

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, PROCLAMATION, WORLD POPULATION AWARENESS WEEK, OCTOBER 21-27, 2001

Whereas, the 21st Century offers enormous environmental and societal challenges for governments at all levels; and

Whereas, these challenges call for innovative leadership to ensure resource conservation, protection of open space, waste prevention, sanitation management to provide quality of life. These challenges are inextricably linked to patterns of considerable demographic change; and

Whereas, world population is projected to increase by almost 80 million per year with 98 percent of population growth predicted to occur in the least developed countries of the world. This growth can lead to disease, hunger and starvation; and

Whereas, demographic problems are not limited to the under developed nations. These problems are also a reality in the United States in other industrialized nations.

Therefore, I, Tom Ridge, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim October 21-27, 2001, as World Population Awareness Week in Pennsylvania. I encourage all citizens to reflect upon these challenges and seek rational, humanitarian and community-based solutions.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Government, at the City of Harrisburg on this eleventh day of July in the year of our Lord two thousand and one of the Commonwealth the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

Tom Ridge, Governor.

HONORING HOLY TRINITY ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church for their 101st anniversary. Holy Trinity Church has been a cornerstone of Fresno's Armenian community since its inception in 1900.

For over 100 years, the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church has served as the spiritual, cultural, and social landmark for Armenians throughout Fresno and the San Joaquin Valley.

Armenian Apostolic Church services were held in Fresno as early as 1895 in a rented hall by the Rev. Aharon Melkonian, who had arrived from Erzerum 1 year earlier. As the parish grew so did the need for a church building. Construction began soon after the church held a general meeting on February 25, 1900, at which a board of trustees was elected. Then, on March 2, 1900, a building committee was appointed and it was decided that the church would be named Holy Trinity.

The foundation of the church was blessed on April 1, 1900, and on October 14, 1900, the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church was consecrated by the Primate of the Armenian Diocese, Rev. Bishop Hovsep Sarajian. It was the second Armenian Apostolic Church in the United States.

In the beginning many Armenians found themselves in a strange new land and turned to the church for support. Still today, those who are no longer strangers to this country continue to view the church as their focal point

for spiritual guidance, thus enabling the church and its members to withstand the test of time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church on the occasion of the 101st anniversary celebration. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church on this special day of recognition.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN HARRY THOMPSON

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Captain Harry Thompson, a national hero who gave his life to save many others during the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Captain Thompson, a long-time court officer, was a resident of Parkchester in the Bronx for over 30 years. "Selfless" is usually the first word to come to the lips of those neighbors and coworkers asked to describe Captain Thompson. They were saddened, but not surprised, to learn that his gallantry and dedication to helping others led him to save the lives of 150 people on that fateful morning in September.

We are all aware that on that morning, heroes abounded and many came from unlikely sources. Mr. Speaker, anyone who knew Captain Thompson considered him the most likely source of heroism. His youngest son, Raahsaan, explained that when he heard of the tragedy, he just assumed that his father was there "helping out." He took for granted that his father was there guiding others to safety while putting himself in harm's way. Captain Thompson was not a fireman or a police officer, yet he felt a call to duty not unlike those brave men and women and he went into a building that people were desperately trying to escape simply because he knew that he could help.

Captain Thompson's two sons say that their father took great pride in the fact that he had climbed the ranks to make Captain, a position that made him responsible for training court officers. Captain Thompson ingrained the value and necessity of hard work into his two sons who both went on to obtain college degrees and pursue successful careers. Both sons recall their father constantly helping people out, whether it was physically supporting an elderly or debilitated person in some task or running an errand for a busy neighbor. I want Raahsaan and Michael Thompson to know that we realize that their father did not come home that day so that 150 other fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, sisters, and brothers could.

Mr. Speaker, we lost so many in such a short time on the morning of September 11, it would be difficult for Congress to mourn and honor each individual life. However, I must ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Captain Thompson, he sacrificed his life in order to save others, not because it was his job, but because it was his nature.

"DEATH OF AN INNOCENT" BY
ELISABETH CERCEK

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, in light of the sobering events that took place on September 11, now more than ever, the young people of this country must remain vigilant, accountable for the actions taken in everyday life. One young American in particular realizes the importance of accountability and expresses these convictions in a poem she has written entitled, *Death of an Innocent*. Elisabeth Cercek of Ocala, FL, deposits the reader amid the chaos of a drunk driving accident. A young girl's life slowly ebbs away as the drunk driver can do nothing but "stare." With violent realism, Elisabeth brings us into the sorrowful world that thousands of Americans face each year when their loved ones are taken from them by alcohol related accidents. I applaud Elisabeth's steadfast resolve in her fight against drunk driving, and with that Mr. Speaker, I submit for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD her poem "Death of an Innocent."

DEATH OF AN INNOCENT

I went to a party, Mom.
I remembered what you said.
You told me not to drink, Mom.
So I drank soda instead.
I really felt proud inside, Mom.
The way you said I would.
I didn't drink and drive, Mom.
Even though the others said I should.
I know I did the right thing, Mom.
I know you are always right.
Now the party is finally ending, Mom.
As everyone is driving out of sight,
As I got into my car, Mom,
I knew I'd get home in one piece.
Because of the way you raised me,
So responsible and sweet.
I started to drive away, Mom,
But as I pulled out into the road,
The other car didn't see me. Mom,
And hit me like a load.
As I lay there on the pavement, Mom.
I hear the policeman say,
"The other guy is drunk," Mom.
And now I'm the one who will pay.
I'm lying here dying, Mom.
I wish you'd get here soon.
How could this happen to me, Mom?
My life just burst like a balloon.
There is blood all around me, Mom.
And most of it is mine.
I hear the medic say, Mom.
I'll die in a short time.
I just wanted to tell you, Mom.
I swear I didn't drink,
It was the others, Mom.
The others didn't think.
He was probably at the same party as I.
The only difference is, he drank
And I will die.
Why do people drink, Mom?
It can ruin your whole life.
I'm feeling sharp pains now.
Pains just like a knife.
The guy who hit me is walking, Mom.
And I don't think it's fair
I'm lying here dying
And all he can do is stare.
Tell my brother not to cry, Mom.
Tell Daddy to be brave.
And when I go to heaven, Mom.
Put "Daddy's Girl" on my grave.
Someone should have told him, Mom.

Not to drink and drive.
If only they had told him, Mom.
I would still be alive.

My breath is getting shorter, Mom.
I'm becoming very scared.
Pleased don't cry for me, Mom
When I needed you
You were always there.
I have one last question, Mom
Before I say goodbye.
I didn't drink and drive
So why am I the one to die?

TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL J. "RUSTY"
HAMMER

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Russell J. "Rusty" Hammer as he ends his tenure as president and CEO of the Sacramento Metro Chamber. As his friends and family gather to celebrate Rusty's impressive tenure, I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in saluting this truly remarkable citizen of Sacramento.

Rusty came to the Sacramento Metro Chamber in 1994 and after 7 years has transformed the chamber into an economically viable and influential organization. Today the Sacramento Metro Chamber is the largest and most diverse chamber in northern California, boasting a membership over 3,000. In addition, the Sacramento Metro Chamber is now represented in all six counties in the Sacramento region, a truly admirable feat.

To my colleagues here in the House of Representatives, perhaps one of the most visible accomplishments of the Sacramento Metro Chamber is the annual Cap-to-Cap trip. Through this important program, over 200 business leaders from the Sacramento region come to Washington, DC, each spring to meet with leaders of the Federal Government to raise awareness of the region's most important issues. Since 1994, under the direction of Rusty and his colleagues in the chamber, the level of participation in Cap-to-Cap has nearly doubled. I feel that this is a true testament to Rusty's dedication and enthusiasm for the Sacramento region.

In addition to the Cap-to-Cap trip, Rusty has also been the driving force behind numerous projects and events at the Sacramento Metro Chamber that have continued to propel the chamber to new heights. One in particular that deserves special recognition is "Perspectives", an annual speakers series hosted in Sacramento involving influential national and international leaders. Through Rusty's tireless efforts, this program has become one of the most important forums for discussions about the future and direction of the Sacramento region.

While I was saddened as both a friend and a colleague to learn of Rusty's departure to become president of the Los Angeles Metro Chamber, I fully believe that Sacramento's loss is Los Angeles's gain. Rusty's commitment to serving his community is a genuine inspiration and example to his fellow citizens and will be a wonderful addition to the Los Angeles region.

Mr. Speaker, as Mr. Rusty Hammer's friends and family gather to reflect on his time

with the Sacramento Metro Chamber, I am privileged to pay tribute to one of Sacramento's most honorable citizens. His successes are unparalleled, and it is a great honor for me to have the opportunity to recognize his many contributions to Sacramento. I ask all my colleagues to join with me in wishing my friend Rusty continued success in all his future endeavors.

HONORING THE CLOVIS SENIOR
CENTER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Clovis Senior Center for their work to improve the lives of senior citizens living in California's Central Valley.

The Clovis Senior Center began providing services over 25 years ago, when they first received Federal aid for senior programs. The actual Clovis Senior Center facility was built 19 years ago. Lynn Bawdon has served as director of the Clovis Senior Center for the past 20 years. The center provides a wide range of programs, including nutrition advice, income tax assistance, social security inquiries, medical information, and general adult information.

The goal of the Clovis Senior Center is to keep seniors independent and living in their own homes, while providing for their own needs. The center is ranked among the top 10 multisite centers in the State. They actively pursue assistance from the State to continue providing the highest level of assistance for seniors.

The Clovis Senior Center is an 11,000 square foot facility that is comprised of a central multipurpose room, two large classrooms, a commercial kitchen, two large restrooms, and two average sized restrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Clovis Senior Center for their valuable assistance to the local senior community. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing the Clovis Senior Center many more years of continued success.

BALKANS YOUTH LINK PROJECT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing the remarkable accomplishments of a budding organization dedicated to the empowerment and unity of youth throughout the Balkan region.

The Balkans Youth Link has emerged from the devastation of war to create a positive future for young people in that region. This San Francisco-based nonprofit organization, which was founded by a constituent of mine, Frederica Bunge, provides support to youth leaders of the Balkans who are working to develop a truly free society. These strive for openness and understanding in a place where ethnic conflict has long challenged hopes for peace.

Since its inception in late 1999, Balkans Youth Link has accomplished many important projects worthy of our attention. When the

conflict in Kosovo ended, two trauma recovery missions sent teams to rural and urban areas in order to create self-support groups, helping teachers recover from their own trauma and enabling them to give their students a renewed interest in learning.

Last summer, Youth Link 2000, the first international public debate camp, which was conceived and directed by Enrion Veliaj, successfully trained a diverse group of young people from Kosovo in the techniques of public debate. There the participants gained a broad understanding of the importance of free speech, diversity of ideas, and respect for human rights.

Also during the summer of 2000, a love of music and a desire for peace united in New York City a group of Serb, Croat, and Muslim youth from Bosnia. Balkans Youth Link Voices spent a month together, rehearsing, performing, and sharing their vision for a peaceful society. The choral group gave a number of excellent performances, including one at the closing luncheon of the State of the World Forum, where they received a standing ovation for their world premier performance of One Song, Many Voices, by Marcus Williams, written for Nelson Mandela's 2001 initiative on diversity.

Mr. Speaker, the latest endeavor of Balkans Youth Link is an international Youth Link Leadership Institute held in Kosovo in August of this year. The project provided community leaders and students with an opportunity for an exchange of ideas on the crucial issues of conflict resolution, advocacy, negotiation, and leadership in a variety of contexts. The leadership institute was designed to create socially conscious citizens and to motivate them toward leadership and activism.

The hard work and dedication of the director and staff of Youth Link Leadership Institute deserves our commendation. Project Director Erion Veliaj and coordinators Kujesa Bejtullahu and Sagita Muco have been actively involved for several years in humanitarian relief and democracy building activities. In addition to directing Youth Link 2000, Mr. Veliaj led an election mobilization campaign under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, (OSCE) in preparation for the first local elections in Kosovo. In addition he has headed several other major leadership and open society projects involving Balkan youth in other parts of the globe.

Mr. Speaker, some of our colleagues may recall that Ms. Behtullahu had been called the Anne Frank of Kosovo for her "From the War Zone" e-mail correspondence with a California high school student, using the pen name "Adona." Each of these leaders has witnessed the atrocity and anguish of war in the Balkans, and they hope to rebuild their communities by educating future generations about the impact of social activism and democratic politics. Balkans Youth Link coordinators and volunteers, along with their founding Board Members, Frederica Bunge, strive to inspire a sense of self-worth and a realization of individual power and value in society. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the persistent crusade for tolerance and understanding which is stressed by Balkans Youth Link. It is an invaluable contribution to a peaceful future for the Balkans.