroken chain—from Archmereans to Archers to Auks—past and present Archmere alumni continue contributing to the school community long after their campus years are over. It is my fervent hope that this tradition—the one for which Father McLaughlin worked so hard to perpetuate—the idea that an Archmere education is but the first step in a lifetime of involvement, will be a cornerstone of the Academy for all succeeding generations of Archmere students.

Father McLaughlin will now redirect his tireless energies and many talents to his new position as novice master and formation director for the Daylesford Abbey, where he will continue in his familiar role as mentor and counselor, as he matures new members of his order, thus ensuring that his enthusiasm, dedication, and legacy of service to the community will be instilled in yet future generations of teachers, students, and community-minded men and women of faith. As he embarks upon that challenge, all of us who love Archmere and the traditions our alma mater stands for, wish our friend Father McLaughlin him well, for his service should be held up as an example and an inspiration for all who accept the challenge to teach America's youth.●

TRIBUTE TO RON D. ALIANO

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the more colorful characters in my home State, Ron D. Aliano, who on June 24, 1997, will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the creation of his first business in Norwich, CT.

Ron is renowned throughout my State for his positive attitude and his determination to tap the potential that he saw in the town of Norwich. He challenged Norwich residents to commit themselves to the revitalization of their hometown, and he is one of the leaders of this community's urban renewal.

Ron Aliano is a man who believes that you can achieve any goal through commitment and hard work. He is also an ardent believer in the theory that, "if you're going to do something, you do it right." The best illustration of Ron's commitment to doing a task first rate would be the Marina at American Wharf.

For years, people talked about developing the Norwich waterfront, but these plans never amounted to anything more than talk. But Ron Aliano was the man who had the determination to make this project come to fruition. Before construction began on the Marina at American Wharf, Ron visited 86 successful marinas around the country to see what worked, and he tried to incorporate the best elements of each into his project. Today, boaters from Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and all over Connecticut have rented slips in Norwich. Many people would argue that American Wharf is the nicest marina in New England, and it is the central spoke in Norwich's revitalization efforts.

Another, more unique illustration of Ron's commitment to doing things first rate would be the miniature golf course that Ron constructed in downtown Norwich. Instead of windmills and plastic dinosaurs, this course is lined with waterfalls and finely manicured gardens. It even has a volcano, a claim that very few miniature golf courses can make. This course has attracted people to the downtown area, stimulating the Norwich economy.

While Ron has worked diligently to develop Norwich, he also recognizes the fact that Norwich's strength lies in its history and tradition. As a result, he is deeply committed to preserving the town's rich heritage. In a misguided effort, certain developers uprooted cobblestone streets and destroyed several 19th century homes in Norwich, replacing them with a parking garage. In addition, many other deteriorating old buildings were in danger of being demolished. Fortunately, Ron Aliano and other members of the private sector invested substantial resources to purchase and renovate these old buildings, and Norwich is currently home to more significant historic buildings than any other city in Connecticut.

Although Ron has been associated with a number of high profile projects in Norwich, his first business priority has always been his ambulance service, which will be 25 years old next Tuesday. Ron's ambulance service has enjoyed a dramatic evolution since its birth. Ron founded the company with a business partner, but, in 1981, he became the sole owner of the company and changed its name to American Ambulance Service. While the company started with only two used ambulances, Ron now operates a fleet of 21 ambulances, nine invalid coaches, two paramedic response vehicles, one watercraft ambulance, as well as numerous administrative and support vehicles. American Ambulance has provided ambulance coverage to U.S. Presidents, and this business continues to offer the highest quality care to Connecticut citizens.

What makes Ron Aliano's passion for Norwich so unusual is that he is not a native son. Ron is actually from Bristol, Connecticut, and he didn't move to Norwich until he started American