

to again pursue her dream of becoming a police officer.

The Neighborhood Block Captains Award was presented to Randy and Jan Joeckel for their work in their neighborhood, Hanover Manor. The Joeckels have diligently worked to maintain a safe and crime free neighborhood by organizing neighborhood watches and community meetings to help keep tabs of developing problems.

Jim Trenary Chevrolet was the recipient of the 2005 Crime Stoppers Business of the Year Award. Jim Trenary employees have been extremely active in the local community with various fundraising efforts to help out good causes. Jim Trenary Chevrolet has also been an invaluable tool to the St. Charles Police Department by providing cars to be used for surveillance and sting operations.

The 2005 Crime Stoppers Special Recognition Award was presented to Thomas Benton. After retiring from 20 years of service to the St. Charles Police Department, Thomas became the director of security for a local casino. Never one to forget his law enforcement skills, Thomas was able to help local authorities identify two suspects from two different bank robberies using casino surveillance tapes and testimony from casino employees.

St. Charles Suburban Journal reporter Jason Lee received the Crime Stoppers Media Relations Award. Jason's reporting on area crime was detailed and thorough and he helped create awareness for the program by including Crime Stoppers information in his articles. Jason also proved to be an asset to the St. Charles Police Department, as he helped out with leads on certain cases.

The 2005 Citizen Award was presented to Renee & Derrick Rivers, Colleen Clifford, John Hanley, Susan & Andy Quinones, Ann Walton, Ann Grice and Stacey Nelson. All of the Citizen Award recipients were actively involved in helping apprehending suspects and thwarting future crimes. And in one particular case, an infant's life was saved by arresting a mother for child abuse and endangerment.

I commend all these recipients and hope my colleagues share in my admiration for the Crime Stoppers. I encourage all Americans to learn more about this wonderful partnership.

THE ENDANGERED CHILDREN OF NORTHERN UGANDA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, when current Ugandan President Yawer Museveni overthrew the murderous regime of the late Milton Obote in Uganda in 1986, many had hoped that their nation would finally emerge from the nightmares of the Obote and Idi Amin regimes. Unfortunately, yet another horror lay ahead for the people of northern Uganda.

Many in the Acholi community were alarmed at the sudden loss of power when Obote was overthrown, and Alice Lakwena formed the Holy Spirit Movement to fight for the Acholi people. Despite her promises that her followers would have immunity from the bullets of the Ugandan army, they were defeated two years later, and she fled to Kenya.

Meanwhile, Joseph Kony, believed to be Lakwena's cousin, took up the battle, forming a group known as the Lord's Resistance Army or LRA. The LRA is often said to be determined to rule Uganda according to the Bible's 10 Commandments. In reality, this group has a philosophy that blends elements of Christianity, Islam and traditional Acholi beliefs into a murderous world view that has terrorized Kony's own Acholi people and set back development in the North by years if not decades.

Over the last 20 years, as many as two million persons—an estimated 90 percent of the population of the Acholi area in northern Uganda—have been forced into internally displaced persons camps. More than 20,000 children have been forced to serve as either soldiers or sexual slaves for the LRA. Those children who have escaped kidnapping by the LRA are forced into the phenomenon known as night commuting, in which an estimated 50,000 children walk miles from the rural areas to towns in order to find relative safety in bus shelters, churches or even on the streets.

The impact of this war on Ugandans in the North, as reported by the Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda, is almost unbelievable:

—The rates of violent death in northern Uganda are three times higher than those reported in Iraq following the Allied invasion in 2003.

—Each month, nearly 3,500 Ugandans die from easily preventable diseases, extreme violence and torture;

—Each day, 58 children under the age of five die as a result of violence and preventable diseases.

—Three times more children under the age of five die in northern Uganda than in the rest of the country.

—One quarter of the children in northern Uganda over ten years of age have lost one or both parents.

—Half of the nearly two million internally displaced persons in northern Uganda are children under the age of 15.

—About a quarter of a million children in northern Uganda receive no education at all because of displacement and the fact that 60% of schools in northern Uganda no longer function due to the war.

Because of the war in the North, Uganda has developed a lost generation that has grown up in dire circumstances with fear and deprivation as their constant companions. Nearly half of all children in the northern town of Kitgum are stunted from malnutrition. They likely will never be able to recover what this war has cost them.

There is great concern that the Government of Uganda is insufficiently committed to improving the situation in northern Uganda. On at least two occasions when there appeared to be a chance for peace talks with the LRA—once in 1993 and again in late 2004–2005—the Government of Uganda launched offensives that ended any chance of peace and yet failed to end the terrorism of the LRA. More recently, the indictment of top LRA leaders by the International Criminal Court has effectively ended further peace efforts.

Because of its inability to end the LRA threat, the Ugandan government in 2003 began encouraging local leaders in northern and eastern Uganda to raise civilian militias to help protect civilians. Unfortunately, according

to a study done by the Alan Shawn Feinstein International Famine Center at Tufts University, these militias were hurriedly recruited, poorly screened and incompletely trained. Furthermore, known criminals are part of these militias, which also contain boys and girls less than 18 years of age.

The Feinstein Center study also reports that there is a widespread perception among individuals and organizations in northern Uganda that the government has malevolent reasons for not ending the war with the LRA. They include revenge against northerners for human rights abuses under previous governments and neutralization of political challenge from the North. In the Uganda elections held earlier this year, President Museveni's main opponent Kizza Besigye, won 80 percent of the vote in northern Uganda—a testimony to the government's unpopularity in the North.

Whatever the truth about the Government of Uganda's war effort, it is certainly a fact that not enough is being done to safeguard the endangered children of northern Uganda. With all the attention given to the genocide in Darfur, a similar crisis in northern Uganda has been eclipsed in both attention and resources.

Just as we have a moral obligation to rescue the suffering people of Darfur, we have a similar obligation not to ignore the terrorized population of northern Uganda. If the eyes and ears of the world are focused elsewhere, we must redirect them to Uganda's distressed northern population—especially the children. Uganda's future may depend on our efforts.

Regrettably, the phenomenon of child soldiers is not one confined to Uganda or Africa. It is a global tragedy in which as many as 300,000 children are involved in as many as 30 conflicts around the world. As in Uganda, children are used by governments or government-supported militias and rebel forces such as the LRA. Utilized in everything from combat to spying to clearing minefields, these children are often killed or maimed, and even those who can escape often find it difficult to reintegrate back into society. They desperately need our help.

To that end, I and some of my colleagues in the House and Senate are planning to introduce legislation shortly to address the issue of child soldiers. This legislation condemns the conscription, forced recruitment or use of children by governments or paramilitaries in hostilities and urges the U.S. Government to lead efforts to enforce existing international standards to end this horrendous human rights abuse.

This legislation would deny U.S. military assistance to 7 of the 26 nations believed to use children in their military forces: Burundi, Columbia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Paraguay, Sudan and Uganda.

RUSSELL KOLB

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Russell Kolb for his 50 years of outstanding service to the Ridge Fire Company of East Vincent Township, Chester County Pennsylvania and the communities it serves.

In addition to his active membership in the Company for 50 years, Mr. Kolb is also a

Trustee and President of the Company. During his time of service, Mr. Kolb has earned the love and respect of his fellow citizens for his dedication and commitment to the local community.

Throughout his tenure, he has been the lead fundraiser for the Company's chicken barbeques, fairs, and annual Thanksgiving turkey raffle. He also serves on the Building and Truck Committees, which oversee the purchase of new equipment, building repairs, and major renovations. The countless hours of service he has provided to the Company and community are testament to his passion for volunteerism and exemplary citizenship.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Mr. Russell Kolb, one of Chester County's and Pennsylvania's great citizen volunteers, for his ceaseless and unselfish commitment to the safety and betterment of his local community and fellow citizens.

THE DEDICATION OF RIVERBEND PARK

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to acknowledge and celebrate a momentous day in the history of the City of Oroville (City), California, a community I have the honor of representing in the House of Representatives. On May 5, 2006, local residents will join representatives from the City, the Feather River Park and Recreation District (District), the California State Water Contractors, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and several other entities to dedicate Riverbend Park. This dedication is the culmination of a collaborative effort involving numerous stakeholders and is a very positive development for the residents of Oroville and the surrounding areas.

Enhancements to Riverbend Park have been ongoing for the better part of 25 years. But only now, during the final stages of DWR's relicensing of hydroelectric facilities at nearby Lake Oroville, are the sparkling visions of local officials and residents for this property being realized. During the last five years of negotiations with state authorities, local officials made it clear that this project was a priority for the community. DWR responded by making Riverbend Park a Special Project as part of the relicensing process and pledged financial assistance and personnel to make the improvements sought by the City and District. While more projects are scheduled, District officials have already significantly improved the area by upgrading and restoring public access to the Oroville Wildlife Area Ponds, placing Americans with Disability Act compliant restrooms on site, installing a water well pump for irrigation and fire suppression, and constructing better barriers to deter illegal trespassing and dumping. Presently, the 210 acres that make up Riverbend Park provide outstanding opportunities for hikers, fishermen, bird watchers, wildlife viewers, disc golfers, and other recreation enthusiasts.

The Feather River, which runs adjacent to Riverbend Park, has long been a focal point of the Oroville community. Before the construction of the Oroville Dam many years ago, area

residents and visitors enjoyed numerous forms of recreation in and on the Feather River. Now, the construction of Riverbend Park has helped to usher in a new and positive era in the City, punctuated by a renewed focus on quality development along the Feather River. I am pleased to commemorate this phase of the development and look forward to future improvements along this important natural feature.

Mr. Speaker, today I join with the people of Oroville, their elected officials, and District staff as they celebrate the exciting occasion of dedicating Riverbend Park. As a showcase for the entire region and a safe place for people of all ages, I am sure Riverbend Park and the amenities it offers will make a lasting impression on residents and visitors to the area for decades to come. I congratulate area leaders and citizens as they commemorate this momentous occasion.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF NEW YORK CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH WITH EMPOWERMENT AWARDS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three outstanding New York City women: Inez Dickens, Yvette Clarke and Rosemonde Pierre-Louis, as the recent recipients of the first Annual Metropolitan College of New York Women's Empowerment Awards and to enter into the RECORD an article from the New York CaribNews entitled "Women's History Month With Empowerment Awards," that salutes their achievements in their fields. These three ladies were truly deserving of the accolades bestowed upon them during National Women's History Month, at a gala recognition ceremony held at Metropolitan College on March 20, 2006.

March of each year symbolizes Women's History Month. This time is set aside to honor all women with particular emphasis on the extraordinary contributions of women who actively make a difference in the daily lives of others. The three honorees for the Metropolitan College of New York's Women's Empowerment Awards have made notable contributions to furthering the causes of Diversity, Education and Public Service. New York City Council members Inez Dickens and Yvette Clarke, along with the Deputy Manhattan Borough President Rosemonde Pierre-Louis, were the honorees whose stellar careers and accomplishments merited this special recognition.

To quote and agree with the MCNY President Stephen R. Greenwald, "... Each of our honorees represents a model of success for our students and for all New Yorkers." While giving eloquent and sincere award acceptance speeches each honoree spoke of their values and the motivating forces that guided their careers. They also stressed the importance of community activism as they encouraged the audience to step up and make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the first Annual Metropolitan College of New York for their decision to select and recognize Inez Dickens, Yvette Clarke and Rosemonde Pierre-Louis for

their contributions to humanity. These trailblazers are very much deserving of the Women's Empowerment Awards.

[From the New York CaribNews, Apr. 4, 2006]

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF NEW YORK CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH WITH EMPOWERMENT AWARDS

Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY) celebrated Women's History Month with the First Annual MCNY Women's Empowerment Awards for Contributions to Diversity, Education and Public Service on Monday, March 20 in the College's Student Lounge. The inaugural Women's Empowerment Awards were bestowed upon New York City Council members Yvette Clarke and Inez Dickens and Deputy Manhattan Borough President Rosemonde Pierre-Louis. MCNY President Stephen R. Greenwald welcomed the honorees, MCNY students, faculty and guests to the event and MCNY Alumna Lori N. Jones-Dessalines, Founder, President, and Center Director for Achievers of New York, Inc. Math Center in West Hempstead, Long Island, served as Mistress of Ceremonies.

"We are delighted to honor the achievements of these three outstanding New York City officials. In some ways, their accomplishments echo the pioneering work that Audrey Cohen began when she founded the Women's Talent Corps in 1964—the precursor to Metropolitan College of New York. Each of our honorees represents a model of success for our students and for all New Yorkers," said Mr. Greenwald.

Councilmember Yvette Clarke credited her parents' community activism with motivating her to become a public servant. She also encouraged the students in the audience, the majority of who were women, to become active in their respective communities.

"I stand on the shoulders of many women who serve our City daily on community boards, in block associations, PTAs, tenant associations—women who are the unsung heroines of our City. It is on their behalf that I accept this award," Ms. Clarke noted.

Council member Inez Dickens departed from her prepared remarks to tell the students a bit about her family history. Her family left Tulsa, Oklahoma in the 1920's to escape the racially motivated violence against African Americans. In the course of one day, more than 10,000 whites gathered and setting fire to every building standing, leveled 35 square blocks, murdered, raped and robbed, and committed other atrocities against African Americans. They used machine guns and airplanes that dropped nitroglycerin and dynamite in an all out attack on the African American section of town. The Dickens family moved first to Canada and then settled in Harlem where Councilmember Dickens' uncle, then her father, were among the first African-American elected officials in the New York State legislature.

Deputy Manhattan Borough President Rosemonde Pierre-Louis encouraged the students to seek creative ways to be involved in public service. Stressing the importance of activism, she outlined many of the initiatives she spearheaded in her role as an attorney and an advocate for battered and other women's issues. She added, with the pride of achievement, that in 2006 she is the first Haitian American woman to hold a significant public appointment in New York.