

the 1999 "Sudler Flag of Honor" award from the John Philip Sousa Foundation. This award is the highest recognition of excellence in concert performance that a high school band can receive. During the 17 years the award has been in existence, only 39 bands from the entire United States and Canada have been selected for the Flag of Honor award. Conductor Gerald Babbitt and his Rebel band deserve our praise and recognition on the occasion of receiving this prestigious award.

The John Philip Sousa Foundation designed this award to identify and recognize high school concert band programs of very special excellence at the international level. To be eligible for nomination, a band must have maintained excellence over a period of many years in several areas including concert, marching, small ensemble and soloists. The director must have been the conductor of the band for at least the previous seven consecutive years including the year of the award.

Each recipient receives a four-by-six foot "Flag of Honor" which becomes the property of the band. The flag is designed in red, white and blue and bears the logo of the John Philip Sousa Foundation. The conductor receives a personal plaque and each student in the band receives a personalized diploma.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor to have such an outstanding high school band in the 14th Congressional District. I am delighted to extend my hearty congratulations to them. Their hard work and dedication is an inspiration to us all.

STATEMENT ON THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 1999

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I begin with the following quote: "Without the assistance of the Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well."—Abraham Lincoln as he began his inaugural journey from Illinois to Washington, D.C., February 11, 1861.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the history of our Nation, leaders have turned to prayer for guidance and inspiration. Our Founding Fathers built this country on the principle that its citizens had a God-given right to freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Since that time, America has been a beacon for millions in search of religious freedom.

The first Thursday of May of each year is set aside as the National Day of Prayer. This day serves to recognize the important role of prayer in our nation's past, present and future.

We recognize today, Thursday, May 6 as the National Day of Prayer. Because of the recent events here at home and abroad, I believe this day has a special significance this year.

The recent events in Yugoslavia and Colorado have sharply reminded us that life is fragile and sometimes fleeting. While our nation is troubled by the senseless death and destruction that surrounds the war in Europe and the shooting in Littleton, we can take comfort in

the fact that our nation is also actively working to repair and heal itself.

As a new member of Congress, I have been thrust into the middle of the many policy debates that shape our nation. Often times there are tough choices to be made, and I am comforted by the fact that I have the ability and the freedom to turn to prayer as a source of guidance.

I hope that we as a nation will make time everyday for a period of prayer and reflection.

PLEDGING SUPPORT FOR THE TRUTH IN ROCK ACT

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 1999

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation authored by my friend and colleague, Mr. KUCINICH of Ohio. The Truth in Rock Act would protect rock and roll's early heroes from the victimization of imitators by changing the trademark laws that allow the imitators to get away with it.

Under current trademark law, the original members of performing groups cannot use the names that made them famous without risking copyright infringement. But the original artists can be replaced by imposter performers who make recordings and sell concert tickets under their names.

You can buy a concert ticket to see the Drifters or the Coasters perform this summer. You'll be surprised to see on stage performers who are not the original Drifters or Coasters. You won't be listening to the memorable voices of those legendary artists; you'll be listening to their imitators.

The law allows the imitators to perform as the Drifters or the Coasters. Under that same law, the original members of the Drifters and the Coasters cannot mention their past affiliation with these bands.

This is a widespread practice that takes advantage of recording artists and consumers. The Truth in Rock Act corrects this inequity by permitting original recording artists to seek damages from the imitators. More importantly, it gives the original members of rock bands the right to advertise their ties to the groups they founded.

Tomorrow night I'll be joining a group of legendary recording artists who have been victimized by the trademark laws. These musicians are working hard to raise awareness on this issue and I'm proud to join them. They deserve the support of this Congress.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 1999

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the territory of Minnesota and the counties of Dakota, Washington and Ramsey, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Minnesota Historical Society and Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights. Each of these institutions have contributed to the culture and societal foundation of our great state!

The Saint Paul Pioneer Press has been a reliable source of information and communication for St. Paul and the surrounding communities. I commend them on their objectivity and thorough coverage of important events throughout Minnesota and the world and for spawning many rival newspapers, especially the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

The Gibbs Farm serves as a reminder of the origins of Minnesota. The original fabric of the Gibbs Farm, now in an urban setting, continues to teach and entertain our citizens with weekly events, and acts as a window into history. This is an unique and valuable resource for many citizens in the urban area.

The Minnesota Historical Society has become an icon in Minnesota; a treasure of information and preservation advocacy about who we are and where we have come from. Exhibit symbolize important events of our past, and educate us on the importance of the future. Several exhibits planned for the fall will be centered around the sesquicentennial celebrations.

Even as a territory, Minnesota's first counties took shape before the formation of our state. The lines that were drawn established more than boundaries. The community spirit we feel today was forged in the early years of our existence and these first counties—Ramsey, Dakota, and Washington—reflect our leaders heritage and geographic governance, then and now.

As a former teacher, I understand the importance of learning from history. The origins of our great state are important to our citizens today, and these institutions have played an important role in shaping and crafting the state. Physical reminders and symbolic entities encapsulate the heart and soul and the essence of what it is to be a Minnesota. As we employ the inspiration and lessons from our past, may we put them to such a good use as our antecedents.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an article from the April 25th edition of the St. Paul Pioneer Press highlighting this historical landmark.

150TH ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATE HERITAGE, SPUR OPTIMISTIC DISCUSSIONS OF FUTURE

(By Heather Johnson)

Twin Cities native Leah Otto was intrigued that St. Paul's designation as territorial capital 150 years ago in 1849 helped spur a boom that more than tripled the city's population in five years—from 1,358 in 1850 to 4,716 in 1855.

That tidbit was among the facts she gleaned while doing research for the city's sesquicentennial.

Such trivia is what Otto, assistant director of marketing and promotions for St. Paul, hopes will be shared throughout the year as the city celebrates its history as the capital of, first, the Minnesota Territory and, since 1858, the state of Minnesota.

Since that initial burst of growth, she said, the city has kept thriving, a sign residents continue to feel St. Paul's pull.

St. Paul isn't alone in pausing this year to reflect on accomplishments and goals with explorations of the past, assessments of the present and optimistic discussions about the future. 1999 also marks the 150th anniversary of the organization of the Minnesota Territory and Washington, Ramsey and Dakota counties, as well as the Minnesota Historical Society, Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights and the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

"There's a lot to commemorate," said Priscilla Farnham, executive director of the

Ramsey County Historical Society, speaking of the Gibbs historic site and the other sesquicentennial celebrators.

While they all share a common thread—growing together—each has had a distinct role in Minnesota history. The sesquicentennial is the perfect time, say celebration organizers, to educate people about those rules.

"It gives us an opportunity or an excuse to look back on the past," said Brian Horrigan, curator for "Tales of the Territory Minnesota 1849-1958," an exhibit that will open this fall at the historical society's Minnesota History Center. "It's important for people to understand the connection between the present and the past."

One goal is to dispel common misconceptions about the state's heritage, he said.

"I think people think in polar terms, that here were white settlers and Indians, when in fact there was a mix of people here," Horrigan said.

Also, he said, not all Minnesotans see the 150th anniversary of the Minnesota Territory as worthy of celebration.

"It was like an earthquake or a tidal wave—it was catastrophic for the Indians," he said of the population boom in the mid-1800s.

Recognizing such perspectives is part of a new way of viewing history, Horrigan said. It recognizes that "Minnesota" existed before it had its name, he said.

We're trying to bring Minnesota more in line with this new Western history, looking at the history of settlement not as history of triumphant conquering of the land. This is a much more complex story," he said.

While paying tribute to the territory, the society also is celebrating its creation, which preceded the state it serves by nine years.

Gibbs Farm this year is attempting something similar as it focuses on the Dakota Indians.

"Most people don't have a clue what sort of society they had," Farnham said. "It was a very fine culture. They had the very highest standards of workmanship. They were very efficient gardeners . . . I think it's just we plain don't know, and that's part of what I see our role is in commemorating the 150th anniversary."

Gibbs Farm, established by Jane BeDow Gibbs and her husband, Herman Gibbs, is open May 1 through Oct. 31 and features special events each weekend.

"One of the things we are going to be doing this summer is breaking ground to build a replica of the original sod house, which was built in 1849," Farnham said. An interpretation of Jane Gibbs' association with the Dakota Indians will also be added, she said and the creation of a Dakota bark lodge will demonstrate Dakota heritage.

St. Paul and the three East Metro counties are also showcasing their heritage.

"We're celebrating our distinguished past and our promising future," said St. Paul's Otto. "We're celebrating what we have. We're celebrating what brings personality and charm to St. Paul."

That includes hosting, along with the Pioneer Press, 150 Pioneer Parties throughout the city. Events will span the whole year and include the city and surrounding area.

The Pioneer Press' role shows its continuing commitment to the community, said Marti Buscaglia, Pioneer Press vice president for market development.

"We have had a relationship with the community for 150 years and have been very much a part of that community, both in forming it and being its voice and its mirror," Buscaglia said. "As we go forward, it's important for us to continue that relationship with the community and to really serve

as the local paper for St. Paul and the surrounding suburbs . . . to get to know our customers better, find out what their needs are and be able to give them what it is they want from their newspaper and from the newspaper as a corporate citizen."

At the county level, Ramsey is encouraging residents to volunteer at events.

Ramsey County is very community oriented," said Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt. "There's nothing more community oriented than celebrating your history."

Residents can learn a lot along the way, she said.

"A lot of people are surprised—It's like '150 years? Really?' IA" she said.

As for the future, ensuring that St. Paul and Ramsey County remain economically strong is a goal, Reinhardt said.

In Washington County, organizers are celebrating the area's opportunities as well as its past, said Washington County Commissioner Dick Stafford.

"We can drive, in a few miles, from lakes and streams to oil refineries and moderate to million-dollar homes," Stafford said. "We've got every kind of industry you can imagine and every kind of recreation you can imagine . . . You've got every ethnic background you can think of, you've got every profession you can think of. It's probably a great microcosm of America."

Dakota County's sesquicentennial is "a work in progress," said Patrice Bataglia, county commissioner and co-chair of the project. Besides celebrating, the county hopes to educate residents, she said.

"What's so important is that it's the fastest-growing county," Bataglia said, citing the thousands of people who move to the area each year. "So many people who are moving to Dakota County are looking for an identify with Dakota County."

Reinhardt believes everyone can benefit from 150th anniversary celebrations.

"You really need to look back in order to know how you got to where you are and figure out where you want to be," said the Ramsey County commissioner.

"It's a celebration of our ancestors and our history, but more important than that, it's looking at how far we've come."

BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 833) to amend title 11 of the United States Code, and for further purposes:

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my opposition to the passage of H.R. 833, the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999. I will vote 'No' on final passage, not because I believe that the bankruptcy system doesn't need reformulation, but because H.R. 833 is an unbalanced piece of legislation which does not offer the flexibility to accommodate the diverse circumstances confronted by debtors and bankruptcy courts.

The American Bankruptcy system was designed to give individuals who found themselves in insurmountable debt the chance to start over again. H.R. 833 threatens the promise of a fresh start by forcing the myriad situations debtors face into a narrow, rigid formula.

The strict, Internal Revenue Service "means test" used to calculate the average monthly expenses for all debtors does not even account for regional income and cost of living differences. In my own state of Hawaii, the cost of living is high. This provision will unjustly penalize my constituents who seek bankruptcy relief because their actual, higher living costs will be ignored. H.R. 833's proponents consistently refused proposals to create a more flexible means test.

H.R. 833 strips bankruptcy judges of the power to determine that exceptional circumstances exist in certain cases and adjust monthly expense allowances to accommodate such situations. Instead of seeking to find the best course of action to help debtors become solvent, H.R. 833, as amended, allows bankruptcy trustees who transfer their clients' petitions from Chapter 7 to Chapter 13 to be paid for doing so. This is bad, lop-sided policy.

H.R. 833 rewards credit card companies' practice of pushing easy credit on debt heavy clients. They are the only winners in this debate. The policy to force more debtors from Chapter 7 bankruptcy into Chapter 13 bankruptcy benefits only those creditors whose debts are dischargeable in Chapter 7 and not under Chapter 13: Credit Card Companies. H.R. 833 makes credit card debt non-dischargeable under Chapter 13 and puts these debts in the same category as child support and alimony payments.

I believe that people should be held personally accountable for their debts. I voted Yes on the substitute bill offered by Congressman NADLER, which would have reformed bankruptcy provisions in a fair, balanced manner. I regret that Mr. NADLER's restructuring substitute did not pass. I voted to pass the amendment offered by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, Congressman HENRY HYDE and Congressman JOHN CONYERS which created a flexible method of computing a debtor's monthly living expenses by providing guidelines to account for extenuating circumstances. This bipartisan amendment balanced a creditor biased bill. The Hyde-Conyers amendment also failed.

As the bill stands, I am unable to vote for it.

HONORING SPRAGUE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 1999

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you this morning to salute Sprague High School in Salem, Oregon, which has been named a 1999 "Grammy Signature School, Gold Award."

I want all my colleagues in Congress, everyone involved in the Sprague Music Department, and everyone who cares about kids and music to know how proud I am of them and of this accomplishment.

The Grammy Signature School Program is a special part of the Grammy Awards that recognize professional artists. We've all seen the Grammy Awards on television, and this Signature School Program is a special part of that prestigious recognition that singles out excellent high school music programs.

I am delighted to congratulate Sprague High School as one of sixteen schools across the