

Ross P. Marine, for his tireless efforts to bring an important exhibition, focused on the fate of Slovak Jews during World War II, to the Kansas City area. Mr. Marine is a dynamic member of the Consular Corps of Greater Kansas City. And for this reason, the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area is very fortunate to have the vital and active Consular Corps of Greater Kansas City, which has been instrumental in fostering cultural exchanges while building economic partnerships between our area and other countries. Time and time again, Mr. Ross P. Marine has proven himself to be one of our most active and dedicated Honorary Consuls in our region.

Years ago, while working for the Truman Medical Center East, Ross became involved in a health partnership program in the Republic of Slovakia, whose mission was to work with abused women and people addicted to drugs and alcohol. In the 3 years that followed, Ross became acquainted with the people and culture. He made many friends and in February 2001, he was honored with the title of Honorary Consul, for the four-state region of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa. Currently, Ross Marine continues to be one of our metropolitan area's most important links to Eastern Europe. He has brought exhibits, business opportunities and international relationships with the Embassy of the Slovak Republic to the people of Missouri's Fifth District. At Ross Marine's request, the Slovak Ambassador to the United States made an official visit to Kansas City for the re-dedication of the Liberty Memorial in 2006, the only national World War I monument in the United States.

Ross's latest endeavor was to spearhead efforts to bring the exhibition "The Tragedy of Slovak Jews" to Kansas City. This important exhibit is the first exhibition to illustrate the betrayal and atrocities committed towards Slovak Jews during World War II. Prepared and presented in cooperation with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, this important exhibit was brought to the Kansas City area with the further assistance of the Czech and Slovak Club of Kansas City, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City, and the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education.

Madam Speaker, please join me in expressing our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Ross P. Marine for his relentless efforts in extending goodwill, not only within the areas surrounding the Fifth Congressional District of Missouri, but to the global community. I urge my colleagues to please join me in expressing our appreciation to Mr. Marine and his endless commitment to the Slovak community. He is a true role model, not just to the Slovak-American community in Missouri, but to our entire society.

IN RECOGNITION OF HOUR CHILDREN AND ITS 2007 HONOREES, ABIGAIL DISNEY, KIRK GOODRICH, AND XIOMARA GUTIERREZ

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Hour Children, a not-for-profit social service agency in Long

Island City, New York dedicated to supporting mothers currently or previously incarcerated in prison and to providing a stable and nurturing environment for their children. This month, Hour Children is celebrating its 12th anniversary at its Annual Awards Benefit, where the organization is honoring 3 outstanding individuals: Abigail Disney, Kirk Goodrich and Xiomara Gutierrez.

Originally founded in 1995 by Sister Teresa Fitzgerald, CSJ, for children rendered homeless by their mothers' incarceration, Hour Children has grown into a full-service, multifaceted social service provider to countless families in need. Sister Teresa, familiarly know as "Sister Tesa," secured housing at the Roman Catholic Convent of St. Rita's in Long Island City as a home for these children, and joined with 4 other Sisters to become foster parents. They went on to establish parent support programs at New York State's Bedford Hills and Taconic Correctional Institutions, facilitating visit schedules so that female inmates and their children were able to reunite for a few hours on a regular basis.

Although nearly one third of prisoners in New York State are reincarcerated, Hour Children's rate of recidivism is less than 10 percent because its clients are afforded ample time to make a successful transition to assuming responsibilities for family and work. Hour Children's unique approach begins by forging relationships with its adult clients while they are still in prison, bringing their children to visit regularly, and providing advocacy and mentoring on parenting, domestic violence, and employment counseling, thus easing their transition to reunification with their children. In forging long-term relationships with its clients built on trust, Hour Children helps them to attain independence and self-sufficiency at a pace suited to their needs.

Today, Hour Children is a community of 5 multi-family residences, serving families with children from infancy to 21 years of age. More than 200 "graduates" of its housing program have successfully made the transition to independent living, returning for monthly support group meetings and special events. In addition, Hour Children was officially recognized as a work release site, opening a Community Outreach Center and 3 thrift shops.

Hour Children's success would not have been possible without the extraordinary contributions of its 3 honorees this year. As Co-Founder and President of the Daphne Foundation, Abigail E. Disney, Ph.D., has devoted herself tirelessly to confronting the causes and consequences of poverty in our Nation's greatest city. She was indispensable in securing and providing the first funding for Hour Children's Early Learning program for children ranging from infants to 3-year-olds.

Hour Children is also honoring Kirk Goodrich, Vice President of the Enterprise Social Investment Corporation, one of the Nation's leading providers of community development capital, tax credit equity investments, and development services for affordable housing, mixed-use, and commercial development. His leadership helped secure the financing to enable Hour Children to open a new residence under construction at 35-54 11th Street in Long Island City, where 8 apartment units will be available to Hour Children's client families.

In addition, Hour Children is honoring Xiomara Gutierrez with its First Annual Jean Harris Award. A mother, child care worker,

and trusted confidante to countless families, Xiomara Harris has touched and inspired the Hour Children community with her compassion and dedication.

Madam Speaker, I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing the remarkable successes enjoyed by Hour Children in helping countless individuals transcend their circumstances and realize their full potential.

A TRIBUTE TO THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF PLAINVIEW, TEXAS

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Plainview, Texas' centennial birthday. For it was in 1907 that the city's founders took the pivotal step from frontier community to an incorporated city.

One hundred years ago, the Santa Fe Railroad decided to put down tracks through Plainview. This helped spur economic growth and attract new residents to the budding community.

Today, Plainview's location along the Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor is having the same effect as its population grows and new businesses come to the area.

During the past century, Plainview's citizens have witnessed the mode of transportation change from rail to road, and local agriculture evolve from being merely a source of food and fiber to also a source of energy.

However, despite these changes, the core values present at Plainview's founding are still alive and well 100 years later. A strong sense of community and a vibrant civic pride continue to make Plainview, Texas a welcome place for businesses and families.

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to represent the great people of Plainview in the United States Congress, and I wish the city well as it embarks on its second hundred years.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PENSION BENEFITS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, this week, with the support of the American Legion and West Virginia veteran John Peters, I am again introducing two bills that will honor those who have served our country so bravely in times of conflict. Both pieces of legislation will achieve this by extending benefits to veterans who have served in harms way, though not in a time of declared war.

Throughout the history of the United States, our country has seen the personal courage and sacrifice by millions of Americans who have served in various wars and conflicts protecting our freedoms and our way of life. Madam Speaker, we have honored many of these fine men and women, but not all. Our

current law only awards full pension benefits to those who have served in a designated "period of war" and excludes those who have fought valiantly in other parts of the world.

Tom Hayes of American Legion Post 93 in Kenova, West Virginia recently acknowledged this mockery of our benefits system in an article from the Huntington Herald Dispatch in Huntington, West Virginia dated April 11, 2007. In this article, Mr. Hayes stated "On Oct. 23, 1983, 241 of our finest died in Beirut, Lebanon. By the time the hostility ended on Feb. 8, 1984, 270 Americans had died. Some 20,000 Americans fought on or around Grenada between Oct. 23 and Nov. 21, 1983. Nineteen were killed and 116 were wounded. In Panama, 23 were killed in action and 322 wounded between Dec. 20, 1989 and Jan. 31, 1990. Public Law 101-478 expanded eligibility for membership in the American Legion to Veterans of Lebanon, Grenada, and Panama." In addition, Mr. Hayes wrote, "Subsequent to Jan. 31, 1955, the Vietnam and Gulf War periods (Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975, and Aug. 2, 1990, to present) have made Korean Veterans eligible for disability pension, leaving approximately half who served between those periods not eligible along with veterans of Lebanon, Grenada, and Panama who answered the call to fight and who may now need financial help and are not eligible for a penny from the VA."

My legislation will end this injustice. My first bill will extend eligibility for veterans' pension benefits to those who served in the areas of the Korean Peninsula, Lebanon, Grenada, and other areas of armed conflict, where their service involved hostile fire or aggression. The second piece of legislation will extend benefits to veterans who have received the expeditionary medal, which is earned by those with whom the Joint Chiefs of Staff have determined were engaged where hostile action by foreign armed forces was imminent.

The United States has sent service personnel to all corners of the globe and in every capacity they have made us proud. Unfortunately, when they return we do not always

treat their honor with the respect that it deserves. We don't fund veterans' healthcare adequately and continue to let our veterans get caught in a never-ending bureaucracy denying them access to basic medical care. I am proud that this Congress has passed substantial Veterans benefits legislation in the past month and I hope that it is signs of more to come.

Madam Speaker, I will end with this, we put these men and women in harm's way because we trusted them and their ability, and they ought to be able to trust our ability. These pieces of legislation would align the sacrifice made with the compensation awarded. I say that these veterans deserve the same benefits afforded their brothers and sisters in arms who participated in declared wars and especially those that are civilian employees and eligible for the same benefits. I urge the Congress to pass this legislation in a swift manner so that we may begin to respect and honor all of our veterans who have served.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 160TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HANSON PLACE CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to a Brooklyn landmark, the Hanson Place Central United Methodist Church, on the occasion of their 160th Anniversary.

The first Hanson Place Methodist Church building was erected in 1847 at the corner of Hanson Place and St. Felix Street in Brooklyn. There, the history of ecumenical cooperation and community service began with a vibrant, Christ-centered congregation. Seventeen years later, to accommodate phenomenal congregational growth, a second and larger build-

ing was constructed, and dedicated on January 4, 1874. Then, on February 23, 1927, the Central Methodist Episcopal Church came into being by merging the Summerfield Methodist Church with the Hanson Place Methodist Church.

The church rose above challenges when its building purchased in 1874 was considered unsafe and had to be vacated leaving 1650 members belonging to a Church Without a Home as it was reported in the press.

By the end of 1930, sufficient investment had been committed in the Hanson Place Central Methodist Church that the church owned property that covered the entire corner on which to build its new cathedral. A lot on Hanson Place and on St. Felix Street was marked off for the structure, and today stands the Hanson Place Central United Methodist Church at 144 St. Felix Street.

The church's commitment to the community has been shown through their various ministries. Their Campaign Against Hunger has been a valuable resource for more than 15 years. This food pantry provides meals to over 110,000 individuals annually. It utilizes a customer choice approach and adopts a supermarket style of shopping with a nutritional education component.

For the past nine years, their Partnership for the Homeless ministry has provided a safe haven for men. This ministry serves as a resource for the Drop-In Center for the Bond Street Salvation Army. The shelter is open year round including public holidays.

The people who once belonged to a Church Without a Home, serves as a home for so many within a changing and rapidly developing neighborhood within and throughout Brooklyn.

I am honored that the Hanson Place Central Methodist Church has provided countless services to constituents within my district. I ask my colleagues to join me in commending this fine institution for their many years of service and commitment to the people of Brooklyn.