

Anne McClosley is a native Philadelphian who graduated from Mastbaum High School. She shares her husband's interest in the government and has participated in Philadelphia politics for years. Mrs. McCloskey was a Constituent Service Representative for Pennsylvania State Representative Cliff Gray from 1978–1982. She is currently employed as an Administrative Aide for State Senator Vincent J. Fumo and serves with her husband on the Democratic Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize these two outstanding American citizens, James and Anne McCloskey. They have devoted their lives to their four children and six grandchildren while maintaining the vital role as neighborhood leaders. The McCloskeys are an extraordinary couple who possess a love and dedication to each other that is commendable. I wish them many more years of marital bliss.

SEVEN CHEERS FOR MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Maryland. This year, Montgomery Blair had six finalists named in the Intel Science Talent Search, formerly known as the Westinghouse Science Talent Search. This group of six students is the largest number from one high school since 1991.

Montgomery Blair is a math, science, and computer science magnet high school drawing students from every corner of Montgomery County, Maryland. When Blair first became a magnet school in 1986, its reputation was declining. The development of an outstanding science and math magnet program has brought the school into the national spotlight.

As a former teacher, I applaud principal Phil Gainous and the teachers at Montgomery Blair High School for inspiring six of the top finalists in the Intel Science Talent Search. The fact that six science all-stars attend the same high school is a testament to the commitment and dedication of the teachers at Montgomery Blair in providing a quality education to a diversity of students.

My heartiest congratulations to: Wei-Li Deng, James Hansen, Grace Lin, Michael Maire, David C. Moore, and Scott Safranek. These students of the math and science magnet program are multi-talented and participate in a wide range of activities at Montgomery Blair and in the Montgomery County community: Wei-Li plays first violin with the Montgomery County Youth Orchestra; James is a drummer in a jazz band, Grace is an accomplished pianist and singer; Michael reads French fluently; David scored a perfect combined score of 1600 on his SATs; and Scott enjoys martial arts, bowling, poker, poetry, philosophy, and listening to music.

I also want to congratulate another Montgomery Blair High School magnet student. Sarah Iams, from Bethesda, Maryland, is a national winner of the Siemens Award for Advanced Placement (AP). This award is given to the most outstanding young science and mathematics students from around the coun-

try. In addition to her pursuit of accelerated programs in math and science, Sarah is a member of the debate team, and a serious athlete who practices Tae Kwon Do, plays team soccer and runs cross country and track.

I wish the winning combination of students and teachers at Montgomery Blair High School continued success in achieving excellence in math and science education.

HONORING FIRE CHIEF ALBERT V. WINGO

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and dedication of Chief Albert V. Wingo who, after serving the Village of Bradley for 44 years, retired as Bradley Fire Chief on December 29, 1998.

Chief Wingo has a long and distinguished record with the Village of Bradley Fire Department as well as the Village of Bradley itself. During his 44 year career with the Bradley Fire Department, Chief Wingo served as Bradley Fire Chief for 28 years. Chief Wingo's dedication to the Fire Department is also shown through his membership in various fireman associations. Chief Wingo has played an active role in the following associations—member and Past President of the Kankakee Valley Firemen's Association, member of the Kankakee Valley Arson Task Force, member of the Kankakee County 911 Board, member of the Hundred Club, member of the Illinois Association of Fire Chiefs, and a member of the National Fire Protection Association. Chief Wingo also served 21 years as Building Inspector and 21 years as Health Inspector for the Village of Bradley.

Chief Wingo was born on April 28, 1926 in Kenney, Illinois. He proudly served his country during World War II while in the service of the United States Navy from 1944 to 1946. On July 3, 1949, Chief Wingo married Jean Vaughn who passed away in 1993. Chief Wingo is the proud father of three children and the grandfather of six grandchildren.

I know the Village of Bradley will greatly miss Chief Wingo's dedication, knowledge and experience. It is always a great honor for me to be able to proudly acknowledge outstanding citizens, like Chief Wingo, who resides in my 11th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, today I recognize this gentleman for his honorable career and uncommon loyalty. I urge this body to identify and recognize others in their own districts whose actions have so greatly benefited and strengthened America's communities.

HONORING SYLVAN DALE RANCH

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and praise the Sylvan Dale Ranch for obtaining a conservation easement from the Larimer County Commissioners, which will preserve a very scenic stretch of

open space at the mouth of the Big Thompson Canyon west of Loveland, CO.

The easement will prevent development on the land, protecting it for the benefit of current and future users. This pro-active, public-private agreement strikes a balance between preserving open space and respecting property rights. I strongly support the ideas underlying this partnership, namely, that ranchers and farmers are the best stewards of the land, and they are crucial to preserving valuable open space amidst Colorado's booming growth. It is my hope other ranches and farms will follow Sylvan Dale's lead and take effective steps to preserve their land heritage through such common-sense, forward-looking arrangements.

Sylvan Dale is a well-known, family owned and operated guest ranch, a viable cattle and horse ranch, and a working farm. Susan Jessup manages Sylvan Dale Ranch, founded in 1946 by her parents Maurice and Mayme Jessup. Building on their commitment to provide one of the best outdoor experiences in Colorado, the Jessup's vision has always been to sustain the natural character of the landscape and provide an authentic Western environment. Accordingly, the Jessup's sought to shield the land from urbanization pressures which lead to the easement protecting 431 acres—about 15 percent of the ranch's land. The family will continue to actively use the land, including grazing horses and cattle, and raising hay.

Clearly, Sylvan Dale Ranch embodies the unrefined characteristics of the Colorado Rocky Mountain foothills and the West, as well as the straightforward, no-nonsense thinking of the earliest pioneers. Highly visible, extremely popular, and easily accessed, the lands owned by Sylvan Dale Ranch are a testament to the wisdom of landowners who know how to best protect and preserve the land.

HONORING JAMES VICTOR STANCIL III

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. James Victor Stancil III on his achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout. This outstanding young man from Lillington, North Carolina is an active member of the community and Antioch Baptist Church, as well as an exemplary student at Western Harnett High School.

As a member of Troop 2, Victor displays his leadership ability as Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, and Junior Assistant Scout Leader. He has also organized many community service projects, including building a picnic shelter for a local church. In 1995, Victor earned his Order of the Arrow Award and served as the troop chaplain.

Academically, Victor excels in many areas of study. He is President of the Beta Honor Club and of the Future Teachers of America Club, as well as a member of the Future Business Leaders and Future Farmers of America Clubs. He has been awarded best actor for his Drama Club performance of "Miracle on 34th Street" and the "Advanced Biology Project

Award" from his Science Club. Victor has also participated in two of North Carolina's prestigious summer programs for academically gifted youth, the North Carolina Governor's School and Summer Ventures in Math and Science. He plans to attend North Carolina State University in my Congressional District in the fall.

As a former Scout leader myself and a recipient of the Boy Scouts' Silver Beaver Award, I know the difference that Scouting can make in young lives. Scouting instills important values in young men that leave a lasting imprint and the experience gained through Scouting will continue to serve Victor well.

I was honored to present Victor with his Eagle Scout Award on January 17, 1999. I congratulate him on this momentous achievement and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

STRUCTURED SETTLEMENT PROTECTION ACT

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, on opening day of the 106th Congress, I, along with my colleague Mr. STARK and a broad bipartisan group of our colleagues introduced the Structured Settlement Protection Act, H.R. 263.

This bill would address the serious public policy concerns that are raised by transactions in which so-called factoring companies purchase recoveries under structured settlements from injured victims.

Recently there has been dramatic growth in these transactions in which injured victims are induced by factoring companies to sell off future structured settlement payments intended to cover ongoing living and medical needs in exchange for a sharply-discounted lump sum that then may be dissipated, placing the injured victim in the very predicament the structured settlement was intended to avoid.

As long-time supporters of structured settlements and the congressional policy underlying such settlements, we have grave concerns that these factoring transactions directly undermine the policy of the structured settlement tax rules. The Treasury Department shares these concerns.

Because the purchase of structured settlement payments by factoring companies directly thwarts the congressional policy underlying the structured settlement tax rules and raises such serious concerns for structured settlements and injured victims, it is appropriate to deal with these concerns in the tax context.

Accordingly, H.R. 263 would impose a substantial excise tax on the factoring company that purchases the structured settlement payments from the injured victim. The excise tax would be subject to an exception for genuine court-approved hardship cases to protect the limited instances of true hardship.

Mr. Speaker, too many Americans have been taken advantage of through the purchase of structured settlements by factoring companies. I urge my colleagues to join me to end this abusive practice.

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD PROGRAM (TAP) ACT

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, when children leave their families to make it in the world, they often do so in stages. The first step for many is to go away to college while still depending on their parents for tuition and living expenses. Others attempt to work immediately, but they also might rely on their family for financial assistance, not to mention emotional support. However, there is one group of young Americans that are required to become completely self-sufficient on their 18th birthday—kids aging out of foster care. The cruel irony of course is that this population is perhaps the least capable of becoming fully independent at such a young age. These kids have to deal with all the traumas and difficulties associated with being removed from their family because of abuse, neglect or abandonment and then being placed in one, two, three or more foster homes. This is hardly the most solid foundation from which to build the rest of their lives.

Repeated studies have illustrated that a sink-or-swim policy for children aging out of foster care has resulted in many falling beneath the waves of poverty and despair. A national study by Westat, Inc. in 1992 found less than half of former foster children had graduated high school between 2.5 and 4 years after being discharged. The study also found only half of former foster kids were working; one-quarter had spent at least one night homeless; and 40% needed some kind of public aid. More recent studies by the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Illinois also have illustrated the extreme difficulties faced by this population. The authors of these reports and many of the state officials responsible for overseeing our Nation's child welfare system have called for bold changes to help foster children make the transition to independence. For example, Peter Digre, Director of the Department of Children and Families in Los Angeles, and Nicholas Scoppetta, Commissioner of the Administration for Children's Services in New York City, released a joint statement in 1998 on youth aging out of foster care which declared, "It becomes our responsibility as a society to provide these young people, who are proven to be at a heightened risk of homelessness or involvement in the criminal justice system, with the opportunity to succeed, (including) a safe and comfortable place to live—an opportunity to continue education—and access to health care."

I am introducing legislation today, along with my Democratic colleagues on the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, to ensure that the end of foster care does not mean the beginning of poverty and hopelessness for thousands of young Americans every year. The Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP) Act would provide States with the option of extending assistance to former foster youth up to the age of 21 as long as they are working or enrolled in educational activities and have a plan to become completely self-sufficient. This extension of foster care assistance would provide needed resources for housing,

education, health care and employment. In addition, the legislation would: provide tax credits to employers who hire former foster children; allow children in foster care to save more resources for their eventual emancipation; require a collaboration among existing housing, educational and employment programs to help foster kids; and update the formula for the current Independent Living Program. In general, the legislation seeks to send foster children down a ramp to independent and productive lives, rather than off a cliff to destitution and welfare dependency.

Some of my colleagues have said in the past that government programs too often take the role and responsibility of families. However, I would remind them that government is the defacto parent for foster children and therefore has an obligation to do a better job of helping them become self-sufficient. How many other parents tell their children at the age of 18 that they are completely and utterly on their own? Of course, it is true that some foster children make a seamless transition to self-reliance at such a young age, but the statistics show that many ultimately do not.

Mr. Speaker, less than two years ago, Congress passed bipartisan legislation to help promote the adoption of children in foster care. However, adoption is not always possible for many older foster children, and we therefore see our TAP legislation as the next logical step in reforming our foster care system. We offer the bill not so much as the final work on helping foster children, but more as the first step towards building a consensus that Congress must act on this important issue. We stand ready to work with anyone who wants to help former foster youth achieve real independence.

HONORING COLORADO STATE SENATOR TILLMAN BISHOP UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to honor an individual who for so many years has exemplified the notion of public service and civic duty and an individual we on the western slope of Colorado will be hard pressed to replace.

Senator Tillman Bishop has represented Colorado's 7th District in the Colorado Senate for 28 years and before that, in the Colorado General Assembly for 4 years. His years of service rank him 5th in the state's history for continuous years of service and he is the longest serving senator from Colorado's western slope.

Senator Bishop, or Tillie, as he is affectionately known, has for decades selflessly given of himself and has always placed the needs of his constituents before his own. I myself served with Tillie when I was a member of the Colorado General Assembly and I consider myself fortunate to have worked with a representative of his caliber.

The number of honors and distinctions that Tillie has earned during his years of outstanding service are too numerous to list, and too few to do justice to his contribution to the state of Colorado.