

CELEBRATION OF 90 YEARS ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH, WEST ALLIS, WISCONSIN

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor the men and women of St. Joseph's Parish, West Allis, Wisconsin, as they celebrate the church's proud heritage and its 90th anniversary with a special Mass and dinner on March 21st.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the steady expansion of farm and industrial machinery firms led many immigrants to the rolling fields and wide-open spaces of the city of West Allis. Satisfied with a sense of security and prosperity offered by West Allis, many Polish immigrants settled in the city. These men and women soon approached the Milwaukee Archdiocese for permission to erect a church and school in their own new neighborhood, one which would praise God in their native tongue and further teach and strengthen them and their growing families. In 1906, the Archbishop agreed to send the new parish a Polish speaking priest for their church and Polish speaking nuns for their school. At a November meeting the name Saint Joseph was chosen as Patron of this new church.

A temporary pastor was appointed and the beginnings of St. Joseph's parish were slow. However, once a definite site for the parish church and school were agreed upon, things moved quickly. Twenty lots on Mitchell Street, between 64th and 65th Street, the present site of St. Joseph's, were purchased at a cost of \$2,200. The first resident pastor, Father Anton Kierzek, was appointed in the fall of 1908. The building's cornerstone was laid in March of 1909 and the wooden two-story structure, built for \$7,500, was dedicated in May.

Thus, the works and deeds of a small group of Polish immigrants were successful in erecting a temple for worship and a school to train and rear their offspring. The city of West Allis grew rapidly; local industries flourished. More Polish families built homes near the parish. In 1924, plans for a new parish building, both chapel and school, were completed. This structure, built of block and brick, has become a familiar landmark in the city to the present.

A roll call of the parish leaders over the years reveals traditional Polish names: Szukalski, Lipinski, Iglinski, Barczak, Makowski, Bieniewski, and Barszczewski. The names of the parish priests since the early 1960s continues that Polish tradition: Fathers Peksa, Piechowski and the current priest, Father James Posanski.

Congratulations to the men, women and families of St. Joseph's Parish on your proud heritage and 90 years of service and worship. May God continue to bless each and every one of the parish members as they face new challenges.

TRIBUTE TO TERRY "TED" OLIVER

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and lament the passing of Mr. Terry "Ted" Oliver, a true hero and selfless contributor to the community of Eaton Rapids, MI.

Mr. Oliver was assistant fire chief and a proud member of Eaton Rapids' volunteer fire department. His family, fellow fire fighters, and the community as a whole all suffered a profound loss when Ted died fighting a residential fire on the 19th of this past month.

Fire fighters like Ted risk their lives each day to protect our lives, homes, businesses, and belongings. Ted Oliver undertook this duty for 33 years. During this time he developed a reputation for being a dedicated, selfless, mentor and friend. He was always enthusiastic about donating his time and energy to the fire department, but his contributions did not end there.

Eaton Rapids also remembers Ted as a local humanitarian and Good Samaritan. He was well known as a generous neighbor who would shovel driveways, wash windows, and fix anything from bicycles to automobiles for members of the community who needed his assistance. He is survived by Carol, his wife of 38 years, 4 children, 14 grandchildren, and an entire community that mourns his loss.

Dozens of fire trucks and hundreds of mourners attended Ted's February 22 memorial service to pay their respects and honor the life of this local hero. I myself was honored to visit the National Firefighters' Memorial this past Monday, where Ted's name was posted and the flag was lowered in his honor. Today, I rise before this Congress of the United States of America, to likewise honor and pay tribute to the life of this great and beloved citizen.

I believe Mr. Richard Freer, Eaton Rapids' fire chief, best expressed the thoughts of the department and the community with the words, "We can put someone in his place, but we'll never replace him."

LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE 50 STATES COMMEMORATIVE COIN PROGRAM ACT

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of legislation which is being introduced today by Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES-NORTON with the four Congressional delegates as cosponsors. The legislation would amend the 50 States Commemorative Coin Program Act to extend the program by an additional year for the purpose of including the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands.

Mr. Speaker, in the 105th Congress when we passed the Commemorative Coin Program Act, the insular areas were omitted from the

legislation. Current law authorizes the minting of twenty-five cent coins to commemorate each of the 50 states through state-specific designs on one side of the coins. It is a ten-year program, with five states being honored each year.

This bill amends current law by adding an eleventh year to the program. During this year, the District of Columbia and the four insular areas, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, would also be recognized through the minting of twenty-five cent coins. Commemorative designs on one side of the coins would be submitted by the chief executive officer of these areas.

This legislation is very timely for my Congressional district, Mr. Speaker. American Samoa will celebrate the centennial of its union with the United States in the year 2000.

American Samoa has a long, proud history of supporting the United States—ever since the traditional leaders of the main island of Tutuila ceded their island to the United States on April 17, 1900. Tutuila's beautiful harbor is the deepest in the South Pacific, and the port village of Pago Pago was used as a coaling station for U.S. naval ships in the early part of the century and as a support base for U.S. soldiers during World War II. To this day, American Samoa serves as a refueling point for U.S. naval ships and military aircraft.

At the present time, American Samoans have a per capita enlistment rate in the U.S. military which is as high as any state or U.S. territory. Our sons and daughters have served in record numbers in every U.S. military engagement from World War II to the present operations in the Middle East. We have stood by the United States in good times and bad, and we will continue to do so.

Congress has recognized American Samoa's proud heritage on numerous occasions, and many of my constituents have asked that the United States Government provide special recognition of the 100th year of our union. I believe it would be most fitting to acknowledge the centennial anniversary of our relationship with the United States with the issuance of a commemorative coin, and I am optimistic that this bill will become public law later this year.

O'DEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. BOB SCHAFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay humble tribute to the students, teachers and parents of O'Dea Elementary School in Colorado for their efforts to help the needy during the holidays. I commend the faculty of the school as well as all the students, parents and individuals who contributed to their special canned food drive. Their selfless dedication has provided warmth, comfort and happiness to families in Colorado. That the school produced over 1,200 pounds of food, and funds from candy cane sales for the benefit of the needy is testament to the true meaning of the spirit of Christmas and Hanukkah. Let us remember, as these good people have, that the holiday season is one of giving, one of joy, and one of hope. Let the childrens' example during the holidays be a beacon to us all throughout the year.