

conferences and symposiums in the U.S. and Asia on political, economic, and security topics, and to host small, off-the-record meetings of American and Asian officials, businessmen and academic leaders providing a venue for free and open discussions and exchange of views.

Under Mrs. Kee's stewardship, the institute has successfully met its objectives, and I am confident that it will continue to do so under the tutelage of her successor. One of Mrs. Kee's most successful initiatives has been staff codels which she has organized and led. As an example, there were 70 staff codels with 800 senior congressional staff that traveled to China to meet and discuss issues with high government officials. This has facilitated mutual understanding, a core objective, and people-to-people diplomacy the benefits of which will continue to inure to our mutual benefit.

As Mrs. Kee retires from active leadership of the United States-Asia Institute, I have every confidence that she will continue to be active in the institute and United States-Asia relations as a valued adviser. On a personal level, I look forward to her continued counsel and advice.

Mahalo nui loa—thank you very much—Esther G. Kee, for all that you have done on behalf of our country in its continuing and important mission of promoting better understanding between the United States and Asia.●

CONGRATULATING JOSEPH M. DELL'OLIO

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I wish today to commend someone whom I have admired for my entire time in this body, a man who has committed his life to helping society's most vulnerable. Joe Dell'Olio, who is retiring after 35 years at Child, Incorporated, is a dedicated public servant in the true sense of the word.

Joe started at Child, Inc., of Wilmington after spending his early career fighting to reduce Delaware's crime rate. In 1972, after just 2 years as the executive director of the Delaware Agency to Reduce Crime, we saw the crime rate cut by 7 percent. As the head of the agency responsible for leading that fight, perhaps no one was due more credit than Joe.

Joe then joined Child, Inc. in 1973, the same year I was sworn in to the Senate. As executive vice president, he was responsible for the development and administration of a wide range of advocacy and service programs for victims of domestic violence and their families. Joe and I grew together as we fought to empower and protect victims of domestic violence in our community.

While I labored in the Senate to write and pass the Violence Against Women Act, Joe Dell'Olio was on the front lines in our battle. He was the one on the street or in the counseling room. He was the one securing legal help when victims could not afford it. And he was the one who made sure

someone was there when a victim had nowhere to go.

I consider the Violence Against Women Act my proudest legislative accomplishment. But the Joe Dell'Olios of the world are the ones who deserve the credit for our progress. Joe has received several awards, including some from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services.

Throughout my career, I have been privileged to work with some of the finest public servants our Nation has ever known, those who committed their lives to the greater good. None have been more unwaveringly focused on a worthy cause than has Joe Dell'Olio, even as he raised a loving family of his own. Joe's tireless sense of duty and his unrelenting service never cease to amaze me.

I wish him the best in all his future endeavors.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF LARKSPUR

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize the 100th anniversary of the city of Larkspur, located in Marin County, CA.

The city of Larkspur was incorporated into the State of California on March 1, 1908. This year, we celebrate its centennial anniversary. With a downtown that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the architecture that defines the city of Larkspur has fascinated and charmed visitors for decades. Its historical structures and natural surroundings provide residents and visitors alike a glimpse of California the way it was at the start of the 20th century.

The city is divided into two distinct areas, with its historic downtown area to the west of Highway 101 and Larkspur Landing, an outdoor shopping area with sublime bay views, to the east of Highway 101. Just across the street from Larkspur Landing, travelers can catch the Larkspur Ferry to the San Francisco Ferry Building, a ride that offers spectacular views of Mount Tamalpais, Angel Island, and the Golden Gate Bridge. This outstanding natural scenery in the midst of such a finely preserved historical setting makes the slogan "Meet me in Larkspur" a common phrase amongst residents and visitors alike.

From the preservation of historic Magnolia Avenue to the conservation of the celebrated Blue Rock Inn, the city of Larkspur offers visitors a vibrant look at smalltown California as it was in the early 1900s. For 100 years, the city of Larkspur has not only served as a recreational escape and historical wonderland for those visiting the city but a place to call home for its more than 11,000 residents. I commend the city of Larkspur for maintaining the natural beauty and historical significance that defines this fine city.

The city of Larkspur's vision and commitment to protecting its small piece of California history should be commended. I congratulate the city of Larkspur for its hard work on this spe-

cial occasion, and I look forward to future generations having the opportunity to visit and enjoy this unique city.●

RETIREMENT OF CAROLYN DOWNS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the service of Carolyn Downs. She has tirelessly worked on behalf of the poor throughout her life, including many years of outstanding service as the director of The Banquet in Sioux Falls, SD. Carolyn has been committed to providing a safe place where people may gather to receive nourishment and fellowship.

Throughout her 20 years at The Banquet, Carolyn has touched the lives of innumerable needy individuals and families. Her devotion to feeding the hungry sets an example to the community of a life devoted to the betterment of people all over South Dakota. All of the guests that she has served have seen what is described as her cheerful strength.

Her work at The Banquet has not only touched the lives of the hungry but has given many South Dakotans an opportunity to volunteer and become involved in their community. Carolyn's work has brought out the best in people around her and is an inspiration to all of South Dakota.

Under her leadership, The Banquet turned into a vital resource center institution for the hungry and is one of the pillars of the Sioux Falls community. Her humility, grace, leadership skills, and humble service will be greatly missed when she retires. All of her work has not been for public praise or external reward but, rather, a deeply held belief in serving others. The State of South Dakota and all of its residents owe her a debt of gratitude for all that she had done to better it.

Carolyn will be retiring this February. Though her day-to-day presence at The Banquet will be greatly missed, her years of hard work are appreciated by all that volunteer and use The Banquet. I applaud Carolyn Downs's service and thank her for her time and efforts.●

TRIBUTE TO LABRADFORD EAGLE DEER

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to offer a statement about a distinguished South Dakota youth, LaBradford Eagle Deer. LaBradford, 16, of St. Francis, SD, was one of two teens who represented the United States at the United Nations' observation of the 20th International Day for the Eradication of Poverty last October. Six young people from across the world were chosen to speak at the event on a panel about what they thought needed to be done about poverty.

According to the United Nations' Web site, the U.N. General Assembly declared October 17 as the International Day for the Eradication of

Poverty and invited all States to devote the day to presenting and promoting, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities with regard to the eradication of poverty and destitution. The resolution further invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to assist States, at their request, in organizing national activities for the observance of the day, and requests the Secretary-General to take, within existing resources, the measures necessary to ensure the success of the day's observance by the United Nations.

Eagle Deer exemplifies the goals of this important day. Eagle Deer lives on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation, where almost half of children younger than 17 live in poverty, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Center. Eagle Deer discussed the hopelessness that poverty creates in a person saying, "suicide, addiction, dropout and crime rates are so high in poverty-stricken areas on our reservation, as well as other areas in the world."

Eagle Deer has taken a leading role to improve his community. An honor student at Todd County High School, he is president of the St. Francis Youth Center. He coaches flag football and is himself involved in cross country, basketball, and track. Staying true to his culture, he has organized a traditional youth-honoring powwow. A sentiment that I agree with, Eagle Deer values education as a pathway out of poverty.

LaBradford is an example to other poverty stricken children, and I commend his efforts to alleviate the effects of poverty on children in South Dakota and children worldwide.●

REMEMBERING VADA SHEID

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that today I honor one of the true pioneers for women in Arkansas, Vada Webb Sheid, who passed away this past Monday. Mrs. Sheid was a remarkable woman who was an enterprising entrepreneur and built a business, Sheid's Furniture Company, with her husband Carl in Mountain Home.

But Mrs. Sheid is best remembered as a dedicated public servant who became the first woman in Arkansas to serve in both the Arkansas House of Representatives and Senate.

She began her public service at 19 years old when she became the Izard County welfare director. Soon after, she met Carl, and they opened the area's first self-serve food market in Mountain Home. During World War II, Carl was drafted in the Army, and Mrs. Sheid went to work as a payroll clerk for a company building the Norfolk Dam. After the war, they opened up a grocery store before finally starting the Sheid's Furniture Company in 1957, which her family still runs today.

It was around this time that Mrs. Sheid began to consider furthering her career in public service. She served as

Baxter Country treasurer from 1960 to 1964 before being elected to the Arkansas House. As a State legislator, she focused on issues affecting the elderly and was asked by then-Governor Dale Bumpers to serve as a representative to the White House Conference on Aging.

In 1976, Mrs. Sheid sought higher office and was elected to the Arkansas Senate. She served in that capacity until 1985. Shortly thereafter, then-Governor Bill Clinton appointed her to the Arkansas Police Commission, where she later served as chairman.

Mrs. Sheid had many great accomplishments in the Arkansas Legislature. She sponsored legislation creating Arkansas State University-Mountain Home and North Arkansas Community College in Harrison. She also authored legislation to construct the twin bridges over Lake Norfork, as well as numerous highway projects.

Mr. President, as a woman growing up in Arkansas, Vada Sheid was a true inspiration to me and many others. The example she set is one that I can only hope to follow. She will be missed by all Arkansans. At this time, my thoughts and prayers go out to her family.●

REMEMBERING MIKE WILSON

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I speak with great sadness as I remember the life of a great Arkansan who passed away on February 8, 2008: Michael Evans "Mike" Wilson.

For the last 20 years, Mike served as the chairman and CEO of Lee Wilson and Company, a business that began to transform and build the Arkansas Delta region more than 100 years ago. Growing up the daughter of a rice farmer in eastern Arkansas, I knew of the Wilson family and how their name was synonymous with the values of hard work and enterprise throughout our region.

Mike was not only the leader of his longtime family business; he was also a tireless servant for the city of Wilson and the State of Arkansas. He had served as mayor of Wilson since 1986 and was committed to economic development and advancing educational opportunity in Arkansas. He also lent his time to a considerable number of charitable organizations' boards and committees to further those goals.

A 1965 graduate of the Citadel, Mike also loved his country. He served our Nation in the U.S. Army upon graduation and achieved the rank of captain before his honorable discharge.

He was passionate about life, and I consider him a true friend. He will be missed by us all.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Pat, son Perry, daughter Natalie, and their entire family at this time.●

IN HONOR OF JOHN ROBERTS

● Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, today I wish to honor John Roberts of Omaha, NE.

John was an independent and dedicated individual who found comfort in life through helping others. He was a 2001 graduate of Omaha Westside High School and a 2005 graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, studying art history. His inquisitive nature toward different cultures and languages, along with his desire to help others, led him to volunteer for the Peace Corps. John was sworn in on December 8, 2005, and served as a construction and skilled trades education volunteer on the island of Erromango in the Republic of Vanuatu.

John's impact in Vanuatu was tangible to the people who lived in his village. He was credited for strengthening South River's transportation, income generation, and communications capabilities. When his parents visited him in Vanuatu, they were proud to see the sense of community John brought to his village. His father, Doug, said the people loved him as though he were one of their own; one Erromango community representative regarded him "as our son." His sincerity and enthusiasm to help those in need is epitomized by his Peace Corps aspiration statement:

Why I have volunteered is a question that I do not fully know the answer to. Coming from a stable farming family I was always taught to help my neighbors but I also feel an internal pull to help lend a hand. Somewhere back in my short life, I made a choice to serve and have been doing so every since. Instead of a single moment defining my reasons to serve, a whole lifetime of learning is driving me to volunteer for the Peace Corps.

On October 11, 2007, John passed away while working at his site, a branch that was being cut by a student inadvertently struck John and another member of the community. He is survived by his parents Doug and Rose of Omaha.

Today, I join all Americans in mourning the loss of this remarkable young man. John Roberts' altruism, compassion, and exemplary service will remain an inspiration for those who wish to follow in his footsteps.●

RECOGNIZING HAVEN'S CANDIES

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, as today is Valentine's Day—a day when everyone deserves to enjoy at least a little chocolate—I commend a small chocolatier from my home State of Maine that has produced quality chocolates and candies for nearly a century. Haven's Candies of Westbrook is an innovative candy factory that sells a wide variety of chocolate favorites in addition to both traditional and original Maine treats.

The early history of Haven's Candies has an element of romance to it. Herbert Haven, the company's founder, followed his sweetheart from Boston, MA, to Portland, ME, in the early 1900s. They were soon married, and Herbert, who was the son of a candy maker, teamed up with his wife to produce handcrafted candies in their kitchen, which they began selling from the