

On behalf of all the citizens of western Wisconsin I ask that the United States House of Representatives recognize Angela M. Barthen for her courage and thank her for being a concerned and giving community citizen.

A TRIBUTE TO REVEREND RODNEY ANNIS AND HIS CONGREGATION

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to congratulate Reverend Rodney Annis and his congregation at First Baptist Church on the upcoming expansion to their present facility.

First Baptist Church has been a prominent fixture in the Fosterburg community since its founding 142 years ago, when a group of German immigrants established this farming community. Today, a 14,000-square-foot addition is scheduled to be made to the present church, providing offices and a recreation center for a multigenerational congregation.

This addition will allow First Baptist Church to both continue and expand a tradition of service that started almost a century and a half ago.

Like you, I am pleased to witness First Baptist Church's leadership and growth in the Fosterburg community.

REPORT FROM INDIANA—ADAMS COUNTY

HON. DAVID M. MCINTOSCH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. MCINTOSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my "Report from Indiana" where I honor distinguished fellow Hoosiers who are actively engaged in their communities helping others. Today, I want to mention a true gentleman from Adams County, Indiana who I had the privilege of meeting recently.

Mr. Speaker, it has always been my strong belief that individuals and communities can do a better job of caring for those who need help in our society than the Federal Government. The wonderfully kind and committed Hoosiers who I have met traveling around Indiana has not changed my view.

Ruthie and I have met hundreds of individuals who are committed to making our communities a better place in which to live and raise our children—we call them "Hoosier Heroes."

I met a genuine Hoosier Hero in Adams County, Indiana recently. He's Alan Converse, a sales manager at WZBD Adams County Radio. He and his wife of 32 years, Judy, have seven children.

Alan epitomizes a "Hoosier Hero." He has worked tirelessly on behalf of the less-fortunate. Alan served as president of the Decatur rotary club, and Chairman of the United Way golf outing to raise money for those who need a helping hand from someone who cares. He also works on the March of Dimes Walk America Committee.

Alan's work has given so many people the most precious gift possible, hope. He doesn't do it for the pay, which is zilch; he does it for the smiles and laughter. He is a true hero in my book, doing good works for others with no other motive than Christian charity.

Alan deserves the gratitude of his county, state, and nation and I thank him here today on the floor of the House of Representatives.

DAKOTA WATER RESOURCES ACT OF 1999

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Dakota Water Resources Act of 1999. My colleagues, Senator CONRAD and Senator DORGAN, are introducing a companion bill in the Senate today. This bill represents an unprecedented agreement among North Dakota's congressional delegation, the States' elected leaders and a variety of State organizations.

After years of negotiations, this legislation embodies a bipartisan effort to meet the comprehensive water needs of North Dakota, including the State's four Indian reservations. Without a dependable source of quality water the State's potential for economic development will be crippled.

The Dakota Water Resources Act amends the Garrison Diversion Reformulation act of 1986 and would refocus the project from large-scale irrigation to the delivery of safe water. Throughout North Dakota, people realize that the project as outlined under the 1986 act will not happen, and they support the more affordable, realistic provisions that would meet the State's water needs.

Right now, much of the State lacks a supply of quality water. Many communities have unresolved Safe Drinking water Act compliance problems. Rural water systems and regional water supply systems have been formed to meet the water needs, but much more needs to be done to complete those systems.

To meet cities and towns' needs for safe water, the act authorizes \$300 million for municipal, rural, and industrial water systems (MR&I) projects. It allows the State to provide grants or loans to MR&I systems. This means the State could establish a revolving loan fund and continue to use funds from repaid loans for MR&I systems.

In conjunction with the State's need for MR&I, it is important to note the additional authorization of \$200 million which would provide for MR&I on the four Indian reservations. Additionally, authorization for irrigation on the reservations is included in this legislation, along with a provision which gives tribes the flexibility to determine which sites to irrigate within the reservation. The Standing Rock, Fort Berthold, Turtle Mountain, and Fort Totten Indian Reservations would finally be able to meet their long overdue water needs with these provisions.

Another major feature of this legislation which has not been realized under the 1986 act is the ability to meet the water needs of the Red River Valley in North Dakota. This would provide \$200 million for the State to choose the method of delivering Missouri

River water to the Red River Valley. The communities of Fargo, and Grand Forks, as well as other towns up and down the valley would have a reliable source of water for continued growth in population and commercial activity.

Any project that would be completed under the act must comply with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. We fully intend, and are required, to comply with the 1909 treaty between the United States and Canada when considering completion of any component of the project.

In addition to meeting the State and the Indian reservation's comprehensive and future water needs, this act involves significant environmental achievements. As nature resources trust would receive \$25 million to preserve, enhance, restore, and manage wetlands and associated wildlife habitat, grassland conservation and riparian areas in the State.

Other sections of the act include authorization for the State to develop water conservation programs using MR&I funding. A bank stabilization study along the Missouri River below the Garrison Dam would be authorized. Also, the current Lonetree Reservoir would be designated as a wildlife conservation area.

All of these provisions and the entire Dakota Water Resources Act have been worked out with painstaking detail among numerous groups. I would like to personally thank the Senators from North Dakota, Senator KENT CONRAD and Senator DORGAN and their very capable staff, as well as North Dakota's State engineer and counsel, for their tireless work on the extraordinary agreement.

HONORING MARY BETH CLARK AND NORMA STAFNE

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to two local heroes from western Wisconsin. I want to honor Mary Beth Clark and Norma Stafne who took courageous action to aid another citizen.

For the past three years the Eau Claire Fire Fighters Local Union 487, in conjunction with the Eau Claire Fire Department, have recognized area students who acted bravely in emergency situations. The recipients of the Citizen Community Involvement Awards are citizens who put the safety and well being of their neighbors ahead of other concerns in a time of need.

Mary Beth Clark and Norma Stafne are two of those extraordinary citizens. Mary Beth and Norma are nurses employed in the Operating Room of Luther Hospital in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. On September 29, 1998, these two women had the unfortunate chance of meeting when they both stopped to assist a man who had been in a motorcycle accident. Both women spotted the motorcycle driver lying on the side of the road. He was bleeding and not breathing well, so they rolled him onto his back and administered CPR. They remained with the driver, soothing him while they waited for help. When the paramedics arrived Mary Beth helped load him into the ambulance. She found it hard to separate herself from him but the rescue team reassured her that they would take good care of him. The calming influence

of Mary Beth and Norma was crucial in this life treating situation.

On behalf of all the citizens of western Wisconsin I ask that the United States House of Representatives recognize Mary Beth Clark and Norma Stafne for their courage and thank them for being concerned and giving community citizens.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN AND VIRGINIA GAFFNEY

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to commend two of my constituents from Springfield, Illinois, John and Virginia Gaffney, for their tireless work on a volunteer mission with the International Executive Service Corps in Egypt.

Too often today, people become so engrossed in their busy lives that they forget others need their help. However, Mr. Gaffney found time to volunteer a month out of his life to teach flour milling technology at the Egyptian Milling Technology Center. While John and Virginia were "helping others help themselves", they were also representing our great nation. This kind of personalized foreign assistance is vital to accelerating the development of free enterprise and democracy around the globe.

Thank you John and Virginia for representing, not only America, but the great state of Illinois in your selfless endeavor.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF VA BECOMING A CABINET DEPARTMENT

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, by 1988 the Veterans Administration had become the largest independent agency in the government. Only the Department of Defense had more employees. Making the VA a cabinet-level department was an idea whose time had come.

On March 15 of this year, the Department of Veterans Affairs celebrates its tenth anniversary.

I remember well both the formal creation of the new cabinet department on March 15, 1989, and the Ft. McNair ceremony the previous October 22 when President Reagan signed the bill into law. He paid tribute, and rightly so, to the two driving forces in Congress who gave veterans their seat at the President's Cabinet table.

President Reagan singled out an Army veteran, Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery of Mississippi, and a former Marine, Congressman Jerry Solomon of New York. At the time, they were, respectively, chairman and ranking minority member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. It was their persistence and legislative skill that brought the measure from its inception to its passage, and finally, to enactment. They also deserve our congratulations today.

Elevation to cabinet status has given the VA a greater opportunity to be heard at the highest level of government, and a greater voice in determining national policies in the areas of health care, education, housing and insurance. Veterans are concerned not only with issues unique to them, such as service-connected illnesses, but also with broader national issues such as homelessness, Alzheimer's and other health issues related specifically to aging.

Making the VA a cabinet department cost the American people nothing in this era of tight budgets, but it would have been justified at any price. Veterans have served their country at great personal sacrifice. More than a million of them made the ultimate sacrifice. It's the price paid for the freedoms we enjoy as Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all Members to join me in congratulating the VA for a decade of improved service to our veterans.

IMPORTANCE OF AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I had planned to offer two amendments concerning after-school programs for children to H.R. 800, the Education Flexibility Partnership Act. After consultation with Chairman MIKE CASTLE, I have decided against offering the amendments and have agreed to work with the chairman to highlight the importance of after-school activities for schoolchildren and the need for a national discourse on this topic.

I believe we should do everything on the Federal level to promote quality, after-school care for students, and after-school educational activities for at-risk juveniles.

Every day at 3 p.m., the final school bell rings and hundreds of classrooms across America stand empty until the next day. Numerous studies have shown that between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. is when the majority of juvenile crimes occur.

It is also the same time period when moms and dads begin to anxiously watch the clock at work, worrying about their children being home alone.

Doesn't it make sense for schools to use this readily available space to provide after-school activities rather than send the school kids home alone to an empty house? After school programs will address the needs of working parents who want a safe haven for their children during non-school hours.

Quality, after-school care can also have tremendous academic benefits. It can overcome learning difficulties created by overcrowded classrooms and high teacher-student ratios which are common problems in America's public schools. After-school child care programs also provide the working parents of the five to twelve million latchkey children in the United States, with the peace of mind that their children are in a safe and supervised environment after school.

After-school educational programs for at-risk youth have been shown to reduce the incidence of crime on school campuses and enhance the academic achievements for at-risk juveniles.

We must encourage schools to provide quality, after-school activities as a way to complement other programs that are designed to promote academic achievement. Education does not end when the last school bell rings. Let's work together to help children reach their highest potential.

I would like to thank Chairman CASTLE for his leadership on after-school programs. It is a pleasure to collaborate with him on this important issue which has significant implications on our children's future.

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from California, Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER for her comments about the importance of after-school programs. I appreciate and applaud her dedication to this issue. In addition, I welcome this opportunity to work with her to bring this issue to the forefront of the ongoing discussion Congress is having on how best to educate our youth.

Indeed, evidence is continually emerging to prove what we have always intuitively known about the importance of out-of-school time for children, their health and well being, and their academic growth. Roughly five million children are unsupervised after school, leaving them at risk of accidents and ripe for undesirable behaviors ranging from smoking and drinking to sexual activity and violent crime. For too many of our children, the hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. are spent engaged in delinquent or unproductive behavior. Television happens to be the No. 1 substitute for good after-school programs. Millions of children come home and plop in front of the television set after school, and I venture to guess that many are not watching educational programming. In addition, juvenile crime rates go up 300 percent after 3 p.m. and over half of all juvenile crime occurs between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

This is quite disturbing, given that we know that the hours after school have become absolutely critical in a child's life. After-school programs can be exceptionally beneficial for kids. Good programs can give kids the chance to interact with their peers and adults in a positive way, to gain or improve new skills, to master educational material, to develop strong bodies, or to foster creativity. In addition, studies have shown that students who attend productive after-school programs make significant academic gains, enjoy school more, feel more safe, and are less likely to participate in delinquent behaviors year round.

We, as leaders of this Nation, need to focus on improving the quality of children's out-of-school time. I do not necessarily believe we have to spend billions of dollars to accomplish this task, but we should invest ourselves and our time. Up to date information is desperately needed to understand the dynamics, intricacies, strengths, and weaknesses of existing after-school programs. The last major study of after-school programs was completed in 1993 by the National Institute of Out-Of-School Time. This lack of up to date information is what drove me to hold several round table discussions with my constituents last year and to