

Award, the Senior Girl Scout Challenge, as well as designing and implementing a Girl Scout Gold Award project in cooperation with an adult Girl Scout volunteer.

The honorees and a brief summary of their accomplishments for the Girl Scout Gold Award follow: Kyle Johnson, a senior at Zealand School, created a web page for Zealand Community Education; Noorain Khan, a Forest Hills Central junior, designed an Islamic Education Youth Director position; Tonya Leeuw, a freshman at Grand Valley State University, utilized her love of gardening by landscaping a portion of the front of the new Byron Community Ministries building; Lauren Magnifico, a junior at Grandville High School, organized the registration records of the Grandville Little League program; Kandace Heinz and Heidi Porter, juniors at Thornapple-Kellogg High School, designed a German cultural event booth for last year's Middleville Heritage Days, and Andrea Dinley, a senior at Byron Center High School, developed a program titled Colguard Basic Mini-Camp and Video.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to recognize the achievements of this select group of young women who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their scouting duties. The hard work and determination they have exhibited during their pursuit of the Gold Award will serve as valuable lessons as they enter adulthood. I ask that my colleagues join me in applauding this special and dedicated group of young achievers.

SHEDD AQUARIUM CELEBRATES ITS OCEANARIUM'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the John G. Shedd Aquarium as it celebrates the tenth anniversary of its world-renowned Oceanarium. Shedd's Oceanarium is the largest indoor marine mammal habitat in the world. More than 18 million visitors from Illinois and around the world have gained a better understanding of the environment and marine mammals by visiting the Oceanarium.

Shedd Aquarium is an international leader in aquatic education as well as animal husbandry, care and training. The Aquarium spearheads numerous conservation initiatives, both locally and abroad, participating in animal rescue efforts and performing in-house studies ranging from sensory biology to animal health. Shedd will commemorate the Oceanarium's anniversary with a year-long celebration filled with exciting activities and never before offered behind the scenes glimpses, the unveiling of a new marine mammal show, chances to meet one-on-one with animal-care specialists and an opportunity to eat breakfast with the dolphins.

The Oceanarium has contributed to the body of knowledge about marine life and enhances public understanding and appreciation of aquatic life and conservation. Shedd's participation in the North American Cooperative Beluga Breeding Program allows scientists to study the behavior of beluga whales and other animals that can't easily be studied in the wild,

gaining a better understanding of whale biology and behavior. After seeing the beluga whales up close visitors to the Oceanarium gain a greater appreciation of the special nature of marine mammals and how humans impact their survival in the wild.

On April 27th, Shedd launches a new presentation, "Totally Training". The "Totally Training" experience gives visitors to the Oceanarium the unique opportunity to watch marine mammal presentations evolve daily as the dolphins and other animals learn new behaviors. Shedd's marine mammal presentations educate by showing natural behaviors of animals—such as dolphins porpoising (jumping). After each presentation, Shedd's expert marine mammal trainers will be available to talk to guests one-on-one.

Mr. Speaker, Shedd Aquarium's "Oceanarium Turns 10" celebration highlights a decade of achievements in conservation and education. Since its doors opened in 1991, the Oceanarium has been changing the way Chicagoans and the world think about the environment and marine mammals.

CONGRATULATING THE BEVERLY HIGH SCHOOL BAND AND CHORUS

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud a group of 180 students in my Congressional District who visited Washington, DC yesterday morning to entertain gatherers at the Lincoln Memorial. The Beverly High School Band and Chorus deserves to be commended for the hard work and practice it takes to perform at such a high level, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating them.

In addition to a wonderful experience here yesterday, these students have learned many valuable lessons from being part of this talented and impressive group. Clearly, for a band and chorus to be successful, it must work as one. Teamwork is a lesson these students have learned well, and it will be one that they carry with them as they encounter new challenges in the years ahead.

Practice and perseverance have become second nature to the members of this organization. These are cornerstones of living, and these students already have a strong grasp on these concepts at a young age.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, each one of these students, as well as their teachers and chaperones, have found joy in this adventure that began in the Sixth Congressional District of Massachusetts and ended in glory at the Lincoln Memorial. They have made all the people in the Commonwealth proud of their work, and they have provided examples of leadership to all they know. I wish them all the best of luck in their future endeavors, and I am confident that the lessons they have learned will not be forgotten.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN OF SPRING LAKE, NORTH CAROLINA

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the town of Spring Lake, North Carolina on May 5, 2001. The entire town will be celebrating at the Golden Anniversary Parade, which is to be one of the biggest parades in the town's history. Over 100 entrants, including antique cars, high school marching bands, and floats and cars sponsored by local businesses and civic groups, will participate in the parade. An Arts & Crafts Bazaar, petting zoo, and a fireworks finale will round out the celebration.

In addition to the revelry and excitement of the parade, a new 50-acre industrial park, the first in the town of Spring Lake, will be dedicated and shall be open for business soon. Also joining members of the town that day will be senior officials from Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, along with members of several veterans' organizations, to dedicate the first-ever military memorial in Spring Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the all-American town of Spring Lake, North Carolina on its 50th anniversary, and I would ask all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the hard-working, patriotic men and women who make Spring Lake such a great place to live and work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION AND STATEMENT REGARDING SOUTH SUBURBAN THIRD AIRPORT

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in Springfield, Illinois on April 24, 2001 in order to testify on the merits of the proposed South Suburban Third Airport before the Illinois House Aviation Committee. As a result, I was unable to cast votes for Roll Call votes numbered 85 and 86. Had I been able to be present for votes, I would have voted nay on Roll Call vote number 85, the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H. Con. Res. 83, The Congressional Budget for Fiscal Year 2002. I would have voted yea on Roll Call vote number 86, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 428 as amended, concerning the participation of Taiwan in the World Health Organization.

Mr. Speaker, I missed these votes because I believe that the development of the South Suburban Third Airport is vitally important to Illinois economy and the Nation's aviation infrastructure. I testified in support of developing the proposed South Suburban Airport and Governor Ryan's appropriation request of \$15 million for land acquisition. If the State of Illinois is to remain economically competitive, the air capacity must be increased. Governor George Ryan's decision to move forward with land acquisition shows bold leadership to achieve both.

Seventeen years ago, the Federal Aviation Administration ordered the States of Illinois,

Indiana, Wisconsin, and the City of Chicago to evaluate the region's future aviation needs and to determine possible solutions. The Chicago Area Capacity Study was formed by Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Chicago to look for a new site. That study concluded in 1988 that Chicago needed a supplemental airport to relieve overcrowding at O'Hare and Midway. Subsequent studies found there was a need for additional capacity by the year 2000, and that the supplemental capacity should be located at a new South Suburban Airport.

As we now know, the results of that study accurately foretold the future. In 2000, Chicago hit aviation gridlock as the runways, airspace and ground transportation network near the airports reached capacity. Today, peak travel times to and from O'Hare and Downtown often exceed one hour. Remote parking access to or from the terminals can often take 35 to 45 minutes.

The gridlock at O'Hare and Midway not only affects Chicago and its suburbs, but the entire state and nation. When air capacity is limited, airlines focus on the most profitable routes (international route) and ignore less lucrative business (short-range domestic routes). As we have seen, the process of dumping short lower-profit flights in favor of long, higher profit ones has already begun at O'Hare. In the past two years, O'Hare eliminated service to 13 Midwestern markets, but added service to more than 20 foreign cities. This shift has hurt the downstate Illinois economy and limited transportation options for its residents.

Chicago's capacity problems are well-documented. Numerous studies, including ones by the USDOT, the FAA, IDOT and the City of Chicago, conclude that Chicago needs new runways. The question is where.

The Greater Rockford Airport was once considered a possible third airport site. While Rockford is very important to the northern Illinois area, the Illinois Department of Transportation eliminated it as a third airport site in the 1988 study for the following reasons: It was deemed to be too far—97 miles—from the Chicago Business District. Rockford is 50 miles past Elgin, which is at the edge of the Chicago urbanized area. The Peotone site abuts the edge of suburbia and is 35 miles from Downtown Chicago. The Rockford market area for obtaining origin and destination passengers was too small for a major commercial airport. In comparison, the Peotone site has 2.5 million people living within a 45 minute drive. According to the latest census data, Will County is one of the fastest growing areas in Illinois. Two rivers border the Greater Rockford Airport, thus hampering any growth possibilities for longer runways. Additionally, the expanded airport boundaries and accompanying noise contours would severely impact many Rockford residents.

Gary Indiana Municipal Airport also has been considered. However, Gary has very little room to grow. Expanding Gary to a size comparable to the Peotone site would require relocating the Indiana Tollway, the Calumet River, 47 miles of railroads, 1,000 acres of wetlands, several toxic landfills, and about 24,000 residents. The \$20 billion cost of expanding Gary would make it virtually impossible for an airline to charge reasonable fares, whereas, the cost of the Peotone site would result in ticket prices comparable to O'Hare.

The Proposed South Suburban Airport would be safer due to its parallel-runway de-

sign and ability for future growth. Further, the South Suburban Airport is less expensive than other options. The cost of an inaugural South Suburban Airport is approximately \$560 million, compared to \$1.5 billion for building one runway at O'Hare. The third airport can also be built sooner than adding an additional runway at O'Hare. The airport can be operational in 4 to 5 years, but it would take 8 to 15 years to design and build an additional runway at O'Hare. The South Suburban Airport would be cleaner than the existing airports as it would be sufficient in size to absorb noise and air pollution. It has road and rail access, but less ground congestion.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to clarify why I missed Roll Call Votes on April 24, 2001 and to further explain the importance of the proposed South Suburban Airport.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of National County Government Week, I rise today to speak on the importance of county government and to highlight the numerous contributions county governments make in the everyday lives of citizens. Today, counties fill an especially challenging role as they continue to meet the complex demands of modern society.

In Texas, we have 254 counties that serve the needs of more than 18 million Texans. The responsiveness of county government to the needs of the community is a long-standing tradition in Texas. Texas law mandates, with certain exceptions, that all county courthouses be centrally located so that each citizen can travel to the seat, vote, and return home in a day. Most county seats fall within five miles of the county's center.

The structure of Texas county government has its roots in the "municipality," the local unit of government under Spanish and Mexican rule. These large areas, embracing one or more settlements and rural territories, are the foundation of the governmental organization of our present day counties. The Texas Constitution declared counties as the functional agents of the state, or as an "arm of the state." Unlike cities, the areas of responsibility authorized to counties are specifically spelled out in laws passed by the Legislature.

Texas counties range in size from less than 100 residents to more than three million. Major responsibilities include county development planning; building and maintaining roads and recreational facilities; and in some cases, county airports; constructing and operating jails; operating the judicial system; maintaining public records; collecting property taxes; issuing vehicle registration and transfers; and registering voters. Counties also provide law enforcement, conduct elections and provide invaluable health and social services to indigent members of the community. In this way, the county structure, more than any other form of government, plays a central role in the everyday functions of communities.

At the heart of each county is the commissioners court. These members of the court

collectively conduct the general business of the county and oversee financial matters. Each Texas county has four precinct commissioners and a county judge who serve on this court. Functions of the county, run by individuals employed by the commissioners court, include such departments as public health and human services, personnel and budget, and in some counties, public transportation and emergency medical services. Elected officials, found in most counties, include county attorneys, county and district clerks, county treasurers, sheriffs, tax assessor-collectors, justices of the peace, and constables.

In the last twenty years, a growing number of federal and state responsibilities have been delegated or mandated to the local level, confirming the importance and necessity of local county governments in Texas. Each day, counties deliver a long list of services and work to respond to the ever-changing needs of our dynamic state.

Counties across America provide solutions at the local level that help bring communities together. I believe this traditional form of local county government, which fulfills a multitude of services to communities, is truly indispensable to its citizens.

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEEK

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of National County Government Week, I rise today to honor the contributions and achievements of our county governments.

We have the opportunity this week to reflect upon the importance of our county governments and show our appreciation for our county officials. As a former mayor, I am very familiar with the role of county government and the need for government at all levels to cooperate in order to best serve Americans, and I appreciate the hard work done at the county level.

I have the privilege of representing the three South Florida counties of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach. These county governments serve a diverse population. This population is truly a microcosm of our state and our country. The needs facing these communities can be found in other parts of the country as well. County government has been successful in addressing these needs, and we in Congress can learn a lot from them.

The backbone of county government is the people who provide the vital services that are essential to our health, safety, and well-being. The school teachers, the social workers, the firefighters, the police, and others who are devoting their lives to public service help form the fabric of our government.

County government is the government closest to the people. It is often the face of government to most of our population. It is our obligation as Members of Congress to help support county governments all across the country in order that they may more effectively serve Americans.