

The seminal document became a roadmap for county commissioners in the decades to come. Their commitment coupled with behind-the-scenes work by Stowers and others paid off. To date, all but one of the 162 properties flagged in the charette have been purchased, notes Latvala.

Stowers rose to become assistant director of a fledgling environmental management department guiding it through a period of significant growth. "I kind of inherited Jake," said former director Steve Peacock, now with Florida Design Consultants. "It was one of the best things to happen to me and the organization."

The two were involved in the county's aggressive land-buying campaign to acquire lands that would ultimately form the 8,300-acre Brooker Creek Preserve, a vast wilderness area located in the northeast corner of Pinellas County. The land was snatched up in parcels with earliest purchases targeted to protect groundwater quality and waters flowing into Lake Tarpon. Adoption of the county's growth management plan in 1989 encouraged expansion of the conservation lands around that area. A Penny for Pinellas sales tax and state Preservation 2000 funds provided additional funds.

"Once we had the land, we needed to let people come in and the concept of environmental education centers evolved," Stowers says. "It was the commitment of the county commissioners to build these that became instrumental in passing the second penny tax."

"He's a rainmaker," says former County Commissioner Sallie Parks. "Jake was always good at understanding where there were areas for compromise."

Most weekends find Stowers out on the water. Fort DeSoto and Weedon Island are favorite boating destinations, but the quiet stretches of Tampa Bay's Braden and Hillsborough rivers hold special charms. "I can take a fly rod and popping bug or a spider and catch bluegill all day," says Stowers.

Fishing is a family affair, exercised every chance they get. Stowers recalls a trip deep into the Alaskan wilderness where the family spent time with Apabaskan Indians, whose poverty failed to dim their joy for the land and fishing. "We try to build those kind of cultural experiences in whenever we can," he says.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers go out to all those affected by the devastating destruction of Hurricane Katrina. I know that the American people are a generous people. I know that the men and women of this Nation feel the suffering of their fellow citizens, and will continue to stand with them in any way that they can.

We are here today to discuss what our government must do in the wake of this disaster. The emergency appropriations bill set to be passed this afternoon is a step in the right direction. Everyone in this chamber realizes that more money—much more—will be needed in the days and months ahead. I'm confident that

this Congress won't think twice about doing everything necessary to meet the critical needs of the desperate citizens in the affected regions of our country.

The shock and grief which has rightly motivated this degree of Federal support is, however, already giving way to anger. Over the past 4 years, a great portion of our national discourse has focused on preparedness. Members of Congress have created new government entities, spent billions upon billions of dollars on them, and spoken at great length about the need for our country to be perpetually vigilant and always ready to respond to any disaster which could befall it.

It is therefore not surprising that the loss of life produced by this hurricane—perhaps four times as great as the human cost of September 11, 2001—has incensed our citizens and shocked observers around the world. It has revealed that we are still unable to respond to homeland disasters in the fast and aggressive manner required.

But as is often the case, what has happened in the Gulf States has also revealed what can only be described as a skewed set of national priorities. Simply put, this was a tragedy which didn't have to happen. People at all levels of government have known for years that New Orleans was a greatly vulnerable city. In fact, in 2001, the Federal Emergency Management Agency produced a list of the worst disasters which could confront our country. A hurricane striking New Orleans was at the top of that list.

And so, it would be reasonable to expect that during the years leading up to this past week, local, State, and Federal Governments would have been doing everything within their power to prepare a complete and carefully planned strategy for how to deal with the aftermath of such an event.

They didn't. It was obvious that we still are not ready to evacuate a large number of people from their homes to safety quickly and effectively. This failing is a danger to all Americans, and must be corrected immediately.

But what is worse, our government spent the last few years actually undermining our readiness for disaster prevention in New Orleans and the surrounding region. Federal funds for flood control projects in that city have faced massive recent budget cuts. To cite but one example: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which has so valiantly struggled against the rising floodwaters this week, had to struggle previously against an 80 percent cut of its funding for New Orleans in 2004. Predictably, one of the major motivators of cuts like these was the spiraling costs of American military operations in Iraq, which continue to siphon off tens of billions of dollars from domestic programs.

The natural defenses of New Orleans faced an assault as well. In 2003, the current Administration reversed a previous commitment to defending coastal wetlands which would have helped to mitigate the effect of storms on the Gulf coast. Instead, the areas were opened up for rapid development.

Nor were the people of the region given the tools they needed for survival. Poverty in America has been increasing year after year. Now, 12.7 percent of our population lives in poverty—that's four million more people than in 2001. As is overwhelmingly obvious, those damaged the most by Hurricane Katrina were some of our country's poorest citizens. Before

the storm hit, they were out of direct communication with authorities. They had no means to evacuate themselves or their families. And during the critical hours when wealthier residents were fleeing, the poorest were left alone to fend for themselves.

It is true that the devastation vested upon New Orleans and the Gulf region was the product of an act of nature. But its severity was greatly exacerbated by a combination of a lack of vision by our leaders and a failure to properly prioritize our Nation's energies and resources. Despite all the talk to the contrary, our government has viewed elective foreign wars as more important than having a real system in place here at home which can respond to any contingency. It hasn't seriously worked to address the poverty which makes millions of people all the more vulnerable to disasters. And it has seen commercial activity as simply being more valuable than defending the naturally existent barriers to disaster which we should be perfectly willing to save.

If anything positive can come from this, I hope it's a wake up call. This week, our failures had horrific consequences for millions of people, and they were especially devastating for just those men and women our society should be focused on the most: the poor, the elderly, the sick, the needy, the displaced, and the homeless. We must meet these serious problems head on and work to solve them. Our errors should not be covered up with political grand standing and slaps on the back. This failure must not be swept under the rug. If we don't learn from this horrible, horrible mistake, I fear we will repeat it, at a new point in time, and at a new place on the map.

This Congress must do what is right for the people of this Nation. They will be watching.

CONGRATULATIONS TO WANDA SAMEK

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Wanda Samek on her installation as President of the National Society of Accountants. Entering into this role serves as a symbol of Mrs. Samek's ongoing devotion and commitment to the organization.

During her affiliation with the National Society of Accountants, Mrs. Samek has held numerous leadership positions, chairing various committees and task forces. In addition, she has received multiple honors, such as being named Accountant of the Year in 1994, winning the Golden Quill Award in 1998, and the President's Award in 2003. For her tireless service and dedication, Mrs. Samek was presented in 1996 with the Society's most prestigious accolade, the Distinguished Service Award.

Within her new role as president, Mrs. Samek will provide leadership to the National Society of Accountants by serving as chairman of the organization's Board of Directors and its Executive Committee which is responsible for monitoring and implementing investment policy. During her tenure, she will also be presiding over many meetings of the association. In addition, she will deliver the annual message of the National Society to its National Council of Delegates, providing them

with an update on the organization's progress and growth.

It is with great honor that I stand here today and recognize Wanda Samek. Her inauguration as president of the National Society of Accountants is a testament to her commitment to the association and her professional career. I am honored to congratulate a constituent from my district on attaining this well-deserved position.

RECOGNIZING JEREMY CHRISTOPHER WOOD FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Christopher Wood of Kansas City, Missouri, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout. Jeremy will receive his Eagle at a Court of Honor on September 18 at Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Jeremy has been involved with scouting he has earned numerous merit badges and has served in leadership positions within his troop.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremy Christopher Wood for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. It is an honor to represent Eagle Scout Wood in the United States Congress.

CONGRATULATING THE SRI CHINMOY MARATHON TEAM

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team for their organization and participation of the World Harmony Run 2005.

Commencing April 16, the World Harmony Run seeks to advance international camaraderie through bringing together runners from more than seventy countries and all fifty states. The goal of this event is to promote genuine goodwill and understanding of cultures through a 10,000 mile trek that will come to an end on August 14th. This event was inspired by Sri Chinmoy in 1987 through his vision of sport as a means of furthering international harmony.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the participants of the World Harmony Run 2005. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute the diligent work of the many volunteers involved in World Harmony Run 2005 and the members of the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, on September 6, 2005, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall votes numbered 454 and 455. Rollcall vote 454 was on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to, H. Res. 360, commemorating the 60th anniversary of V-J Day and the end of World War II in the Pacific. Rollcall vote 455 was on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to, S.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution calling upon the President to issue a proclamation recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 454 and 455.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3645 to provide emergency supplemental appropriations to meet the immediate needs arising from the consequences of Hurricane Katrina. But more importantly, I rise today in support of the hundreds of thousands of men, women and children who are suffering throughout the Gulf Coast States as a result of what has been called our Nation's greatest natural disaster, Hurricane Katrina. I know I speak for all of my colleagues when I say our prayers are with each and everyone of them as they struggle through these extremely difficult and life threatening times.

The supplemental legislation we are approving today is absolutely critical to continue the infusion of federal funding into this area. News agencies have reported the cost of this disaster to be around \$500 million a day. The \$10.5 billion in federal funding we are approving today should be viewed as a down payment in terms of funding and resources to come in the following months. I am confident these resources will be used efficiently and effectively, helping those most in need and importantly, helping to support emergency protective measures as well as debris removal and rehabilitation.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency should be recognized for its response to this disaster and their organization of food, water, medical supplies, generators, shelter and other items to help those who have been displaced due to Hurricane Katrina. And the Department of Defense and National Guard should be recognized for the deployment of military personnel who are helping communities respond to this crisis.

I know personally that every State is pooling their resources and is doing all it can to help these victims in the Gulf Coast area. For example in my home State of Delaware, we have deployed National Guard troops and

planes to help at Ground Zero and in the surrounding disaster areas; Delaware State University is waiving tuition for Tulane University students to attend class; my office is working with the Food Bank of Delaware to start a Hunger Drive for those in need; local schools are collecting monetary donations to send to the victims; and, Delmarva Power is sending workers to restore electricity in the region. But I am confident we can reach even deeper and partner together to help our fellow Americans.

It is always in times of tragedy—like the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 or the Tsunami this past December in Southeast Asia—where human decency and patriotism is front and center. We need to muster the same resources and patriotism and provide the same help to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

I am hopeful the Federal Government will continue to respond in a way that is appropriate, action oriented and immediate to the Gulf Coast Region. As I have said, the funding we are approving today, is just the beginning. I expect a more comprehensive package to reach the House Floor in the coming weeks, once more precise estimates are understood.

These are very sad and trying times. May God Bless those in need and their families.

FRANCHISING APPRECIATION DAY

HON. RICHARD H. BAKER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome over 300 franchisee, franchisor, and franchise supplier members of the International Franchise Association who are visiting Washington on September 13 as part of "Franchise Appreciation Day," the IFA's annual fly-in to the Nation's Capital.

As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the IFA is the world's oldest and largest trade association representing the franchise community with a membership roster that includes more than 1,000 franchisors, 8,000 franchisees and 400 suppliers.

Franchising is a driving force of our economy and generates \$1.53 trillion in economic output and one-of-every-seven jobs in the Nation's private-sector economy, according to a study conducted for the IFA Educational Foundation by PricewaterhouseCoopers. The "Economic Impact of Franchised Businesses" study found that there are more than 760,000 franchised small businesses in the U.S., generating more than 18 million jobs.

Those statistics are impressive enough on their own, but of particular concern and interest to me is the initiative the International Franchise Association has taken to help our veterans move from their service in the armed forces into the world of franchise ownership. Through the Veterans Transition Franchise Initiative, commonly known as "VetFran," 360 veterans have been assisted in purchasing their own franchise small business, and 120 more are in various stages of negotiation.

VetFran was established by Don Dwyer, the late founder of The Dwyer Group and an IFA leader, during Operation Desert Storm. It was re-initiated following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The program requires that participating franchisors offer veterans their "best deal" through discounts or other incentives that are determined by each company,