

Ruby was terrified and didn't have any clue on what was going to happen while she attended the school. The court had federal marshals guarding her every where she went and watching everything she did in the school, and making sure no one harmed her. Charles Burks, a U.S. Marshal, who was one of the men who escorted Ms. Bridges said, "We expected a lot of trouble, but, as it turned out, it wasn't nearly as bad as we thought, even though Miss Bridges probably thought it was. For a little girl six years old, going into a strange school with four strange deputy marshals, a place she had never been before, she showed a lot of courage. She never cried. She didn't whimper. She just marched along like a little soldier. And we're all very proud of her." (Jim Lehrer, 2006)

The Federal marshals had to be ordered in by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to escort Ruby into the school building. The city police of New Orleans and the Louisiana State Police refused to help out. The marshals carried guns just in case people tried to hurt little Ruby. In fact, on many occasions they threatened to arrest people just to keep the crowds away from her. Ruby would always run through the crowds without saying a word.

Ruby Bridges, who is now Ruby Bridges Hall said, "I wish there were enough marshals to walk with every child as they faced the hatred and racism today, and to support, encourage them the way these federal marshals did for me. I know there aren't enough of you, but I do hope that I have inspired you to join me by dedicating yourselves to not just protecting but uplifting those you touch because that will enable us to rise together as a people, as a nation, and as a world." (Ruby Bridges, 2002)

On November 14, 1960, the nation's eyes were on her, as six year old Ruby Bridges walked into not only the school but 'into history as well'. "That first morning," said Bridges, "I remember mom saying as I got dressed in my new outfit, 'Now, I want you to behave yourself today, Ruby, and don't be afraid. There might be a lot of people outside this new school, but I'll be with you,'" (Eileen McCluskey, 2002)

Ruby's first day and all the other days that she attended school, there was a mob of angry white people trying to scare off Ruby. Some people even threatened to hurt Ruby. The crowd was yelling with one voice, "Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to integrate." (Ruby Bridges, 1999)

On her second day of school, Ruby remembers, "My mother and I drove to school with the marshals. The crowd outside the building was ready. Racists spat at us and shouted things like 'Go home, nigger,' and 'No niggers allowed here.' One woman screamed at me, 'I'm going to poison you. I'll find a way.' She made the same threat every morning." (Ruby Bridges, 2002) Yet every morning Ruby kept walking and praying, ignoring the noise that was going on all around her.

"Please God try to forgive these people because even if they said those bad things, they don't know what they're doing. So could you forgive them, just like you did those folks a long time ago when they said terrible things about you." (Bruce McCluggage, "A Prayer for White Folks") Ruby called her prayer, "The White Folks' Prayer." Ruby prayed every morning and afternoon about a block away from school, after she had been mocked and made fun of. She called it the "white folks' prayer," because she prayed for all those white folks that were yelling bad things at her. This prayer showed Ruby's character, her faith and Christianity. Ruby's mother wanted her children to be close to the Lord at a very young age. Little Ruby came from a very re-

ligious background. Even though Ruby's family was poor, being Christians made them very rich. Because of her mother and father teaching her about God she knew what to do while being persecuted.

Ruby entered the class room, and she saw that the teacher, Mrs. Henry, and she were the only ones in the class room. The parents of the white children would not let their children go into the school with Ruby.

Her walk and her bravery inspired the 1964 Norman Rockwell painting, "The Problem We All Live With." This shows a small black girl escorted by four federal marshals walking to school beside a wall bearing a scrawled racial epithet and the letters KKK, which stands for the Klu Klux Klan. The KKK are people who dress up in white robes and hoods, and they do not like black people at all. They try to do whatever they can to hurt black people.

A Harvard professor by the name of Robert Coles witnessed Ruby's first day in New Orleans. He wrote a children's book about Ruby Bridges' experience called *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. Coles reminds children of all ages about the heroism of Bridges' action by showing her facing an empty classroom because angry parents kept their children home and all but one teacher refused to teach a black child.

A book about Ruby titled *The Story of Ruby Bridges* was published in 1995. When the book came out, Ruby's first grade teacher, Mrs. Henry, saw it and contacted her. They were reunited on the "Oprah Winfrey Show." I suppose that was one of the greatest joys of Ruby's life. She has also been in contact again with Dr. Coles, her old child psychiatrist. Also, there was footage of Ruby in the television series, "Eyes on the Prize," about the Civil Rights Movement.

Ruby Bridges played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement. She feels that there was a reason for what she went through. She played an important part in bringing blacks and whites together. She did not know why she had to go through it, but now believes that it was meant to be that way. She has finally reached a point in her life where she feels that her life had meaning.

There are few who deny the heroism of Ruby Bridges: she has demonstrated the value of education to countless others. Ruby Bridges, who is now 51 years old, has devoted herself to the education of the young. She raised her own four sons, her brother's four daughters, and started the Ruby Bridges Foundation "in the hopes of bringing parents back into the schools and taking a more active role in their children's' education." (Bridges Foundation)

Ruby went through more than half of the school year in a room being the only student. The only other person, who was brave enough to be seen with Ruby was Ms. Henry, her teacher. Ms. Henry was a lady from the north who was telephoned by the superintendent to come teach the first grade class at William Franz Elementary School. At first, Ms. Henry, did not know that she would teach at a segregated school.

The first day when Ruby walked into the classroom, she only saw the teacher, a white lady. Ruby said, "A young white woman met us inside the building. She smiled at me. 'Good morning, Ruby Nell' she said, just like Mama except with what I later learned was a Boston accent. 'Welcome, I'm your new teacher, Ms. Henry. 'She seemed nice, but I wasn't sure how to feel about her. I had never been taught by a white teacher before.'" (Ruby Bridges Hall, March 2000) Ruby was surprised that the school had not sent her a black teacher, but a white teacher. There were no other students, but yet Ms. Henry and Ruby both came to school faith-

fully the whole year. Ignoring the noise outside, she and Ruby used their time getting to know one another and learning the whole year.

Despite not being able to go outside, Ms. Henry always found a way to cheer Ruby and create games for the both of them. Ms. Henry remembers that "Ruby was an extraordinary little girl. She was a child who exuded, I think courage. To think that every day she would come to class knowing, that she would not have any children to play with, to be with, to talk to, and yet continually she came to school happily and interested to learn whatever could be offered to her. I think she was a child with an incredible sense of self in that she was strong enough to counter all the obstacles that were put in her way. And each day she would enter class, after having gone through tumultuous entrance into the school where she was confronted by an incredible number of agitators and protestors. Yet she would come into school every day with the most wonderful smile on her face. Then she would come over and greet me, her eyes dazzled with a sense of wonder." (Lucille Renwick, 2001)

Ms. Henry has said, "I have learned so much from Ruby. Children can teach us so much by showing their inner selves. Children are pure, honest and simple. Children constantly teach teachers lessons of character honesty, and integrity. Children learn what they see. They take a signal from the teacher on how to value the worth of an individual." (Lucille Renwick, 2001)

Ms. Henry also said, "Teachers have to present to the students the struggles that have gone on in the world before them to realize the opportunities that they have just to go to school, and the struggles some people have had simply to get an education. You have to be a person who offers a child an opportunity for enlarging his world, and seeing the world from different points of view, and in different settings." (Lucille Renwick, 2001)

Eventually Ruby was joined by two boys, and was soon followed by the rest of the students. Ruby went on to finish out elementary school and then middle and also high school! Ruby became a major part of American history. Because of her bravery and her actions may the whites and the blacks or any other ethnicities never be separated like this again! Thanks to Ruby Bridges who stood up for what she believed in and for continuing to take a stand!

#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIVONIA, MICHIGAN'S CHAPTER 114 OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

**HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 26, 2006*

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge the 50th Anniversary of the Livonia, Michigan Chapter 114 of the Disabled American Veterans.

For five decades, Chapter 114 has tirelessly sought to improve the quality of life for disabled veterans. Founded in a basement by 12 people in 1956, Livonia Chapter 114 had 31 charter members. Now the third largest in the state of Michigan, this chapter has blossomed into a membership of 1,500.

After 50 years, Chapter 114 continues to promote appreciation and understanding of American history at local schools through benevolence and outreach. To foster patriotism,

members host a writing contest, What the American Flag Means to Me; to encourage involvement, members sponsor local ROTC programs; and, to educate young men and women, members speak with students about the role of America in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

The members of Chapter 114 also play a vital role in the lives of other veterans. They schedule hospital visits to newly admitted veterans and wounded soldiers, plan bingo nights for hospitalized soldiers and veterans, assist with health benefit claims for disabled soldiers, and donate modified cars to help disabled veterans drive.

The organization is also an institution where veterans of all wars can meet other legendary former servicemen. One of the first members of the 1920 National Disabled American Veterans Convention in Detroit, Joseph Piccola, joined the U.S. Army in 1918 and lost an eye during World War I. At age 98, Joe continues to inspire members to retain their independence and give back to their community. Thomas Silvermail, another inspirational figure, was wounded in the Korean War and is the only surviving charter member of Chapter 114.

Mr. Speaker, to the men, women, and children of our community; to the families of missing and fallen soldiers; and to every veteran of foreign wars, Livonia Chapter 114 is the embodiment of eternal unity and brotherhood. For 50 years, the organization's tireless efforts have commemorated the lives of heroic servicemen, preserved the independence of disabled veterans, and ensured the bravery of our armed forces is never forgotten. We owe the courageous members of Chapter 114 a great debt of gratitude. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their years of unrelenting service to our community and our country.

#### CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF YWCA SERVICE

### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 26, 2006*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the YWCA of Fort Worth and Tarrant County as it celebrates 100 years of service in the 26th District of Texas. The YWCA of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, the first YWCA in Texas, has been serving our community since 1907.

Since its start, the YWCA of Fort Worth and Tarrant County has grown to encompass over 100 paid employees as well as 200 volunteers. Together, these individuals have sought to eliminate racism and empower women through residential services such as My Own Place, which houses 14 young women who have outgrown foster care, and Supportive Living, which houses about 20 women and is designed to help homeless women become independent and self-reliant.

After 100 years of service, the YWCA of Fort Worth and Tarrant County continues to find innovative ways to improve the community. In 2005, the YWCA started two new programs: a class on diversity called "Dialogue on Race" and a partnership with a local Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream shop that employs at-risk youth.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I stand here today to honor the YWCA of Fort Worth and Tarrant County for its commitment to playing an active role in the development, improvement, and success of the community.

#### SACRED HEART BASEBALL TEAM WINS CLASS 1 CHAMPIONSHIP

### HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 26, 2006*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to recognize the Sacred Heart High School baseball team from Sedalia, MO, on winning the Class 1 State championship.

With their 11-4 win against Stoutland, the Sacred Heart baseball team won the first State championship in the school's 61-year history and the Kaysinger Conference's first team championship on June 1. The team has worked diligently and provided many hours of hard work and dedication to achieve such a great accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, the Sacred Heart baseball team and their coaches can be very proud of this accomplishment. I know the Members of the House will join me in congratulating them for winning the Class 1 championship.

#### A TRIBUTE TO KEISHA ARSO

### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 26, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Keisha Arso on the occasion of her graduation from Martin Van Buren High School in New York City on June 27, 2006. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding citizen and student and I hope that my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Keisha Arso was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1987. As the second of four daughters, Keisha lived in New Orleans until August 2005 when she and her family had to evacuate their home because of the impending onslaught of Hurricane Katrina, one of the most horrific and devastating hurricanes to hit the United States.

Keisha Arso was one of the lucky ones. She was able to escape to Texas prior to the hurricane's landing in New Orleans. However, her mother Brenda Arso, a nurse, had to stay behind. For days, Keisha Arso, like many others separated from family members and unable to establish communication, fretted with anxiety as she watched the visual images of thousands of people fighting for survival among the rising flood waters, lack of food and water, and outlaws victimizing the weak and helpless.

However, with the assistance of clergy, volunteers in New Orleans and New York City, and family members in Texas, Keisha was finally reunited with her mother and other siblings. Add to that, the dedicated teachers and administrators from Martin Van Buren High School, Keisha and her family have been able to face and survive many obstacles that from the outset seemed insurmountable. The Arso family home may not have survived the cata-

strophic levee breach of Lake Pontchartrain, but Keisha's spirit remains intact. Keisha's strength, courage and ability to rise above all obstacles and receive her diploma are prominent examples of the power of faith, freedom, compassion and the American spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Keisha Arso, as she serves as a role model for others facing adversity.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Keisha Arso, as her steadfast perseverance makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

#### IN TRIBUTE TO CECIL BROWN, JR.

### HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 26, 2006*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and work of a noted civil rights leader. Mr. Cecil Brown, Jr., who died earlier this week, was one of the first African Americans elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly, and ultimately became a national leader in the fight for equality and desegregation.

A lifelong Midwesterner, Mr. Brown was born in Chicago and also lived briefly in Iowa but was only nine years old when his family settled in Milwaukee during the depression, hoping to make a better life for themselves and their children. Mr. Brown graduated from North Division High school and went on to pursue a college degree at Marquette University. He worked as an accountant before he won a seat in the Assembly in 1954. His victory helped establish new opportunities for African Americans in elected office, giving rise to a cadre of strong elected officials that included Representative Lloyd Barbee, and County Board Supervisor Clinton Rose, among others. Serving a district that was predominantly white, Cecil Brown became known for his ethics and integrity, as well as exemplary civil rights leadership.

After serving briefly in the Assembly, Mr. Brown went on to become one of the foremost leaders of Milwaukee's civil rights movement. He founded the Milwaukee chapter of the Congress on Racial Equality, and worked alongside Father James Groppi and others to fight for desegregated housing and schools. Inspired equally by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Paul Robeson, he was deeply committed to non-violent strategies for social change. His wife, Loretta Brown, too, was a civil rights activist whom he met while participating in the Milwaukee United School Integration Committee.

All of us who are elected to public office stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Mr. Brown is one of the giants in our state's history whose efforts enabled me to have a career in public service. I am honored to have this opportunity to pay tribute to his lifelong efforts to advance the African American community and to give thanks to him and his family for their unwavering commitment to equality and civil rights.