

The average age of Merchant Marine veterans is now 81. Many have outlived their savings. An increase in their Social Security and a monthly benefit to compensate for the loss of nearly a lifetime of ineligibility for the GI Bill would be of comfort and would provide some measure of security for veterans of the Merchant Marine.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Ian Allison of Santa Rosa, California and Henry Van Gemert of Palmetto, Florida who are Co-Chairs of the Just Compensation Committee of the U.S. Merchant Marine Combat Veterans, and to Ted Metula of Lemon Grove, California for bringing this issue to my attention.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting and cosponsoring this legislation. We can fix the injustices endured by our Nation's Merchant Marines by passing H.R. 23 as quickly as possible!

HONORING RAY STRONG ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the artistic contributions of Ray Strong, on the occasion of his 100th Birthday.

Ray Strong has contributed to the Santa Barbara community not only through his art, but also through his passion and commitment to education and his dedication to the preservation of our environment. His generosity has touched many, including those young artists fortunate enough to paint with Ray as part of the Oak Group. Ray Strong has assisted in raising money for a number of environmental causes and has brought awareness to many conservation issues through his work.

In addition to exhibiting throughout the United States, Ray Strong's work is held in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution. I am fortunate to have had some of Ray's pieces grace the walls of all three of my Congressional district offices. Locally, Ray has been honored by Santa Barbara Beautiful and is revered by many in this community for his generosity, spectacular talent and his passion for our physical environment.

Ray Strong's enthusiastic dedication to recording the landscape around us reminds me just how precious our natural surroundings are. His commitment to environmental causes and his contributions to the American realist tradition are commendable. Ray Strong is a talented artist, generous teacher and role model to many. I am privileged to know Ray and I continue to be awed by his many talents.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN D.W. REILEY

HON. TIM HOLDEN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John D.W. Reiley and to recognize the many contributions he has made to the city of Pottsville, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

and the world. He knows no limits in his service and commitment to the people and communities he has touched over the years.

John D.W. Reiley was born and raised in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, where he still resides today. He is a graduate of Pottsville Catholic High School and Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia.

After serving with the United States Army in the U.S. and Germany, he was associated with Reiley's Stores, Inc. in Pottsville. In May 1976, he was named Secretary of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, and he served in that capacity to the present time.

As a lifelong resident of Pottsville, Mr. Reiley has been active in the Greater Pottsville Winter Carnival, serving as its first president. A member of the Pottsville Lions, he is a past President and past District Governor. He is currently Co-Chairman of Pottsville Cruise Night and is a Director of the Union Bank and Trust Company, UBT Realty, and the Schuylkill County Motor Club, the Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities, and Penn Prime Insurance.

In 1969, he was appointed to Pottsville City Council. He was re-elected later that year and again in 1973.

He is also a member of Robert R. Wodbury Post #67 American Legion; Ancient Order of Hibernians, JFK Division (#2); Catholic War Veterans Post No. 1051; Knights of Columbus Council No. 431; Schuylkill Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame; and the Yorkville Hose & Fire Company.

Mr. Reiley is a past President of the Pottsville Merchants Association and past member of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Retailers Association and the Pottsville Library.

In March 2000, he was appointed Mayor of Pottsville, completing the term of his son Terence, who lost a five-year battle with leukemia while in office. In November 2001, John was re-elected to a full term.

He is married to the former Agnes McGowan, and is the father of Hugh Reiley and the late Terry Reiley.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC CHURCH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I congratulate St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church as they join together in the celebration of their 75th anniversary. The festivities will begin on Saturday, January 8, 2005. The parish community of St. Francis will also host a variety of activities throughout the entire year of 2005.

In 1882 there were two churches, Catholic and Methodist that existed in Lake Station, Indiana. The first Catholic Church was located at a Way Station on the Stage Line that operated between Michigan and Joliet. It stood on the identical spot which the present church now occupies. The Way Station was listed on railroad bulletins as Lake Station. The Michigan Central Railroad was built from Detroit to Chicago in 1852, and at this time the structure

was not known as a parish church but as a chapel. This building was in existence before the railroad. The original bell from the structure was stored when the building was razed and is now still in use at the present church.

Father Francis Xavier Guerre was the pastor of St. Mary of the Lake in Miller, Indiana. He was persuaded to start a mission parish in East Gary. Father Guerre founded the mission parish of St. Francis Xavier in 1930, and Bishop John F. Noll dedicated the church in 1931. The name St. Francis Xavier was in honor of Father Guerre's patron saint. The parish continued as a mission until 1941, when Bishop appointed Father Francis Quinn as its resident pastor.

In 1950 Father Koors planned for the enlargement of the existing church and the erection of a Parochial School. However, Father Koors needed a written guarantee that nuns would be available to teach in the school. Six orders of nuns were contacted before a written guarantee was received from Mother Emily of the Poor Sisters of St. Francis of Seraph. Mother Emily persuaded her Council to give the necessary written guarantee for the Sisters to teach at St. Francis Xavier. On September 5, 1956, the St. Francis Xavier School was officially opened for classes. The School was dedicated and blessed on November 11, 1956 by Bishop Pursley.

In 1984, Father Robert Evers became the Pastor of the St. Francis. Father Evers reopened the "Center" and procured the help of the Jesuits to service the Spanish community with week-end and daily masses. When the Jesuits left, liturgies were again celebrated in the main church. Father Evers retired in June 2004 after serving the parish for 20 years. The proud parishioners are thankful for the spiritual and emotional leadership he and the previous pastors have provided during the years.

The present church's beautiful interior features sculptured statues of the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, the Infant of Prague, and St. Theresa. The beautiful, dimly-lit interior is illuminated by sunlight through the stained-glass window and dozens of votive candles flicker through ruby and sapphire tinted globes. The present pastor, Reverend J. Anthony Valtierra and his congregation continue to serve the needs of the citizens of Northwest Indiana. By offering service and guidance to others, the members of St. Francis Xavier Church have proven their sincere dedication and motivation for assisting others in need.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring and congratulating St. Francis Xavier Church on their 75th anniversary. They have provided support and guidance for all those in the community. Their constant dedication and commitment is worthy of the highest commendation.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON HOSPITAL'S SERVICE LEAGUE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the 50th anniversary of Washington Hospital's Service League. Washington Hospital, located in Fremont, CA, will mark the anniversary at a celebration on February 7, 2005.

At 11:30 a.m., on March 6, 1955, ground was broken for the construction of Washington Hospital. During this same month, 14 civic-minded women in the community came together to plan a volunteer organization that would work in and for the hospital.

As a result of their commitment, the Washington Hospital Service League became a reality in 1956; the hospital opened on November 24, 1958. The Service League's goal was—and still is—to support the hospital by purchasing much needed equipment and to assist patients, visitors and staff.

Over the years, the Service League has raised more than \$1.79 million for equipment in almost every department at Washington Hospital, enabling community members to obtain state-of-the-art health care in their own community. Seed money donated by the Service League helped bring to fruition Washington Hospital Healthcare Foundation, Washington-Stanford Radiation Oncology Center and the Community Health Resource Library.

One of the Service League's activities that has continued to change the lives of so many in the community was the establishment of a scholarship program in 1961. Since the first nursing scholarship in the amount of \$150 was awarded to a nursing student at Highland Hospital, the volunteers have given more than \$150,000 to students seeking a career in health care.

The Service League volunteers also bring a human touch—freely offering a cheerful smile, a friendly attitude and thousands of hours of service to the hospital's patients, visitors and staff.

I join in congratulating all the volunteers who have contributed to the success of the Washington Hospital Service League over the past 50 years, and the present-day volunteers who continue to make a positive difference by giving back to the community.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE
ROPPE CORPORATION ON THE
OCCASION OF ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to pay tribute to a special company in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. This year, the Roppe Corporation of Fostoria, OH, will celebrate 50 years of dedicated service.

Mr. Speaker, the Roppe Corporation is one of the nation's leading suppliers of rubber and vinyl flooring products and accessories. The Roppe Rubber Corporation was founded in 1955, by Thony Roppe and production began in 1956. With only seven employees, the Roppe Rubber Corporation focused exclusively on rubber products.

Through the expansion of its trucking fleet and an increased customer base, Roppe has grown and flourished since its beginning. Due to the expansion of products and services that Roppe Rubber offered, it officially changed its name, in 1990, to the Roppe Corporation.

In 1993, the Miller family purchased the Roppe Corporation where Donald Miller continues to serve as chairman of the board, nearly 47 years after beginning his service at

Roppe. With expanded facilities and dedicated leadership, the Roppe Corporation has become a premier employer in the Fifth Congressional District of Ohio. By maintaining its factory in Fostoria, OH, Roppe has become a permanent fixture in the community.

Today, Roppe has become the world's largest rubber wall base manufacturer. Roppe has over 45 distributors with 105 locations in the United States and exports products worldwide. The Roppe Corporation has grown in annual sales to \$60,000,000 and now owns ATECO, Tri County Broadcasting, Seneca Millwork, Custom Corner, The Fostoria Focus, and Flexco.

Mr. Speaker, the real success of the Roppe Corporation comes not only from its products, but from its people. The employees of the Roppe Corporation provide customers with the service and dependability that are expected of a first-class company. Beyond the walls of Roppe, its employees are model citizens by providing for and leading their community. In all but 1 of the past 20 years, Roppe employees were the highest per capita givers to the Fostoria United Way campaign. Each year, we can count on the employees of Roppe to give of their time and their means to the community of Fostoria, OH.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to the employees and the legacy of the Roppe Corporation. As all who benefit from this fine company gather to celebrate its 50th anniversary of service, I am confident that the good people of Fostoria, OH, will continue the successes of the Roppe Corporation into the future.

HONORING DR. JIM KING OF WVXU
IN CINCINNATI UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Jim King, who is Director of Broadcasting and General Manager of WVXU, Xavier University's public radio station in Cincinnati. He retired December 31, 2004 after 28 years of dedicated service to our community, and will return to a full time Xavier faculty position.

A native of Cheboygan, MI, Jim had an early interest in music. He began his interest in broadcasting while still a youngster with his own "pirate" radio station, and even then, he knew he wanted a career in radio. Later, he gained his first full time job in radio as a high school sophomore. At Western Michigan University, Jim earned a B.A. in English Literature and an M.A. in English Literature and Ancient History. Happily, he also met his wife of 37 years, Kathy, there. In 1969, Jim and Kathy moved to Ann Arbor and in 1973, Dr. King earned a Ph.D in Radio, TV and Film from the University of Michigan.

In 1976, Jim joined Xavier University as its full time professional manager of WVXU, which was then a small 10 watt FM station. Jim also serves as Professor of Communication Arts at Xavier.

Over the years, WVXU has increased its power several times, and today, the station is 26,000 watts. Under Jim's visionary leader-

ship, the station became a member of a regional network of seven stations in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. WVXU is now housed in a 12,000 square foot broadcasting complex on the Xavier University campus, employs 25 radio professionals, and has won almost every honor in broadcasting, including the George Foster Peabody Award, the industry's most prestigious award.

Simply put, Jim has improved the quality of life for all of us in the community by treating us to WVXU's mix of vintage radio shows; award-winning news programs; financial information; and a beloved variety of music.

All of us congratulate Jim on his retirement and wish him luck in the new challenges to come.

HONORING JOSEPH HILLS AS VIRGINIA'S
TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joseph Hills, Virginia's 2005 Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Hills, a social studies teacher at Lake Braddock Secondary School, was named Virginia's 2005 Teacher of the Year and will represent Virginia in the National Teacher of the Year program. He was also awarded Fairfax County Public Schools 2004 Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Hills received a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education from Lock Haven University in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, and a Master of Arts degree in Education from the College of St. Thomas, Minnesota. He began his career with Fairfax County Public Schools in 1960 as a history teacher at Fairfax High School. He then moved to Marshall High School and later to Langley High School, where he worked as a teacher and social studies department chair. In 1973, Mr. Hills came to Lake Braddock Secondary School where he still serves.

He is a member of numerous education associations including the National Council of Social Studies, the Virginia Council of Social Studies, and is active in various Parent Teacher Associations. Mr. Hills has received the Washington Post Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award, as well as outstanding teacher awards from the University of Chicago and Smith College.

Colleagues describe Mr. Hills as "the embodiment of a dedicated teacher who is energized by his students and at the same time energizes those in his classroom." Former students praise Mr. Hills for making history come alive by telling stories and inspiring them to become teachers or earn graduate degrees in history. He is known for his use of the Socratic Method, spurring students to "think deeply and differently."

Our students are our number one resource. Mr. Hills has dedicated his life to ensuring that they are given the opportunity to achieve success. Over the past 44 years, he has made a lasting impact on thousands of students.

I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding Joseph Hills and congratulating him on this distinguished achievement.