

What inspired this outpouring of devotion and array of public displays of affection? A single West Virginia mother, Mrs. Anna Reese Jarvis, is at the heart of this story. Mrs. Jarvis was a minister's daughter. She taught Sunday school in the Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton, WV, for many years, while raising her children and caring for her neighbors in the difficult years following the Civil War.

Mrs. Jarvis's daughter, born in 1864 and also named Anna, was a devoted child. She remained close to her family and especially to her mother. Miss Jarvis graduated from the Female Seminary in Wheeling, WV, and taught in Grafton before moving with her family to Philadelphia, PA. When her mother died in Philadelphia in 1905, Miss Jarvis was deeply affected. She felt that children often neglected to appreciate their mothers enough while their mothers are still alive.

With the help of her friends, in 1907 she initiated a letter-writing campaign urging influential ministers, businessmen and congressmen to declare a national Mother's Day, hoping to increase respect for parents and strengthen family bonds. And such was the power of her message that her grassroots campaign took off, resulting in the national display of familial love that we will see this Sunday.

At that first Mother's Day observance in Grafton, Miss Jarvis supplied carnations to the church because they were her mother's favorite flower. White carnations were chosen because they represented sweetness, purity, and endurance of a mother's love. Over the years, red carnations have become the symbol of a living mother. White carnations now signify that, like Miss Jarvis's mother at the time of the first Mother's Day, one's mother has died.

Though not many people wear flowers these days, Mother's Day is a bonanza for the floral industry, just as it is for restaurants, the phone companies, greeting card companies, and jewelers. It is said that more long distance calls are made on Mother's Day than on any other single day of the year. Though Miss Jarvis might decry some of the more commercial aspects of today's Mother's Day celebrations, I think that she, too, would be pleased that through her efforts, so many people do make the effort to pay their respects and show their affection for their mothers.

We have so much to thank our mothers for, when we consider the enormous expenditure of time and effort that it takes to raise a child properly. Aside from the sometimes grueling routine that many mothers face every day just to stay abreast of regular family maintenance, there are the hours she cheerfully spends ensuring that homework is done, that chores are performed, that piano lessons or sports practices or dance classes are attended, or that cookies are baked and presents wrapped. There are also the loving times that a mother spends with her

children: washing hair, reading bedtime stories, saying prayers, comforting away bad dreams, kissing away hurts, encouraging dreams. It is a wonder that mothers find the time to do any of the other creative things they do, from sewing to scrap-booking, painting to pottery, reading to writing the letters that help to knit families together.

My own dear mother died when I was just a baby. I cannot recall the touch of her hand on my cheek, or the sound of her voice saying "I love you." But her angel face still smiles at me from an old photograph, and in her smile I can see the love that she still bears for me as she waits. No mother ever truly leaves you. Anna Jarvis knew that to be true when she conceived the notion of a national Mother's Day. She would not have us regret failing to show our love and appreciation to our mothers while we can.

I offer my thanks to all mothers on this Mother's Day. To my own mother, I say thank you for giving me life, and for thinking of me and my future even as your own short life was coming to a close. And to the great love of my life, Erma, the mother of my beautiful daughters, I say thank you. Thank you for mothering me even as you mothered our children. Your talent at your chosen career, and your devotion to it, continue to show themselves in the generations of our lovely and loving grandchildren and great grandchildren. If Miss Jarvis had not beaten me to it, my wife Erma certainly has provided ample inspiration for a national Mother's Day.

I close with the words of one of my favorite poems, one that I come back to each Mother's Day. It is called "Rock Me To Sleep," and it was written by Elizabeth Akers Allen (1823-1911).

ROCK ME TO SLEEP

Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight,
Make me a child again just for to-night!
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,
Take me again to your heart as of yore;
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep:
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!
Backward, flow backward, oh, tide of the years!
I am so weary of toil and of tears—
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain—
Take them, and give me my childhood again!
I have grown weary of dust and decay—
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap;
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!
Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,
Mother, O Mother, my heart calls for you!
Many a summer the grass has grown green,
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,
Long I to-night for your presence again.
Come from the silence so long and so deep:
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!
Over my heart, in the days that are flown,
No love like mother-love ever has shone;
No other worship abides and endures—

Faithful, unselfish, and patient like yours:
None like a mother can charm away pain
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.
Slumber's soft calms o'er my heavy lids creep;
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!
Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;
Let it drop over my forehead to-night,
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep:
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!
Mother, dear Mother, the years have been long
Since I last listened your lullaby song:
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,
Never hereafter to wake or to weep;
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT GEORGE S. RENTSCHLER

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to the patriotism and the courage of SSG George Rentschler of Louisville, KY. SSG Rentschler was killed a month ago on April 7, 2004.

While his family, friends and his country mourn the loss of this man, I offer a few words to praise the inestimable value of his sacrifice. In this time of war, my colleagues, we can all expect to hear reports of the tragic loss of life. It would be unrealistic to expect that we can fight a war and not lose lives. SSG Rentschler knew this. And knowing this he went forth into battle for the love of his country.

To serve your country when you know that it might be the cause of your death, involves sacrifice. It means that you are brave, honorable, patriotic, virtuous. It also means that you are willing to make the final sacrifice should the necessity arise. The men and women serving our country, as SSG George Rentschler did, are heroes who are protecting America to preserve our freedoms in these times of continuing terrorist threat across the world.

The death of SSG Rentschler reveals to the world that this man was a true hero who sacrificed for our country. We have lost a man of courage and generosity. He was role model for all of us and will be missed.

ON SECTION 8 RULE CHANGES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, We have all heard of the war on poverty, but I fear that 40 years after that war began, there is a new war afoot, a war on people in poverty. And the latest assault in this war threatens to leave thousands of people homeless. I am speaking about the Bush administration's plan to make substantial changes in the way our Government helps our poorest citizens secure housing.

It is not hyperbole, in my view, to say that this change to the Section 8 voucher program could have disastrous effects. Section 8, administered by the department of Housing and Urban Development, helps nearly 2 million poor families and disabled citizens pay for housing with vouchers that have traditionally covered the full cost of their rent.

But under the rule change, the reimbursements will no longer cover the full costs. As a result, housing authorities around the country will have to cut back on the number of vouchers they offer.

For fiscal year 2005, the President's request shortchanges all housing vouchers now in use by \$1.6 billion and could result in further cuts in the years ahead. This request would also remove key provisions of the Section 8 program that protect families with the lowest incomes, such as maintaining rent payments at 30 percent of a resident's income.

In my home state of Vermont, there are 6,080 authorized vouchers available this year, but Vermont stands to lose 740 of these by next year with the rule change. That translates to a loss of more than \$4 million in housing assistance in Vermont. And this scenario could indeed get worse: it is estimated that my state stands to lose up to 1, 770 housing vouchers by the year 2009.

It is important to remind ourselves that we're not talking about just numbers here. These are families—real families—who will be at risk of not having a place to live.

I recently read in the Washington Post that the Bush administration is making three changes in an effort to "constrain rapid growth in the program's spending." However, the increased demand for Section 8 housing arises because more people need help in our ailing economy.

Every day in our country, working families are forced to turn to emergency shelters and food banks because they cannot afford the high cost of rent, child care and transportation. I believe this change in section 8 will add greatly to those numbers, while undermining our deeply held premise that work leads to self-sufficiency.

Every day we hear the term "working poor," but I'm afraid we do not take the time to fully understand its meaning.

All of this prompts me to ask, once again, where are our nation's priorities? We continue to give out tax breaks to millionaires despite an ever-mounting deficit. We pour billions of dollars into fighting a war in Iraq for which there is no end in sight. And we will be spending billions more—there is another \$25 billion request before us now—to rebuild that country while our own nation's poorest citizens cannot afford housing.

If I may borrow a line from Rita Markley, the executive director of the largest homeless services program in my state, "We've got to remind people that Homeland Security starts with a home."

It is unfortunate that President Bush continues to find fault with a program that has demonstrated such success. As the Congress deliberates the fiscal year 2005 budget, I will continue to work to protect the Section 8 program.

Forty years ago, when President Johnson declared war on poverty, he highlighted this nation's commitment "to pursue victory over the most ancient of mankind's enemies."

I fear that we have lost sight of the enemy, at the expense of those who needed this victory the most.

RECOGNIZING PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD WINNERS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, for the past 5 days, I have paid tribute to the Nation's public servants during Public Service Recognition Week through statements on the floor of the U.S. Senate. As this is the 20th annual celebration of public service, it was fitting to focus the Senate's attention on public servants and issues affecting Federal employees throughout the week.

Today I would like to recognize those Federal, State, and local government programs that received the Public Service Excellence Awards. The Public Service Excellence Awards recognize and commend U.S. programs and employee teams who represent public service at its best. It rewards innovations, raises awareness of exemplary public service, and provides public agencies a showcase for outstanding programs. On May 3, 2004, the Public Employees Roundtable, a nonprofit coalition of organizations representing public employees and retirees, held a Breakfast of Champions to honor the award winners for this year.

This year, the Federal winner was the "Internal Revenue Service (IRS) eLearning Program." As my colleagues on the Governmental Affairs Committee know, training our Federal workforce is one of the most important and most underfunded programs in the Federal Government. Even when training programs are funded, agencies must use innovative techniques to stretch training dollars and apply training funds strategically. The IRS realized that approximately 70 percent of its training budget went toward travel to and from the seminars. As such, eLearning could save the IRS a significant amount of money by converting its training system from a classroom-based to a technology-enhanced learning and performance support environment. In the initial phase of the program, the IRS saved more than \$5 million in travel costs by using the technology for briefings required of all 120,000 employees and courses supporting the 28,000 employees of Customer Call Center Operations. At full implementation, the eLearning strategy is expected to save more than \$50 million in annual travel costs and reduce training time by up to one-third. This innovative program at IRS is an excellent example of the dedicated work and professional excellence of federal employees.

The State winner is the "Work that Matters" campaign by the Montana Education Association and the Montana Federation of Teachers (MEA-MFT). The "Work that Matters" public relations campaign was created in 2003 to prevent the Montana Legislature from freezing salaries of State employees. "Work That Matters" is about putting a face on the people who provide state services and showing them as dedicated, hardworking people, who care about the people they serve.

As my colleagues know, all too often government employees are forced to "tighten their belts" during times of financial difficulties. That trend is no different for State governments across the United States. In Montana, the beginning of the 2003 legislative session had State employees struggling with hiring freezes, layoffs, staff shortages, and salaries far below market value. This public relations program put a face to the government employees who carry out the programs and services that benefit taxpayers, the State legislature realized the importance of public service and passed a pay increase.

This year's local winner was the City of Chicago's "311 Service," which provides a one-stop telephone and online customer service center for all non-emergency city services. It is a comprehensive, high-tech, customer-focused information and response service. Chicago residents can use the system to make service needs known, check on the status of earlier requests, file police reports, and get information on city programs and events. In addition, the 311 service is synchronized with Chicago's 911 emergency service. Such interoperability is commendable because all too often the non-emergency services are overlooked when developing an emergency response system. "Chicago 311" is an innovative and effective way for public employees to serve the community.

The Public Service Roundtable also recognized a non-profit organization, which was founded by a retired federal employee. Scott Dimock and his partner, Sammie Morrison, created Southeast White House community center in Washington, DC which has made an incredible impact on an area troubled by high unemployment, lack of opportunity, and broken promises. Through the use of donated services, time, and money, Southeast White House has developed a mentoring program, a Friends of Children program, a People's House referral service for services throughout the Metropolitan area, and an activities program that includes summer camps, field trips, lessons and programs in a variety of subjects, Mom's Night Out, and weekly community banquets open to all.

In addition, Southeast White House has adopted an elementary school and has developed an intensive mentoring program for at-risk children. More than 100 elementary school children