

bus, a mere three feet from the oncoming student who was approaching in the driver's blind spot.

I salute Daniel and the other young recipients of this year's award, Daniel Rogers of Maryland and Greg Lawson and Tasha Tanner of Ohio, for their lifesaving contributions to the safety of their fellow students. As members of their school safety patrols, these young people have made invaluable contributions to their schools and communities. I also commend the American Automobile Association for their sponsorship of this valuable program to keep our nation's young people safe on their trips to and from school.●

REBIRTH FOR RUTLAND'S PARAMOUNT THEATER

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on Saturday, March 18, the Paramount Theater opened its doors to the Rutland community for the first public performance on its stage in nearly 20 years. This was a memorable night for Vermonters who had the opportunity to see Arlo Guthrie perform with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra. This grand reopening also marked the successful completion of an important and historic restoration project.

The Paramount Theater is a Vermont treasure that was an icon of downtown Rutland from the time it first opened its doors in 1914 to the day those doors closed in 1981. Founded by Rutland businessman George T. Chaffee, the Chaffee Playhouse served as a venue for the entertainers of the day, allowing Rutland area residents the opportunity to see the likes of Will Rogers, the Marx Brothers and Harry Houdini, among many others. As motion pictures moved into the spotlight in the 1930s, Chaffee's Playhouse was taken over by Paramount and became known as the Paramount Movie House.

Then times changed, and after years of screening movies for fewer and fewer patrons, the Paramount closed its doors to the public in 1981. The ornate theater that had once served as a centerpiece for the Rutland arts and social scenes had become only a fond memory for those whose lives it had affected.

Now times have changed again, and over the past several years, downtown Rutland has undergone remarkable growth and revitalization. As the downtown community began to bustle with more and more visitors, local residents and merchants felt the time had come to reopen the doors of the old Center Street theater.

Coming up with a good idea is often the easy part of a project. Finding a way to turn that idea into reality can be a much larger task. That was the case with the project to reopen the Paramount Theater, which required significant renovation and restoration. Through the tireless efforts of community leaders, a major fund raising effort was launched with contributions from individuals and local businesses, with grants also from the state and

federal governments. More than 1500 people made personal contributions toward the renovation project. My colleague, Senator JEFFORDS, took the lead in making the case for the federal contribution, and I was pleased to support that effort.

Nearly 20 years after it closed, and after more than \$3.5 million in construction and renovation, the Paramount Theater has been restored to the beauty and splendor enjoyed by those Vermonters who attended its original opening night on January 15, 1914. The reopening of the Paramount Theater now will serve the Rutland community's need for an arts center, and, for new generations of Vermonters, it will once again be a focal point for the social life of a vibrant community.●

TAIWANESE-AMERICAN HERITAGE WEEK

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, this month I join people in New Jersey and throughout the nation in celebrating Pacific-American Heritage Month. The Pacific-American community represents an important part of America's future and I applaud their proud celebration of heritage and community.

Taiwanese-American Heritage Week, from May 7 to May 14, celebrates the unique and diverse contributions of the more than 500,000 Taiwanese-Americans in the United States. These Americans have played a significant role in our nation's life and their countless accomplishments can be found in every facet of American society. For instance, Taiwanese-Americans have succeeded as notable artists, Nobel Laureate scientists, researchers, human rights activists, and business leaders.

In addition to recognizing these contributions, this is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the success of democracy on the island of Taiwan. Since 1987, the Taiwanese people have possessed the rights to select their own leaders, practice the religion of their choice, and express their thoughts openly and freely. Taiwan is a vibrant and democratic participant in the family of nations.

The election on March 18 of opposition leader Chen Shui-bian as president, and my friend Annette Lu as vice-president, represents the crowning achievement of the struggle of the people of Taiwan for full-fledged democracy and freedom. While Taiwan has established a model democracy, there remain political challenges. Gaining worldwide recognition of the legitimacy of Taiwan's government is paramount. With all that Taiwanese and Taiwanese-Americans have accomplished there is still more work to be done before Taiwan's status and global contributions are properly respected and appreciated.

Mr. President, Taiwanese-American Heritage Week recognizes the long-standing friendship between the United

States and Taiwan. I commend the great accomplishments and contributions of the Taiwanese-American community.●

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to praise the work of Minnesota's hospitals and those across America as we recognize National Hospital Week. This year's theme, "Touching The Future With Care," focuses on the heart of the hospital system: its people. For those Minnesota doctors, nurses, administrators, and volunteers who consistently provide the highest level of quality health care in America, I commend your selfless efforts. You are very deserving of our recognition here today.

Hospitals are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing their communities with around-the-clock health care services. In my own state of Minnesota, 142 hospitals and 22 different health care systems provide Minnesotans with one of the most efficient and effective health care systems in the United States. This is not a result of mere chance. Rather, it is the combined efforts of our health care professionals—those men and women who devote themselves to the delivery of timely, quality health care, when and where it is needed.

As we all know, American hospitals have faced severe challenges over the last several years due to rapidly declining reimbursement rates under Medicare. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 made dramatic changes to the payment rates to hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and individual providers. In fact, Medpac, Congress' Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, reported that profit margins for hospitals across the country dropped nearly 40 percent between 1998 and 1999. This is the lowest level in 20 years. And to add insult to injury, the Congressional Budget Office reported that Medicare payments, which serve as one of the largest revenue sources to hospitals, would realize a 62% decrease over the next five years. Clearly, in an industry that is already running on fumes, we cannot afford to cut deeper into the margins of hospitals and simply hope that they will be able to absorb the added losses and continue to provide the quality health care that we expect.

Last year, in an effort to reduce some of this burden, Congress attempted to address the problem with the 1999 Balanced Budget Refinement Act. This legislation restored some of the drastic cuts called for in 1997, and provided relief in payments for outpatient services. This effort has already made a measurable difference and has enabled many hospitals and other providers to remain in business. Yet, this is only half the problem.

The Balanced Budget Refinement Act addressed outpatient care provided by hospitals, and now, through legislation

I cosponsored earlier this year called the American Hospital Preservation Act, we are addressing inpatient services. This is the other half of the equation. The American Hospital Preservation Act will help restore the scheduled 1.1 percent reduction in the inflation rate adjustment for in-patient services for years 2001 and 2002. Most importantly, this legislation will allow hospitals to better keep up with rapid increases in health-related costs.

Mr. President, we in Congress have a big task ahead of us. We need to remain steadfast in our commitment to these institutions and complement the efforts of the people who devote so much of themselves to saving and preserving the lives of others. National Hospital Week exists so that we may remember and recognize the efforts of these organizations, and more importantly, the people who work within them. I am proud of the level of quality health care that is provided through our city and rural hospitals in Minnesota, and I am going to continue to do all I can to help preserve the integrity of these institutions on which we all rely.●

IN RECOGNITION OF SAUL B. KATZ

● Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of Saul B. Katz; an outstanding member of the New York health care community.

Mr. Katz has the distinction of serving as the first Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the North Shore—Long Island Jewish Health System. After serving in various leadership capacities within the health system for over a decade, Mr. Katz led the development of a system that now includes 13 hospitals, 2 skilled nursing centers and numerous ambulatory programs which span across the New York Metropolitan area.

As Co-founder, President and Chief Operating Officer of Sterling Equities, Inc., a diversified investment and operating company, Mr. Katz was a member of the governing Board of the Community Hospital of Glen Cove, which became North Shore University Hospital at Glen Cove in 1989. Mr. Katz served as the First Vice President of the Board of Trustees, as well as a member of the Finance, Planning, Development and Building committees.

In addition, Mr. Katz serves as a Director, Trustee and Member of numerous trade and charitable organizations including the Jewish Association for Services for the Aging, the Brooklyn College Foundation and the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York.

The Katz family is a close-knit one. Saul and his wife Iris have enjoyed 40 years of marriage and spend as much time as they can with their grown children and their spouses: Heather Katz Knopf and Dan Knopf, Natalie Katz D'Amore and Al D'Amore and David Katz. Iris and Saul recently celebrated the arrival of their first grandchild Carly Frances Knopf.

The North Shore—Long Island Health System will certainly miss the exemplary leadership that Mr. Katz provided all these years and I applaud the significant improvements he has made to the state of health care in the New York Metropolitan area.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Mr. Katz on his retirement from the Board and wish him and his family well in his golden years.●

RETIREMENT OF DIANE RODEKOH

● Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wanted to take this opportunity to express the heartfelt appreciation and gratitude I feel, along with my staff and my wife Diana, for the hard work and determined effort Diane Rodekohr has given the Senate and my office over these past few years. If not for Diane, or Dee as she is known to her friends, we just could not have accomplished as much for the people of Wyoming as we have been able to do since my election to the Senate four years ago.

When Diana and I arrived in Washington ready to take on this new adventure in our lives, knowing we already had staff in place with experience who were committed to me and to Wyoming made all the difference. The continuity that I benefitted from having a seasoned staff helped to make a transition that was better than smooth—it was almost seamless.

I'll always be grateful to Dee for staying on as State Director when she could have ridden off into the sunset to enjoy her well deserved retirement. Instead she stayed with me and with Wyoming and continued to make a difference for me, for my constituents, and for her fellow staff members who continued to look to her for her sage advice, counsel and support.

Now she has made a decision to turn her attention to tending different areas of the garden of her life. I hope she fully enjoys whatever challenges await her. The Bible tells us that "to everything there is a season"—and this is the season for Dee to enjoy her life to the fullest! May God continue to bless and watch over her. My wife, Diana, my staff and the people of Wyoming join in sending our best wishes to her for a life full of continued joy and happiness. Dee, you have truly earned that and so much more!●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1237. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to permit grants for the national estuary program to be used for the development and implementation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan, to reauthorize appropriations to carry out the program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3069. An act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to provide for redevelopment of the Southeast Federal Center in the District of Columbia.

H.R. 3577. An act to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated for the north side pumping division of the Minidoka reclamation project, Idaho.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 89. Concurrent resolution recognizing the Hermann Monument and Hermann Heights Park in New Ulm, Minnesota, as a national symbol of the contributions of Americans of German heritage.

The message further announced that pursuant to Senate concurrent resolution 89, 106th Congress, the Speaker has appointed the following Members of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies: Mr. HASTERT of Illinois, Mr. ARMEY of Texas, and Mr. GEPHARDT of Missouri.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1237. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to permit grants for the national estuary program to be used for the development and implementation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan, to reauthorize appropriations to carry out the program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 3069. An act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to provide for redevelopment of the Southeast Federal Center in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3577. An act to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated for the north side pumping division of the Minidoka reclamation project, Idaho; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 89. Concurrent resolution recognizing the Hermann Monument and Hermann Heights Park in New Ulm, Minnesota, as a national symbol of the contributions of Americans of German heritage; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated: