

1950 to 2,083 in 1960. In addition, the number of residents with some college rose from 395 in 1950 to 473 in 1960. By the year 2000, when the census counted 38,628 people living in Atascosa County, over 65 percent of residents age 25 and older had 4 years of high school. Agriculture, government services, and some light manufacturing are key elements of the area's economy. The largest communities in the county are Jourdan, the county seat, and Pleasanton, the county's largest town. Other communities include Campbellton, Poteet, Lytle, Charlotte, Christine, Leming, McCoy, and Peggy. Some of the county's wonderful attractions include the Poteet Strawberry Festival, the Jourdan Days Celebration, and the Cowboy Homecoming and Rodeo in Pleasanton. As we look back on the last 150 years with pride, we also look forward to a promising future for Atascosa.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Atascosa County on their 150th anniversary and all of their accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LAUNCHING OF THE CARIBBEAN SINGLE MARKET ECONOMY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Caribbean leaders for their achievement of the Caribbean Single Market Economy and to enter into the RECORD a Caribnews editorial celebrating this milestone. The CSME—the initial phase of a historic regional economic integration project uniting 13 countries within the Caribbean—culminates a movement that was years in the making.

With the creation of this newest trade bloc that includes Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the countries have agreed to lift tariffs and allow all citizens to open businesses. In conjunction with Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the countries will also be able to provide services and move capital throughout the single market without restrictions. The implications of the CSME are sweeping, with plans advancing to replace national travel documents with a regional passport and the possibility of a common currency to be used by participating countries and a consolidation of economic policies.

The CSME is a fitting and progressive response to the evolving global environment characterized by disappearing borders. I have full faith that CSME will create a larger spectrum of opportunities for employment, investment, production and trade for the people of the Caribbean islands. The coming together of regional economies into one bloc will undisputedly give the countries strength in facing other trade blocs and superpowers across the negotiating tables.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the leaders of the participating' bean nations for forging ahead with the CSME and wishing them well in their next steps.

CARIBBEAN SINGLE MARKET: SEALED, SIGNED AND DELIVERED

"Sealed," stated one front-page newspaper headline in the Caribbean on Tuesday morning.

"Caribbean leaders sign on formal document," hailed another paper.

And a third publication completed the process when it made it clear that the pact had been "delivered."

In effect, the Caribbean Single Market, the long awaited important step towards deep economic and social integration had moved closer to completion when several CARICOM leaders signed on the dotted line on Monday, committing their countries to be bound by and live up to the provisions of the treaty establishing the CSME.

The signing took place, quite appropriately, on the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies, the quintessential Caribbean educational institution, and the occasion wasn't simply historic but vital if the countries of the region are to realize their full potential.

Admittedly, there were some unfortunate aspects of the ceremony. One of them was a hard fact of Caribbean life: at least one nation, the Bahamas, opted out all together while Haiti, a country in chaos with a dysfunctional interim government wasn't invited to the party. Another setback, of sorts, was the decision by the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States to push back the deadline for their implementation of the CSM. Originally, the deadline was January 1, then it was moved to March and now we are being told that it would be the end of June. Don't be surprised if the OECS countries demand another extension.

The countries, which are moving ahead with the CSM, are Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the OECS nations are coming on board during the second half of the year.

The pact, a work in progress, calls for the removal of all barriers to trade in goods and services, limited freedom of movement by a handful of skilled people, such as UWI graduates, sports figures and journalists, the setting of a regional standard for goods being produced in or entering the region from other countries and recognition of Caribbean Court of Justice. Eventually, it could result in a common currency and the harmonization of economic policies.

What it wouldn't involve is a political union.

These desirable and important objectives should become a reality by 2008, the year when the CSME should become fully implemented. No one should under-estimate the complexity and the challenges the region faces as it moves forward.

Jamaica's Prime Minister, P.J. Patterson, underscored that point when he cautioned the leaders and others at the signing ceremony "formidable challenges still exist as we move boldly forward in the pursuit of closer regional collaboration within a global economy that is admittedly hostile to the interest of small island developing nations."

The problem for small states is that global competitiveness can undermine economic growth, slowdown social development and diminish competitiveness. As if those weren't bad enough, the mountains of red tape and the foot-dragging by some countries can reduce the CSM's effectiveness and appeal.

But there is little reason to despair.

When Caribbean Free Trade Agreement, CARIFTA, the forerunner of CARICOM and CSME, it started with three countries—Antigua, Barbados and Guyana. The list grew in later years. That's likely to happen with the CSME.

Secondly, the Caribbean Court of Justice is now a functioning judicial body. Yes, it's true that only Barbados and Guyana have so far accepted the CCJ as their court of last resort, relinquishing the necessity to turn to

the Privy Council in London as the final arbiter. Again, foot-dragging is standing in the way of a broader court. Political considerations in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have turned out to be roadblocks for expansion but that's not the case in the OECS.

A word about the OECS and its reasons for not signing the final acceptance on Monday. The members are pushing for the creation of a Caribbean Development Fund, which would help bridge the gap in finance, which the elimination of tariffs would create. That's a realistic situation, one that the larger economies have recognized and are trying to solve. The Fund must be established, no ifs, ands or buts.

Interestingly, Edwin Carrington, CARICOM's long-serving Secretary-General, in his speech on Monday borrowed from the lyrics of one of Bob Marley's most popular songs, "One Love," and invoked the memory of that great Caribbean icon when he insisted "Let's get together and feel alright, I say let's stay together and be all right."

We may be some distance away from achieving that togetherness but at the very least we are on the road to it becoming a fact of life.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FLOWER MOUND LIBRARY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Flower Mound Public Library for their receipt of the 2006 Alibris Collection Award.

The Alibris Collection Award is an annual grant of up to \$3,000 worth of books to an academic, public, special, or K-12 library supporting specific collection development projects that advance the mission, priority areas, and goals of the selected library.

The purpose of the award is to help provide materials for libraries with replacement projects, retrospective collection development projects, or routine collection building needs.

The library tied for first place with the College State School Library in Anchorage, Alaska. Both schools were presented this award on January 22, 2006.

The library will be contributing the prize money to the—"Sit! Stay!! READ!!! Program." This program is designed to help kids with reading disabilities. Working in conjunction with Delta Society trained dogs, the program pairs children with a pet, which helps the children relax and improve their confidence. This creates a non-judgmental audience and thus a lighter stress load on the children allowing them to truly embrace and improve their skills.

I extend my sincere congratulations to the Flower Mound Public Library for their contributions to the community and youth education as well as their dedication to excellence. This truly original program deserves much applause.

SUPPORT FOR ANIMAL FIGHTING PROHIBITION ENFORCEMENT ACT

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 817, the Animal

Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act. More than 150 local police and sheriff's departments have requested this legislation and I am pleased that the committee is considering it.

A few years ago, Congress enacted legislation to tighten Federal law and close some loopholes that allowed the barbaric practices of animal fighting to thrive nationwide, in spite of bans in virtually every State.

But Congress didn't finish the job. We left in place weak penalties that have proven ineffective. Misdemeanor penalties simply don't provide a meaningful deterrent. Those involved in animal fighting ventures—where thousands of dollars typically change hands in the associated gambling activity—consider misdemeanor penalties a “slap on the wrist” or merely a “cost of doing business.” Moreover, we've heard from U.S. Attorneys that they are reluctant to pursue animal fighting cases with just a misdemeanor penalty.

In recent years, we have seen a marked rise in the frequency of animal fighting arrests in communities across the country. Local police and sheriffs are increasingly concerned about animal fighting, not only because of the animal cruelty involved, but also because of the other crimes that often go hand-in-hand, including illegal gambling, drug traffic, and acts of human violence.

In addition, there are concerns cockfighters spread diseases that jeopardize poultry flocks and even public health. We in California experienced this first-hand, when cockfighters spread exotic Newcastle disease, which was so devastating to many of our poultry producers in 2002 and 2003. That outbreak cost U.S. taxpayers “nearly \$200 million to eradicate, and cost the U.S. poultry industry many millions more in lost export markets,” according to Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman.

It is time Congress finishes the job and helps State and local law enforcement officials who have requested stronger Federal laws to rid animal fighting from communities that do not want it.

TRIBUTE TO THE PAISANO 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Paisano, the student newspaper at the University of Texas at San Antonio, UTSA. The Paisano is the oldest independent student newspaper in the State of Texas. In January 1981, the first issues of the Paisano were distributed to the UTSA community. A quarter of a century later, the Paisano often publishes 7,000 to 10,000 issues a week for the downtown and 1604 campuses.

Because UTSA is a young school, student enterprises like the Paisano were important in creating a sense of community. Other schools have longer histories but few have more school pride. Students know that the Paisano is their forum to celebrate their college years and examine their community and world.

Put simply, students run the paper. They write the stories, sell the advertising, and create budgets for the paper. But they receive neither college credit nor compensation from

the university for their efforts. Yet, the invaluable experience of running a business has compensated them far more than a paycheck ever could.

Through the Paisano Educational Trust, dedicated students, faculty, and staff publish the Paisano. All overhead for the paper's publication, including rent, equipment, utilities, and printing costs are funded through advertising revenues. Countless hours of student work have kept this paper operating.

Many of the former student staff now serve San Antonio and south Texas in numerous capacities. They are school teachers, writers, journalists, editors, accountants, lawyers, website creators, hotel managers, and environmental researchers. Over these last 25 years, they have helped transform San Antonio into the vibrant city poised for greater things on the verge of the 21st century.

The Founders knew that a free press was essential to democracy as a medium for free expression. The Paisano allows students to voice their concerns and to articulate their disparate experiences. This newspaper has provided a forum for students to participate in the give-and-take exchange of ideas vital to an academic institution and our society.

As UTSA continues its transformation into a flagship university, I expect that the Paisano will continue to reflect the richness and diversity of the student body and South Texas. Today, I celebrate their first 25 years and wish them many more.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JIM BEATTY

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions and life-time achievements of Mr. Jim Beatty. He is an outstanding member of his community who has shown dedication through his endless service and volunteer efforts.

After graduating from Adams State College in Alamosa, CO, he served in the Air Force as an intelligence officer during the Korean war. Following his service in the military, Mr. Beatty used the G.I. bill to attend law school at the University of Colorado.

Soon after receiving his law degree, Mr. Beatty became senior partner at the Fisher & Beatty law office. Mr. Beatty also became very involved in the Fort Collins community. He was a member of the Fort Collins Junior Chamber of Commerce and, at age 35, was youngest president of the Rotary Club. He was also actively involved in the Fort Collins PTA and coached Little League. Mr. Beatty frequently volunteered his legal services to local service clubs and organizations.

Mr. Beatty has been actively involved in State and local politics. In the 1960's and 1970's, he served as a precinct committee person and successfully motivated every Republican in his precinct to vote.

In 1980, Mr. Beatty was elected to the Colorado State Senate, where he served until 1988. During his time in the State Senate, Mr. Beatty proved himself to be an intelligent and very effective legislator. He served as chair or vice-chair of eight legislative committees, including the Judiciary, Finance, Legal Affairs, Appropriations, and Joint Budget committees.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Mr. Beatty in Congress and I am very grateful for his unselfish and prolific service to his community. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the many contributions and achievements of Mr. Jim Beatty.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MAEDGEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to bring an important anniversary to my colleagues' attention. My elementary school, Maedgen Elementary School, in Lubbock, TX, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Maedgen first opened in the spring of 1955 and has been educating Lubbock's youngest citizens ever since. The school was named in honor of Charles Ernest Maedgen—1882–1964—an early resident of Lubbock who had a strong interest in the community and in education.

I am proud to be a Maedgen alumnus and am looking forward to attending the anniversary commemoration on February 24, 2006. I have many fond memories of my elementary school years. Mrs. Dunn, my first grade teacher, had a big influence on my life. I particularly remember a chart she placed in the front of the classroom to teach reading. Mrs. Dunn, using that chart, unlocked the world of reading for me. I also have memories of Mr. Ford, my principal. Some days I think I spent as much time in his office as he did.

Many things have changed in our world and in education over the past 50 years. Teaching methods have changed, and technology that we never could have imagined 50 years ago now plays a big role in students' education. For example, computers, instead of charts, are used to teach reading now. I am pleased that Maedgen Elementary School is still serving the Lubbock community by teaching our children and giving them the tools to build a successful life. Congratulations to all who have worked over the past 50 years teaching and serving Lubbock children at Maedgen, and best wishes for much success to all future students, teachers and administrators.

SALUTING JAMES P. HOFFA

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute James P. Hoffa, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Mr. Hoffa has spent the past 47 years in diligent and loyal service to the Teamsters Union and workers across the country.

Sworn in at the age of 18 by his father, James has been a member of the Teamsters Union since 1959. He learned early in his life the importance of workers' rights as he joined his father on picket lines as a young boy.

Since taking office in March of 1999, Mr. Hoffa has been rebuilding the International