

Mr. Speaker, please join me in commending William A. Gallina of Bronx, New York for a remarkable life on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES BUCKLEY

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and to pay tribute to Mr. James Buckley, Executive Director of University Neighborhood Housing Program in my South Bronx district. He was selected to receive a James A. Johnson Community Fellowship from the Fannie Mae Foundation for his significant contributions to the fields of affordable housing and community development. Mr. Buckley is one of only six individuals selected through a national nomination process to receive this fellowship in the inaugural year of this program.

Mr. Speaker, James Buckley founded the University Neighborhood Housing program (UNHP) in 1989 and has served as its Executive Director since then. As a Fordham University student in 1975, Mr. Buckley interned with the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NBCCC) as a community organizer, and he later served as its Executive Director. As a result of his organizing efforts at NBCCC, the Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation (FBHC) was formed, which has reclaimed thousands of units of housing and presently owns and/or manages 70 multi-family apartment buildings.

As the Director of the Reinvestment Project at the NBCCC, Mr. Buckley attracted over \$100 million in public and private funds to area neighborhoods, which led to the creation of 1,500 units of safe, sanitary, affordable housing units for community residents. As a result of these efforts, two additional non-profit community housing corporations were created that went on to develop residential properties with tenant or community ownership.

Mr. Speaker, the Johnson fellows Program was created to honor the leadership and distinguished service of former Fannie Mae Foundation Chairman James A. Johnson. The Fellows program is designed to reward and recognize outstanding leaders and promote innovation in the affordable housing and community development fields. Each fellow will receive a \$70,000 grant and plus a \$20,000 educational travel/study stipend to pursue a self-designed course of professional development to enhance the individual's skills and field experiences and to explore new solutions to current affordable housing or community development challenges.

Mr. Speaker, being selected for this program indicates that James Buckley has demonstrated that he has the ability and the desire to be an asset and a role model in our community. We are proud of his accomplishments and I know he will take full advantage of the opportunity presented to him. He is a terrific example for community leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. James Buckley for his outstanding accomplishments, and in commending the Fannie Mae Foundation for honoring these six outstanding leaders and giving

them the opportunity to do even more for their communities.

HONORING MILLARD NELSON

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Millard Nelson. Millard Nelson has distinguished himself by his life-long commitment to his family, his community and the Democratic Party.

Millard Nelson has worked as a farmer, substitute mail carrier, and office manager for the Pierce County Agriculture, Stabilization and Conservation Office. Millard has been dedicated to public service throughout his life. He served as the President of the Salem Town Board, a member of the Pierce County Board and the assessor for the Gilmanton Township. Millard has also been active in many conservation programs in his native Pierce County, and it is estimated that throughout his life he has planted more than 500,000 trees in Pierce County. These trees are Millard's lasting gift to future generations of Pierce County citizens.

Millard Nelson is perhaps best known for his life-long commitment to the Democratic Party. Millard was involved in the founding of the current Democratic Party in Wisconsin in 1949 and has served the party in a variety of capacities since that time. Millard and his wife Ellen have been pillars of the Democratic Party for over 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, this country needs more citizens like Millard Nelson. He has lived his life committed to the principle that we must make this world better for future generations. I rise today in the United States House of Representatives to honor Millard Nelson and thank him for his lifetime of commitment to Pierce County and the Wisconsin Democratic Party.

RECOGNIZING VALERIE SANDEFUR

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention the outstanding accomplishment of Valerie Sandefur.

Valerie is a High School student at Albuquerque Academy, in Albuquerque, New Mexico and recently won the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary "Voice of Democracy" broadcast scriptwriting contest. The contest asked students to create a speech based on the theme "My Service to America." Her speech was judged the best from New Mexico.

Valerie spoke about how she and all of us could better serve our country by re-enforcing the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance. In her speech she said:

"We are no longer a nation indivisible, we are increasingly a nation invisible. My service to America is to put the meaning back into the pledge of allegiance and to create again the idea of 'one nation.' However, there are two challenges to regaining our allegiance—apathy and ignorance."

She continued to describe how apathy leads to a loss of participation and interest in democracy. Valerie then told how ignorance has caused even greater problems than apathy. She said she feels American society is devaluing virtues such as ambition, leadership and heroism, and that Americans are losing their uniquely American character, their sense of nationality and their spirit of patriotism.

There are lessons in her speech the entire nation could learn from. Valerie demonstrated the ambition and intelligence needed for success now and in the future. Valerie finished her speech by imploring all of us to strive to put meaning back into the Pledge of Allegiance. I submit the text of her script for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the VFW for sponsoring the "Voice of Democracy" contest and I ask that we recognize Valerie Sandefur for her achievement by striving to do what she has—put meaning back into the Pledge of Allegiance.

"MY SERVICE TO AMERICA"—1998-99 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

(By New Mexico Winner, Valerie Sandefur)

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands . . . and that's about where I forgot. I was in middle school. Actually it was more like the middle of a muddle. But I was not alone. When asked many students couldn't remember these sacred words, and more significantly they, like most of America didn't understand the true meaning of what they recited each morning. I've heard many of my friends ask—what's the point of learning this 'stuff'? For me the answer found is that who we are as a society is based on what they call 'stuff'. What I call history. And the history lesson for today is that we are no longer a nation indivisible, we are increasingly a nation invisible. Therefore, my service to America is to put the meaning back into the pledge of allegiance, and to create again the idea of 'one nation'. However, there are two challenges to regaining our allegiance—apathy and ignorance.

Let us first consider apathy. It is the constitutional right of every citizen over the age of 18 to vote. Yet, in the 1996 presidential elections apathy paralyzed roughly 50% of registered voters. Politicians struggled to recapture the public's fading attention. They failed. As Christopher Hitchens wrote for The Nation magazine it was really a case of the Blind leading the Dumb. Presidential candidates spend \$138 million dollars on a public that in many cases, didn't even care enough to show up. . . .

But it's not just lack of attendance at the polls that demonstrates our growing apathy. The education of our children has become a diluted and narrow stream that too often focuses on the 'real world' of MTV rather than the lessons of the world of the past. Many classrooms no longer have an American flag, and we have stopped teaching the words to the national anthem. In fact at a World Series game this year, Tony Bennett chose not to sing the national anthem. . . . And no one seemed to care. It seems that Mr. Bennett left not only his heart in San Francisco but also his patriotism.

But apathy is not the only challenge to our allegiance, my service to America includes confronting ignorance in myself and others. Consider a recent political cartoon in the Washington Post. The first part of this two-fold cartoon shows a young impressionable child in 1958 wearing a cowboy hat and glasses. He fondly dreams about the famous singing cowboy Roy Rogers, who stood for respect, honesty and goodness, sitting of

course upon his trustworthy horse, Trigger. The second part of this cartoon shows another young and impressionable child in 1998 with a nose-ring and his baseball cap on sideways. In his ignorance, the child of 1998 thinks of Roy Rogers as the fast food chain out east, not as the great American hero. Oh, and when it comes to 'Trigger' all he can think of is the next drive-by shooting.

Now it seems the creator of this cartoon has captured the essence of what makes my service to America so important. For young people like this poster-boy of 1998—nationalism has been replaced by an individualism that is self-indulgent. Too many of my peers remain blissfully ignorant of what their allegiance to America really means. An allegiance that requires an informed electorate. But more and more we are less and less informed. One survey revealed that a 1/3 of all college students firmly believed in ghosts, Atlantis, flying saucers, and yes even Big Foot.

Similarly on a quiz of general knowledge, answers came back saying that the Great Gatsby was a magician in the 1930's, and that Socrates was an American Indian Chieftain.

While this ignorance might seem some what amusing at first, Gertrude Himmelfarb, a writer for Commentary magazine, argues that this society, which is devaluing virtues like ambition, leadership and heroism, is in danger of losing the character of the people and their sense of nationality and spirit of patriotism. But there is still hope for the future . . . and it begins with my service to America. And with your service. And with the service of every American. We are all responsible for reducing the ignorance and apathy that challenge our "nation indivisible". If we are to make the pledge of allegiance meaningful, then we must give full meaning to every word. And that's my service, my pledge of allegiance, my pledge to America. A pledge worth remembering.

FOLIC ACID PROMOTION AND BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, today, I, along with my colleague Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, am introducing the Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999. This bipartisan bill, with 102 Democratic and Republican original cosponsors, is being introduced in the Senate by Senators ABRAHAM, KOHL, and BOND.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 will provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects.

Each year an estimated 2,500 babies are born in the United States with serious birth defects of the brain and spine, called neural tube defects. These neural tube defects cause crippling lifelong physical disabilities and at times, even death.

However, up to 70 percent of neural tube defects could be prevented if women of child-bearing age consumed 400 micrograms of folic acid daily. That means women need to eat a healthy diet and take a daily multivitamin. It's that simple.

Women need to be taking folic acid before and during their first trimester of pregnancy because these neural tube defects occur very

early in pregnancy, before most women know that they are pregnant and because roughly 50 percent of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned.

The problem is that the majority of women are not aware of the benefits of folic acid. A 1997 March of Dimes national survey found that only 30 percent of women take a multivitamin with folic acid before pregnancy. There is an urgent need to teach women about the importance of increasing their consumption of folic acid by taking a daily vitamin pill, eating more fortified cereal grain products, and eating food naturally rich in folic acid.

Nationwide, Hispanic women have the highest rates of neural tube defects. In fact, in my home State of California, Hispanic mothers have the highest number of cases of neural tube defects than any other racial group and Mexican-born mothers have twice the risk of having babies with neural tube defects compared to United States-born mothers.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 will amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects. This bill authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in partnership with states and local public and private entities, to launch an education and public awareness campaign, conduct research to identify effective strategies for increasing folic acid consumption by women of reproductive capacity, and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 is supported by leading health organization, including the March of Dimes Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners, Council for Responsible Nutrition, American Association of University Affiliated Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American College of Nurse-Midwives, American Public Health Association, Council of Women's and Infants' Specialty Hospitals, Easter Seals, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Women's Health Network, and the Spina Bifida Association of America.

I would like to recognize the March of Dimes, the National Council on Folic Acid and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for their leadership and steadfast commitment to this issue. I would especially like to thank Jody Adams and here daughter, the March of Dimes Ambassador Kelsey Adams, for their hard work in publicizing this simple, yet highly effective, prevention strategy.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues, Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, as well as Senators ABRAHAM, KOHL, and BOND for their hard work in raising awareness about this vitally important issue. By getting the message out, we can help families across the country have healthy babies and save the lives of thousands of babies each year.

RECOGNIZING PELCO

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pelco, a world leader in the

design, development and manufacture of advanced closed circuit television systems and supporting equipment.

Pelco has a long prestigious history of offering high quality products and exceptional customer service. Pelco has become the most sought after product supplier in the industry.

Pelco operates from the largest CCTV manufacturing complex in the world. They produce a steady stream of enclosures, domes, mounts, pan/tilt units, matrix systems, and other CCTV electronic products in a never-ending pursuit of achieving 100 percent off-the-shelf-availability for its customers. Pelco is respected as a major product innovator. They manufacture a large number of special equipment item including explosion-proof and water-cooled camera enclosures, high security housing, and a series of award-winning microwave control/video systems. Pelco also produces the industry-acclaimed Legacy and Intercept product lines, each designed around Pelco's revolutionary Coaxitron video/control platform of single coax operation.

Pelco constantly strives to maintain its position as the most reliable supplier of CCTV systems in the industry. The company has established an impressive array of customers service programs including: Guaranteed Ship Dates, 24-hour Technical Assistance and 24-hour Turnaround on Replacement Parts and Repairs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Pelco for their achievements in becoming a world leader in the closed circuit video market. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Pelco many more years of continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on July 19, 1999, I was unavoidably detained at LaGuardia Airport in New York due to poor weather conditions. The weather delays caused me to miss rollcall votes 308, 309, and 310. I would like the RECORD to reflect that had I been present, I would have voted in the affirmative on all three rollcall votes, numbers 308, 309, and 310.

TRIBUTE TO THE BRONX PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, once again it is with pride that I rise to pay tribute to the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade, on its eleventh year of celebrating the culture and contributions of the Puerto Rican community to our nation.

The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade will be held on Sunday, August 1 in my South Bronx Congressional District. The event is the culmination of a series of activities surrounding Puerto Rican Week in the Bronx. This year's parade is dedicated to our children.

Under the leadership of its founder, Mr. Angel L. Rosario, and its president, Mr. Francisco Gonzalez, the Parade has grown into