

Service, an organization of 36 religious denominations united together to relieve poverty and aid in social and economic development. I applaud Oregonians participating in local Crop Walks and am very pleased to see so many faith groups coming together to support food programs that provide relief to families in our community and around the world.

Events like Crop Walks are a vital link in the chain of services—public and private—that provide for the most needy in our Nation and the working poor that struggle to make ends meet each month. There are also several pieces of important Congressional legislation that would move our Nation closer to resolving the challenge of food insecurity and hunger. The Hunger Free Communities Act (H.R. 2717) sets a goal of ending hunger by the year 2015 along with establishing grant programs that would support local food programs and improve the coordination of Federal, State and local nutrition services. The Stop Senior Hunger Act (H.R. 1792), which renews the federal commitment to locally-administered programs like Meals on Wheels and congregate meal programs at local senior centers, is another important component in tackling hunger by targeting the vulnerable senior population. Finally, common sense measures like the Relief Trucking Tax Credit Act (H.R. 1954), which would give transportation and trucking companies a 25-cent/mile tax credit for volunteering trucks and drivers to transfer charitably donated food for hunger relief efforts, will help more food reach those in need. Because hunger is a problem that can take a variety of faces and forms in communities around the country, resolving it requires a variety of approaches. For this reason, I am proud to be a cosponsor of each of these measures and am hopeful that when they are combined with efforts like the Crop Walk that hunger and food insecurity will be a challenge that we overcome once and for all.

I urge my colleagues to support these sound legislative endeavors, and join me in highlighting the outstanding work of participants of Crop Walks occurring throughout Oregon.

HONORING ALVINA KENNEDY ON
THE OCCASION OF HER 75TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, as my mother approaches her 75th birthday, I would like to share with my colleagues what a wonderful encouragement and inspiration she has been to me, my family and so many others.

Alvina Dorothy Weber was born to Raymond and Helen Weber and graduated from high school in Benson, Minnesota. Her family had earlier lived for a time on a farm near Harold, South Dakota. Growing up on the frontier gave her a thankful heart for the many blessings we enjoy as Americans and a determination to make the most of those blessings. Her father Ray was of German Heritage and ran the local Sinclair service station in Benson. Her mother Helen was a Page whose English ancestors arrived in Hingham, Massachusetts in the mid-1600s.

I remember getting together with the Weber family gathering during the Christmas holidays and Ray and Helen giving each of their children—Phyllis, Kenneth, Donald, Robert and my mother—a nativity set that has formed the centerpiece of our family's Christmas decorations for the decades that followed.

My mother worked at the hospital in Benson where I was born and married my father Eugene Thomas Kennedy, a graduate of the high school in nearby Murdock. After a short period living in Hunter, North Dakota, when my oldest sister Monica was born, they returned to Murdock where my father worked at the Murdock State Bank. We lived in a home built by my grandparents, Charles and Rose Kennedy, right across the street from the Sacred Heart Church. It was in that house that my siblings Nancy, Steven, Peggy and I began our lives and in that church that my parents had us baptized. It was a grand old house with a fine porch, where we would often gather on summer days. I fondly remember peeking through the railings of the stairs and watching my parents visit with company when we were supposed to be in bed, riding my tricycle on the sidewalk and playing in our sandbox. My last memory of living in Murdock was when my mother gathered all of us children around the yellow-topped kitchen table to tell us that we were moving for the opportunity of a better job for my father. My father could have earned more money in the Cities, but my parents wanted to raise their children in the country, where neighbors really knew each other and cared about each other.

While living at our new home in the country just outside of Pequot Lakes, Minnesota where my parents still reside, she brought the final of her seven children—David and Neil—into the world. My mother took her parenting responsibilities very seriously. She would regularly sit all of us children down in the living room and read us newspaper clippings so we knew how the things she and my dad taught us applied to the world around us. She still sends me clippings regularly I and calls to make sure that I am reading them.

She taught us to care. We would all line up by the front door on the first day of school to take a picture with our new “back to school” clothes. Every year, she told each of us to be on the look out for children that were new to the school. She encouraged us to reach out to them and make them feel welcome.

She taught us how to share. If there was only one brownie left and two children, she let one child cut it in half and the other get the first pick as to which half to choose. She and my father encouraged us as children to contribute to charities of our choice, particularly during the holiday season.

She taught us responsibility and to hold ourselves to high standards, in part through our 4-H projects whether it be weeding the garden or caring for livestock—Hereford cattle in my case, chickens in the case of my sister. She would get very frustrated when other children misbehaved and their parents responded, “My Johnnie wouldn’t do that.” She made it clear to us that in our case, she would consider us guilty until proven innocent if anyone called her about our behavior. If we tried to get permission to do some activity based on some other child being allowed to do so, she would reply, “Is his last name Kennedy?”

The feeding, caring and guiding of seven children was more than a full time job. She

dedicated her life to that task. My mother has many positive qualities. Among those qualities is the ability to put on a great meal. A positive side effect of my sister raising chickens was that we had chicken dinner nearly every Sunday. My mother makes the best chicken gravy and the best brownies. Our normal meal when we had company was Swedish meat balls, which always baffled me since no one in our family had a drop of Swedish blood. In any case, they were always tasty.

She taught us to persevere. I started out with Little League when I was young and found that I really wasn’t as good as the town boys that played a lot more growing up than I did. I was having difficulty fitting in with the group of boys that were largely strangers to me and certainly better ball players. She said that it was OK for me not to go out for baseball the next year, but that Kennedys were not quitters. She would not let me quit, a lesson that has stuck with me throughout my life.

She and my father have always been strong in their faith and have taken every opportunity to engender the light of faith in their children and grandchildren. We never missed mass, often prayed together and are still regularly reminded of our overriding mission to serve God’s Will, not our own. My mother is a very active volunteer at St. Alice Catholic Church and encouraged my father to help lead the effort to build a larger church building. To encourage our good behavior during services, we were rewarded by being able to buy two cents worth of candy at the penny candy case at Pfeiffer’s drug store if we behaved. We could have anything we wanted as long as it totaled two cents.

My parents spent time together in their early years in Rural Youth and were big fans of 4-H. To give their children the same opportunities, my mother spearheaded forming a 4-H club, which to me was critical since I met my wife Debbie in 4-H. As the prime leader of the Pelican Lakes 4-H Club, it grew to the largest and most active in the county. My mother would regularly be on the lookout for young people that needed positive influences in their lives and pulled them into the 4-H club to provide those influences.

My parents valued education highly. My mother encouraged my father’s participation as a school board member for 27 years at Pequot Lakes Public High School, where my father helped lead the effort to build a new school complex. We would regularly hear my mother pass on her advice to our father on issues before the school board.

As an insurance agent in the local bank and homemaker, my mother and father got all seven of us children through college, our family’s first generation of college grads. All seven of us earned degrees at St. John’s University or the College of St. Benedict. They gave us \$500 a year for four years, not five—four, and taught us how to work so we could earn the rest.

Even though my parents had never been to Europe, my mother really encouraged us to participate in the international exchange programs at college, and contributed an extra \$500 to defray part of the costs if we did. Debbie and I were blessed to be able to welcome my mother and father to Europe for the first time and tour them around for three weeks when I was participating in an exchange program in graduate school in the Netherlands. My mother really wanted us to

understand other cultures, but remained convinced that America is the greatest nation the world has ever known.

Seeing how much government impacted our lives, my mother served as the treasurer for a friend from church who ran for the Minnesota House of Representatives and won. She worked endlessly for his campaign and regularly marshaled the family for lit drops. As her children left the nest, she spent an increasing amount of time volunteering for the Republican Party and its candidates. We attended our first party conventions for the 1978 election, a watershed year for Minnesota Republicans. She was selected as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in New York City in 2004. I will always cherish the time I was able to spend with my mother and father during that convention.

There is so much more that I could share about how big of an impact my mother has had on my life and countless others. She has worked selflessly throughout her life for others, volunteering for church, 4-H, Party or community activities, driving others to the hospital or clinic, never asking anything in return. She is devoted to her seven children and twenty-seven grandchildren and regularly visits their school events.

I suppose every child has a special moment with their parent that they will always remember. Mine is talking with my mother when I was having trouble fitting in at school during my youth. She sat down beside me and shared the story of her own life and how at a young age she came to the conclusion that she was no better than anyone else, but that no one else was better than her. That understanding of the inherent equality of worth of all individuals served to help her confidence and mine.

Although I fervently believe in the equality of all people, any honest appraisal would have to agree that the impact my mother has had on this earth during her first 75 years has truly been exceptional. May her positive influence extend for decades to come.

HONORING THE VISIT OF TAIWANESE PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the citizens of Taiwan and to welcome their democratically elected President, Chen Shui-bian, to the United States of America.

As you know, Taiwan has been a friend and stalwart ally of the United States for over 50 years. Together we have opposed communism and supported the principles of freedom and democracy. Our nations have worked together to fight terror in Iraq and Afghanistan, poverty in Africa and adversity worldwide.

Through this relationship, our countries have seen strengthened political and economic ties leading to mutual prosperity. Today, Taiwan is our nation's eighth largest trading partner and a valuable advocate for free trade and democracy in the Asian Pacific region and beyond. Strengthening the relationship and expanding

cooperation between the United States and the Republic of China in Taiwan should remain a national priority.

Mr. Speaker, because of President Chen Shui-bian's continued dedication to the American-Taiwanese alliance, I ask all Members of the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing his visit to the United States.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 22, 2005 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 27

10 a.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 1701, to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to improve the reclamation of abandoned mines, and S. 961, to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to reauthorize and reform the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program.

SD-366

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine assessing progress in the Federal government regarding alternative personnel systems, focusing on systems to learn where personnel systems have been successfully employed and what steps have been taken in their development to ensure effective implementation and operation.

SD-342

2:30 p.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine housing-related programs for the poor, focusing on existing challenges in measuring improper rent subsidy payments in housing assistance programs at HUD, as well as Federal oversight of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

SD-342

SEPTEMBER 28

9:30 a.m.

Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the role of science in environmental policy making.

SD-406

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To resume hearings to examine issues relating to recovering from Hurricane Katrina, focusing on the needs of those displaced, today and tomorrow.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine S. 1334, to provide for integrity and accountability in professional sports, and S. 1114, to establish minimum drug testing standards for major professional sports leagues.

SH-216

11:30 a.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-366

2 p.m.

Judiciary

Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine whether there is more consolidation or new choices for consumers regarding video competition in 2005.

SD-226

Energy and Natural Resources

Public Lands and Forests Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the grazing programs of the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, including proposed changes to grazing regulations, and the status of grazing permit renewals, monitoring programs and allotment restocking plans.

SD-366

2:30 p.m.

Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian housing.

SR-485

SEPTEMBER 29

9:30 a.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Investigations Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the effectiveness and cost of the Defense Travel System of the Department of Defense.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine communications for first responders in disaster.

SD-562

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine proposed Duck Valley Reservation, Shoshone Paiute Tribes, Water Rights Settlement.

SR-485

3:30 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To receive a closed briefing regarding the evolving NATO role in Afghanistan.

S-407, Capitol

OCTOBER 6

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. military strategy and operations in Iraq.

SD-106