

Oh, I know, I'm an unlikely champion of gay rights. I'm a Marine Vietnam vet who has deep regrets about that war—mostly I regret that we didn't kill twice as many of those totalitarian murderers. I hope we do better in Iraq.

I believe the “out-now crowd” are racists who think the Iraqis are too inferior to deserve democracy. Or they don't care, as long as America is defeated and George Bush embarrassed.

I worked hard to defeat John Kerry last November, and will do so again, if he runs.

And I'm a death penalty advocate who thinks we should run it like a barbershop—two chairs, no waiting.

As a member of the Massachusetts Senate, I regularly voted against increasing the state budget more than any other senator.

And don't get me started on guns. I'm not for mandatory concealed carry, but I do think fondly of how polite folks were in the days when gentlemen wore swords.

Living in Madison, I feel a certain kinship with the Israeli ambassador to Baghdad. While I think of myself as a centrist Republican with a libertarian bent, to the average Progressive Dane voter, I'm a fascist pig.

So how did I become a supporter of gay rights?

In 1973, Massachusetts State Rep. Barney Frank had filed bills prohibiting employment and housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The bills came before a committee on which I served. There were a lot of jokes and nudging going on—this was the early '70s. Appearing to testify was a bright and charming woman, Elaine Nobel, who would later serve as a state representative herself. Elaine convinced me that supporting Barney's bills was the right thing to do. I told the chairman, Sen. Allen McKinnon, to record me in favor of them.

The bills received a favorable report—but no one in the committee's Democratic majority was willing to carry (be floor manager) for them. So, my back up, I volunteered.

The Republican floor leader had a minor stroke when he learned I was carrying gay rights bills. He had only seven Republicans out of 40 senators. I was 27, single and holding a seat I'd won by nine votes out of 60,000 cast. The common wisdom was that I was a one-term wonder who caught the incumbent senator vulnerable but couldn't be re-elected.

I suspect that I may have been the first legislator in the country to speak for gay rights on the floor of a state legislature. McKinnon spoke for the bills after me. On the roll call, only six senators voted in favor—McKinnon, four other Democrats and myself. And the bills were dead that year.

But I won the next election by 10,000 votes, carrying every city and town in my working-class Democratic district. More legislators decided that supporting anti-discrimination was a safe thing to do. Today, it's the law in Massachusetts—which strangely doesn't seem to have collapsed because of it or because of the gay marriage decision there last year.

Trust me, no true heterosexual wakes up and thinks, hey, I'm really angry with my partner. I think I'll try dating someone from my own gender from now on.

So who is destroying traditional marriage in America?

How about men—and increasingly women—abusing their spouses? How about the heterosexual trend toward infidelity, led by the example of our highest elected leaders? How about men fathering and then abandoning children to poverty and state support? How about a large number of straight people deciding serial marriage and divorce is a cool lifestyle?

Doing something about those trends would really protect marriage.

IN HONOR OF RICHARD WALTER

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Richard Walter on his retirement from more than 36 years of dedicated service to the State of Missouri. Richard Walter distinguished himself in Missouri by his commitment to improving the lives of citizens in this great State.

On December 31, 2005, Richard will retire as District Engineer for MoDOT's District 7. The leadership he provided during his time with the department was crucial to the success of several projects currently moving forward in the 7th Congressional District. Just a few of the projects Richard spent his time advocating include the completion of MO 249, commonly known as the Range Line By-Pass, building four lanes of U.S. Highway 71 south from Joplin to the Missouri-Arkansas border, and completing four lanes of MO Highway 13 north of Springfield to Kansas City. These major projects are vitally important to the economic growth and quality of life in southwest Missouri. The citizens of southwest Missouri owe a great deal of gratitude to Richard for his efforts to advance these projects.

I congratulate Richard on his accomplishments during his tenure with the Missouri Department of Transportation and wish him the best in his retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATRICIA A. KANE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a tremendous amount of sadness that I report to the House on the passing of a gentle woman whose strength of character served her community and the Democratic party in my hometown of South Buffalo, NY, with tremendous honor and distinction. More importantly, she was a woman of valor—a wife, mother, and grandmother of extraordinary stature, and someone who will be missed for generations to come.

Born Patricia Ann Doyle, Pat Kane was, simply put, a legendary figure in Democratic politics for decades. Pat and her husband, Donald F. Kane—another legendary figure and mentor to many of my contemporaries—were part of a large extended family that, along with leaders like former county and State Chairman Joe Crangle and families like the Crotts, Dillons, Keanes, Mahoneys, Whalens and many others, ruled South Buffalo politics from the 1960's to well into the 1990's.

Former House Speaker Thomas P. “Tip” O'Neill is often quoted as saying that “politics ain't beanbag,” and that statement goes double for the rough and tumble world of South Buffalo politics. Pat Kane was a strong leader, who was no shrinking violet; she was an integral player in many important races over the

years, and her absence will be felt for many years to come. Through her gentle example and moral leadership, she made so many of us so much better than we otherwise would have been. She had the guts to say what was on her mind and the integrity to get away with it.

On a more personal level, Pat Kane's graciousness and generosity extended beyond her family to a wide yet close circle of neighbors, classmates, friends and the friends of her six children, of which I was honored to be included. Having attended school with her son, Patrick Timothy, I will always hold the warmest of kind feelings and blessing of happy memories having been a guest in the Kane home many times. Once given, Pat Kane's hospitality and her genuine interest in you could never be forgotten. I am also proud to note that Pat Kane's eldest daughter, Bonnie Kane Lockwood, is a member of my district staff. Bonnie and I have worked together since my initial election to the Buffalo Common Council in 1987, and I am fortunate to have her working with me, because Bonnie possesses both the intellect and the political acumen one would expect from Don and Pat Kane's daughter, and my constituents and I are blessed to have her service on a daily basis.

Pat Kane loved her family, loved her community, and loved the Democratic party, and her influence is seen in the many young women who have become active in local politics over the past several years. I am a better person for having known Pat Kane, and our community is better for her tireless service to it.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, November 26, a cold and snowy morning in South Buffalo, Pat Kane left St. Teresa's Catholic Church on Seneca Street toward her final resting place.

Before doing so, her daughter Bonnie delivered a stirring eulogy that was extraordinary in both its content and its delivery. With the House's consent, I want to close my remarks with Bonnie's words from the Mass of Christian Burial celebrating the life of Patricia Ann Kane.

EULOGY OF PATRICIA A. DOYLE KANE

(By Veronica Bonnie Kane Lockwood)

On behalf of our Dad, Don Kane—and the entire Kane Klan—I want to thank Fr. Paul Seil for celebrating the new life of Patricia Ann Kane this morning and for being with us as that new life began. Our cousin, Fr. Paul has been with us so many times before—weddings, christenings—but his finest moment may have been in Room 8—ICD—8th Floor Mercy Hospital Monday, Nov. 21 at 3 p.m., when, surrounded by her loving family—Fr. Paul stepped to my Mother's side and helped her cross over and help us to accept the cross of missing her—knowing she is with us always.

We also know she is with God and—by now; my guess is God has received his first hand-delivered letter from Mrs. Kane. While I cannot imagine the exact contents of the letter—I am confident a couple of dollars were enclosed.

Thank you to all the Clergy here who celebrate my Mother's life—my Mother was a part of your lives too. And, of course, we thank the Sisters of Mercy for being such an important part of my Mother's life—“Pat Kane lived Mercy, taught Mercy and was Mercy”—and we thank the St. Thomas Aquinas Rosary and Altar Society for providing the honor guard this morning.

Thank you Fr. Mitka for welcoming her and all the Kane's back to St. Teresa's—St.

Teresa's was My Dad's parish for more than 70 years—A Navaho boy—he bought a four-bedroom house all the way across the street on Pawnee Parkway before they were married—and St. Teresa's became Mom's parish too! As with so many things in our parent's lives and loves together—Mom made it her own—she is rightly remembered for her leadership and involvement in so much of St. Teresa's history—Msgr. Toomey's Golden Jubilee, the first St. Teresa's Restoration campaign—with Fr. Berg—another success as we can see.

Mom and Dad organized the hot dog concession for the Annual Comeback Run and I know people came back—for Mom's brownies—which she would offer with every hot dog sold! She was a lecturer for many years—so standing here—where she stood many times before—feels very right.

Our family thanks all of you here today. We know you share our loss—one of my great friends said “thanks for sharing your Mom with me.” There was no choice—My Mother's life was and her legacy will be about sharing. Her devotion to countless classmates and neighbors, her friends and the friends of her children was imbedded into her very being—it was not what she did—it was who she was!

She gave of herself—listening, organizing, collecting for a worthy cause, her talents—singing Danny Boy—always a favorite, fashion show commenting, the wearing of the hats, the baking of the brownies, the donating of the dollars—(in fact, we realize our true inheritance is all the good she did—because her money went to so many of you here today—a dollar here, five dollars there—that really adds up, you know).

She gave her heart—when she had her heart attack in 1994—her grandson, James—just a little guy then—said—Gram's heart hurts—because she loves too much—and now, all of our hearts hurt because we loved her so much.

And we have to hurt—but we also must give thanks! If that fact escaped any of our attention—it was Thanksgiving Day when the Buffalo News printed her beautiful picture and life story.

We give thanks for Patricia Doyle born almost 76 years ago to Mike and Gert Doyle of South Park Avenue. At 14, her world would be forever changed by the death of her father—she would have go to work at Cecil's dress shop every day after class at her beloved Mt. Mercy Academy to help make ends meet—and dreams of college and a teaching career were ended.

Her life was not to be an easy one—but she made it easy for all of us. She was not a teacher by trade—but our greatest teacher by example—she became a legal secretary where many a Judge and co-worker told us—they worked for Mrs. Kane. She would always say the greatest gift you can give your child is to teach them empathy—understanding the feeling of others—and oh, how she understood.

We give thanks for Patricia Doyle whose goodness and beauty caught the eye and heart of a young man named Donald F. Kane—56 years ago—husband and wife for 52 years—wonderful parents and best friends whose mutual respect for each other made them even more successful as individuals. We strive to be better husbands and wives, better parents and friends—better at whatever we do in the workplace—because of their example.

We give thanks for the best Mother and Mother-in-Law, making us each feel special as individuals but showing us nothing is more important than family. Mom to six, Mother-in-Law to five, Grandma Kano to 14, Sis to two brothers whom she loved so much, a Sister-in-Law who became a good friend and confidant, a Cousin who became an older

sister, Aunt Pat to many and ‘Chubby Cheeks’ to some.

Our Mother always said, “Make a Difference in this World.” And we give thanks for the difference she made in all of our lives.

We give thanks to a woman ahead of her time who was always a lady—a politically savvy partner with my Dad—a politically active person on her own—she knew who she was and what she stood for, stayed loyal when it would have been easier to bend, a truth teller—even when we on the receiving end did not always ask for it or want to hear it when it was given—She never had a driver's license—but how she drove us all to be better than we otherwise would have been—A special friend said—“she had the guts to say whatever was on her mind and the integrity to get away with it.”

We give thanks for her words—left to us to read, remember, treasure and share. Before there was E-Mail there was “Mom-mail!” Can you imagine the discipline (which I do not have) it took to put paper in the typewriter—with not an insert or delete button in sight—and type out her thoughts to you perfectly—perhaps include an article she clipped or currency for a special treat—what was better than knowing you got a letter from Mom, Grandma Kano, Aunt Pat or Mrs. Kane.

Let me restate that—not all letters brought good news—some brought “constructive criticism,” some brought fashion tips including Dr. Scholl's footpads for all of us before a family wedding.

Words were my Mother's actions and her strength. Her own experiences were an endless well of hope and faith, a simple, powerful reminder that you were not alone!

We give thanks for my Mother's love of holidays—and how she helped us get through our first Thanksgiving without her physically present—yet her presence filled the day. We were at my house—watching football, taking the kids to St. Tommy's gym, making fun of me being in the kitchen—and after dinner—Gramps called us together and—told the Grandkids how Grandma Kano talked about what she wanted to do for them for Christmas this year. And of course what she talked about doing—she did—and so—

Gramps called each of them by name and gave them an envelope from Grandma. Tears and thanks were followed by lots of stories and reading from a few of her letters—it is only right to leave you with the words of Patricia Kane—I will read the words but it is her voice I know that you will hear.

“Keep doing what you think is right and realize that not everyone will agree with you. Put a smile on your face—even in the darkest of days, you found Mom with a smile throughout her whole life. Smiles make everyone feel good—yourself and the one to whom the smile is given. God Bless You—keep your head high and your mind ever working and your spirit with God, He will help you every step of the way—I am proof positive of that statement—I love you today and always.”

Thank You Mom—We love you today and always!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from Washington on Tuesday, December 6, 2005. As a result, I was not re-

corded for rollcall votes No. 609, No. 610 and No. 611. Had I been present, I would have voted aye on rollcall No. 609, No. 610 and No. 611.

IN MEMORY OF GURDEV SINGH SANDHU

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was recently informed of the passing of Gurdev Singh Sandhu at the young age of 62. I would like to extend my sympathies to his family and friends. He is survived by his wife Jaswant Kaur Sandhu, whom he married in 1974, his daughters Samreet and Ramneek, his son Sanmeet, his son-in-law Jason Pavlak, and his grandson London Singh Pavlak.

Gurdev Singh Sandhu was a very passionate supporter of Sikh freedom. He came to this country at age 18 and attended Wayne State University. He worked at many careers, including working as an engineer at Motown Records, working at DEA, employment as an engineer at General Dynamics, and a Quality Manager at Thyssen-Krupp Budd Company. He even had a couple of businesses of his own. He was very involved with his children, helping with homework, coaching Little League Baseball, teaching them to ride a bike, and so many other activities. He designed the house where he and his wife lived.

In his last few years, Gurdev Singh Sandhu had learned to play golf, worked in his garden, was active at a local gym, and worked in his yard and on various home-improvement projects. He had recently built a deck and designed his new garage.

Gurdev Singh Sandhu was a strong supporter of the cause of Sikh freedom and the Sikh homeland, Khalistan. He had hoped to live to see Khalistan free. Hopefully, even though he won't be around to see it, this dream will be achieved in very short order.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my condolences to Mr. Sandhu's family and friends and I know that the Members of this House join me in that. May God bless him.

IN TRIBUTE TO MRS. EDITH A. GRAY, DISTINGUISHED CONEYUH COUNTY EDUCATOR

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the long service of a distinguished Conecuh County citizen who has contributed to the education of many in Southeast Alabama. Mrs. Edith A. Gray, who turned 95 this year, is truly an inspiration of community service.

A native of Galveston, Texas, Mrs. Gray received her educational training in 1940 at Tuskegee Institute. Already teaching even before she obtained her B.S. degree, Mrs. Gray dedicated over four decades of her life to educating others at Conecuh County Training School.