

are among only 264 elementary schools nationwide to be honored with this award, the most prestigious national school recognition for public and private schools.

According to the Department of Education, Blue Ribbons Schools have been judged to be particularly effective in meeting local, State, and national goals. These schools also display the qualities of excellence that are necessary to prepare our young people for the challenges of the next century. Blue Ribbon status is awarded to schools which have strong leadership; a clear vision and sense of mission that is shared by all connected with the school; high quality teaching; challenging, up-to-date curriculum; policies and practices that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning; a solid commitment to family involvement; evidence that the school helps students achieve high standards; and a commitment to share the best practices with other schools.

After a screening process by each State Department of Education, the Department of Defense Dependent Schools, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Council for American Private Education, the Blue Ribbon School nominations were forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education. A panel of outstanding educators from around the country then reviewed the nominations, selected schools for site visits, and made recommendations to the Secretary of Education.

The designation as a Blue Ribbon School is a ringing endorsement of the successful practices that enable the students of these schools to succeed and achieve. Over the past few years, I have made a commitment to visit the Blue Ribbons Schools in my State and have always been delighted to see first hand the interaction between parents, teachers, and the community, which strongly contribute to the success of the school. As I complete my visits to each of these schools, I look forward to personally congratulating the students, teachers and staff for this exceptional accomplishment.

The nine winning Maryland elementary schools include:

Benfield Elementary School. Located in Anne Arundel County, Benfield Elementary was ranked 7th in Maryland on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, MSPAP, in 1996 and noted as one of the fastest improving schools in Maryland. The Baltimore Sun recently recognized Benfield's reading program as one of the most effective in the State. The Washington Post also recognized its character-building program, "No Putdowns," as a valuable asset to the school community. Benfield was one of two elementary schools selected to send their experiments aboard the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* and also has two award winning after school programs focusing on science and Spanish language.

Beth Tfiloh Community School. Beth Tfiloh of Baltimore, MD, has dedicated

itself to creating a vibrant educational community that touches the minds and hearts of Jewish children. The school's administration and leadership are committed to meeting the needs of each individual student through continued innovation, both as an institution of learning and as a guarantor of Jewish culture. The school has recently received recognition as a Good Neighbor School, Maryland Character Education School of the Year, and a Baltimore Business Journal Innovation in Technology School. Beth Tfiloh graduates have been accepted by the top colleges, universities, and religious seminaries in the United States and Israel and have assumed Jewish leadership roles on their college campuses and in their communities.

Bodkin Elementary School. Bodkin Elementary, located in Anne Arundel County, has had some of the highest test scores in Maryland over the past 2 years. The school has been awarded the Chesapeake Cup for outstanding participation with the Anne Arundel County Public Library and many of its staff members have earned State and county awards for their teaching skills. Bodkin's theme, "A Recipe For Success," accurately reflects that the special ingredients of a supportive school community, enthusiastic teachers and eager learners work to make it an educational star.

Charlestown Elementary School. Charlestown Elementary strives to live up to its motto, "Success for all students, whatever it takes." As a title I school, it successfully provides numerous programs for students of its rural community in Cecil County, including after-school enrichment programs, student support programs, and parent/student volunteers. Scores on the MSPAP have increased for the last 5 years. The committed staff, hard working students, and involved community all contribute to Charlestown's success.

Darnestown Elementary School. Darnestown Elementary is committed to an educational program that recognizes the unique value, needs, and talents of the individual student. Located in Gaithersburg, MD, Darnestown is a school with steadily increasing test scores. Over the past 4 years, Darnestown's composite MSPAP score has increased from 60 percent to 82 percent. The school has received Maryland's Recognition School monetary award for 2 consecutive years. The staff and community are also proud to be the first recipient of the Marriott "Spirit to Serve" award, recognizing Darnestown's involvement in numerous community service projects to support the homeless.

Fort Foote Elementary School. At Fort Foote Elementary, outstanding MSPAP test scores validate the academic achievement of the students, parents, and teachers. The children of this Fort Washington, MD, school embrace the concept of a Community of Caring through the school's nationally recognized character education pro-

gram. With a 97 percent minority population, the school coordinates a kindergarten through Grade 6 program with an early childhood special education program and Head Start. Combining innovative assessment techniques such as the Comer School Development Program, team instructional planning, shared decisionmaking, and community partnerships have proven effective for total school success.

Ocean City Elementary School. Ocean City Elementary is located close to the resort town, for which it was named, in Ocean City, MD. The teachers and community strongly believe it is their responsibility to expand the number of life choices a child has upon graduation from high school. Ocean City has an excellent reputation of having high behavioral standards as well as reaching academic achievements that have been recognized statewide. The vision behind the school is to make all students academically successful, as well as productive members of society. The dedication of the students, teachers, and parents of Ocean City Elementary truly represents their school motto: I can be anything, I can learn anything if I believe in myself and work hard.

Saint Bernadette School. Saint Bernadette School, founded in 1947 by the parishioners of St. Bernadette Church, is located in Silver Spring, MD. Saint Bernadette's aims to educate the child completely, recognizing and nurturing the spiritual, intellectual, personal, social, physical, and cultural development of its students. The teachers realize that parents are the primary educators of their children and work with them for the well being of each child. The parents do an exemplary job of participating by volunteering in excess of 10,000 hours per year. Saint Bernadette's parents and students continue to distinguish themselves year after year, demonstrating that their dedication and commitment is a true formula for success.●

RECOGNITION OF CAROL CURTISS

● Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to fellow Texan Carol Curtiss, who has recently made a truly remarkable and unprecedented achievement. She is a Merchant Mariner who is the first woman ever to earn both a Chief Engineer's license and an unlimited Master's license. The U.S. Coast Guard has determined that she is one of only three merchant mariners in the country to achieve both these distinctions. Those who complete and accomplish the rigorous training and sea time required for gaining such status, are forever known as Master Mariners.

Carol entered the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY in 1976, which was the School's third year accepting women. She was attracted to the Merchant Marine Academy because of her love of travel, a love developed

as a child when her family lived overseas while her father served in the Air Force.

Women normally pursued careers on the deck side. However, Carol strove to be in the engine room, and decided to defy convention and maximize her talents in the Academy's arduous dual license program. Most participants in the dual program focus on a single department, deck or engine, but Carol earned her degree on a variety of technologies. She graduated as a Third Engineer and Third Mate in 1980, with honors.

Soon after, she became a member of the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association and started a long and successful career sailing as both an engineer and mate, on a variety of vessel types. Last year, Carol earned her Master's license, enabling her to captain a ship of any size. This year, she gained entry to an even more elite group when she successfully earned her unlimited Chief Engineer's license.

In addition, Carol and her husband are both volunteer firefighters. At sea, Carol is the on-scene commander during all emergency situations. She felt that if she was accountable for training seamen how to fight fires, it would be best to have firsthand experience, not just training.

Carol has ascended to the pinnacle of her profession after two decades of seafaring, a rare achievement reserved for an exceptional person and first-class marine officer. I congratulate Carol for earning such a high and honorable status in her career and service.●

CALVIN JAMES

● Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, recently our State of Kansas lost a giant within our political system with the unexpected passing of our Republican National Committeeman, Calvin James of Jewell, KS.

All those involved in public service in Kansas, regardless of party, mourn his loss. Calvin James was a textbook study in the pursuit of politics for the public good, not personal gain.

I endeavored to capture what Cal James has meant to his hometown, his State, and our nation and to his family and friends with an article and eulogy published in the Salina Journal last week. I extend the thoughts, prayers and best wishes of Calvin's many friends to Betty, his wife, and to his daughter Susan and her family. I ask the article be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

With the death last week of Republican National Committeeman Calvin James, Jewell, Kansas lost a giant of politics. He is remembered not only for what is good about Kansas politics, but also for what is great about Kansas communities.

For me, Calvin James was a mentor, a friend, my strongest supporter and my sharpest critic. He smoothed the ups and downs of winning and losing. He set a high standard, but he was gentle in reaching for it.

At his funeral Saturday, a warm February afternoon, the Methodist Church in Jewell

overflowed with friends and family from across the state. Among those attending were a sitting governor and two former governors, two U.S. Senators, a Congressman, the Speaker of the House, the Secretary of State, legislators and political officials—a virtual who's who of the contemporary Kansas GOP.

It was the kind of gathering that happens only rarely in rural communities. It signifies the esteem in which Calvin James was held statewide.

Calvin was remembered for commitment to family, to his community and to his state. Quietly, behind the scene with his yellow legal pad, Calvin was a key advisor to governors, senators and congressmen. He believed strongly in the two-party political system and in the role political parties play in good government.

In an era of impersonal media campaigns, he was a people politician. He scouted candidates and recruited precinct committee men and committee women the old fashioned way—by getting in his car and driving from county seat to county seat and talking to people up and down main street.

He worked tirelessly in their campaigns and, once elected, he expected them to remain accountable to grassroots Kansas.

Calvin knew that to get the votes, you first had to count the votes. He was good at it. In his own race for National Committeeman he had the final vote counted exactly—the day before it was taken.

He believed in consensus, in detail and in organizations well run. As Republican Chairman in the first Congressional District of Western and Central Kansas, Calvin made the rounds by car and by phone every two years to build consensus ahead of party elections, which he expected to operate smoothly.

A few years ago in Great Bend, he was challenged by a delegate with different ideas: "This appears to be a railroad operation," the delegate said.

"If it is, I am the conductor," Calvin retorted.

It is a direct result of Calvin's work over three decades that First District Republicans are more activist, more interested and more involved than their counterparts in other parts of the state.

Calvin was born in Jewell and he died there. He left only twice, once as a young man for a job in a larger Kansas community and once to serve in the Army in Korea. On that first job, in a drug store, African Americans were not to be served at the counter. Outraged, Calvin did so anyway—then walked out before he could be fired.

Calvin was once asked if he had considered moving to a larger community. "Why?" he answered. "I have everything I need here."

"Everything" especially included his wife, Betty, and daughter, Susan.

He believed in the worth of Jewell and his family and neighbors and he worked to make the place better. From the school board to the church board, he applied the same energy he applied to politics.

The first stop for every new Methodist minister in Jewell was Calvin James, who "educated" him as to the proper way to draft, present and implement a church budget in order to build consensus and lower controversy.

He brought government officials to Jewell and Beloit to "educate" them on the need for low income housing, elderly housing, rural water infrastructure, highways and, lately, broadband internet capability.

He built James Clothing, with stores in Jewell and Beloit, selling in recent years to his younger partner and protege. He was a self-described "rag merchant."

In retail clothing as in retail politics, there are certain individuals you would rather not see walk through the front door.

Those are the folks, Calvin often said, who you must "smother with the milk of human kindness" in order to make the sale, secure the vote, cement the support.

Calvin James is a textbook study in the pursuit of politics for the public good, not personal gain. He did not get rich at it. He did not use his many connections to those in politics to accrue personal power.

Rather, he used it for the benefit of his community, his state and his nation.

That is a legacy worth renewing as the torch of political leadership passes to a new generation.●

TRIBUTE TO LILLIAN CIUFO

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Lillian Ciufu, a New Jersey resident and distinguished member of the Fort Lee community, who will be honored as Person of the Year by the Fort Lee Rotary Club on March 3, 2002.

Lillian, a resident of River Vale, currently serves as an Executive Director of the Fort Lee Housing Authority. The Housing Authority plays an important role in Fort Lee, a community in New Jersey situated right on the Hudson River, directly across from Manhattan, with limited space but a fast growing population. As Executive Director, Lillian is responsible for operating public housing and administering rent subsidies for hundreds of low-income seniors and families.

Under Lillian's direction, the Fort Lee Housing Authority has enjoyed quite a renaissance. In the past five years that she has been Executive Director, over eight affordable housing projects have been constructed. Additionally, the housing authority has been nationally recognized for operating successful projects such as the Family Self Sufficiency Program, FSS, and an affordable child daycare program. The FSS program is a model which I truly believe all communities should examine closely as they look to solve their housing problems. The program provides career planning, job training, educational opportunities, home ownership opportunities and support services, while honoring personal dignity and one's self worth.

Among other notable distinctions, Lillian also serves as Vice President of Community Revitalization on the Board of trustees of the New Jersey Association of Housing and Redevelopment, a branch of the National Housing Organization, and as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of Heightened Independent and Progress, an agency that serves the disabled.

It is my firm belief that Lillian will continue this fine tradition of community service in the years to come, and will serve with distinction as a tireless advocate on behalf of those in need of housing. As she continues her career as Executive Director of the Fort Lee Housing Authority, I look forward to further recognition of her outstanding work from both the Rotary club and other service organizations.●