

Congregation Beth Shalom is one of five synagogues in the State of Alaska. Only two of those five synagogues enjoy the services of a full-time rabbi. Congregation Beth Shalom is one of these two synagogues.

I am pleased to acknowledge and welcome Rabbi Michael Oblath, the present Rabbi, who joined Congregation Beth Shalom in September 2007. He is the fifth Rabbi to serve the congregation since its founding on September 5, 1958. It is also appropriate to recognize the four other individuals who have served as spiritual leaders to Congregation Beth Shalom since its founding, beginning with Rabbi Lester Polonsky, Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld, Rabbi Johanna Hershenson, and Rabbi Fred Wenger.

Congregation Beth Shalom was first organized on September 5, 1958. It was on that day that 20 people gathered in Burt and Bobbie Goldberg's home to welcome the Shabbat and organize a synagogue. At the time, the only Jewish services in Anchorage were being conducted by chaplains on Elmendorf Air Force Base, and organizers wanted to establish a Jewish identity for their children which were anchored to the city.

Today, Congregation Beth Shalom occupies a beautiful synagogue building on East Northern Lights Boulevard, which opened 20 years ago to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the congregation's founding. The synagogue houses the Joy Greisen Jewish Education Center, which features a preschool open to the entire community, without regard to religious affiliation, an afterschool arts program and a summer camp.

Congregation Beth Shalom has achieved Green Star recognition for its environmental and energy conservation efforts. Its Tikkun Olam program is engaged in numerous good works which help make Anchorage one of the best places in our Nation to live and raise a family.

I am proud to recognize Congregation Beth Shalom on 50 years of service to our southcentral Alaska community. We have great expectations for your next 50 years.●

RECOGNIZING TOMMY L. HARBOUR

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I honor Tommy L. Harbour, a fellow West Virginian from Milton. He is a shining example of the self sacrifice and willingness to serve that is an important part of the culture of West Virginia. I am privileged to represent him and share his story with you today.

Tommy Harbour proudly served his country during World War II. He joined the Coast Guard on July 5, 1943, where he was assigned to the USS *Bayfield* and served on the landing craft PA33-4. During the invasion of Normandy, Mr. Harbour's landing craft first helped reinforce Omaha Beach with soldiers before making several more landings on

Utah Beach under constant gunfire from several fortified German positions. After the European campaign was over, Tommy continued to serve in the Pacific Theater. He and his fellow soldiers played crucial roles in the invasion of Iwo Jima and the invasion of Okinawa in 1945.

Following the war, Tommy Harbour was honorably discharged on May 27, 1946, when he returned home to Milton, WV. Tommy went on to once again answer the call of duty, serving as the mayor of Milton for 17 years. During his time as mayor, Tommy showed strong commitment to helping those he served. Mr. Harbour had a reputation for thoroughly examining the issues before him and ensuring the best possible course of action was taken. As mayor, Tommy was approachable and always willing to listen to people's thoughts and concerns. The enhancements he helped orchestrate, such as flood protection and improving the police department, will be attributes to Milton for years to come.

Tommy Harbour is an outstanding American and a true West Virginian. He is a perfect model of the impact one man can have. Mr. Harbour has lived a life of service, always giving and never asking for anything in return. This story of his bravery and willingness to serve his community is a great example of the accomplishments we are all capable of and I hope it has inspired my fellow colleagues and individuals nationwide.●

COMMENDING DR. EPHRAIM ZUROFF

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to commend Dr. Ephraim Zuroff and the Simon Wiesenthal Center for their efforts to track down the last Nazi war criminals from World War II. Their work is enormously important, both in bringing the guilty to justice and preventing future acts of genocide. The statute of limitations does not—must not—expire on crimes against humanity. Earlier this year, I introduced the World War II War Crimes Accountability Act with Senator NELSON, which I hope will help Dr. Zuroff and the Simon Wiesenthal Center in their noble effort.

One of the main targets of this effort is Milivoj Asner, who during World War II was the fascist police chief of Pozega, Yugoslavia. Serving the Nazi-allied Ustasha regime in his native Croatia, Asner presided over the destruction of the local Jewish, Serb, and Gypsy populations. After the war ended, Asner fled to Austria, where he lived in obscurity until he was finally charged with war crimes by Croatia in 2005. His extradition has been delayed, however, by Austrian federal and local bureaucratic obstruction. Austrian authorities have claimed that Asner is in poor health, though apparently that infirmity did not stop him from attending a Euro 2008 soccer game this past summer, where he was spotted by a

British newspaper. In light of this evidence, the local and national Austrian authorities must summon the political will to bring Asner to justice.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center launched Operation: Last Chance in 2002 to identify and assist in the prosecution of the remaining Nazi war criminals still at large. Dr. Zuroff, who has been leading this effort, should be highly commended for his outstanding efforts in bringing the most guilty Nazis to justice. Of these, Asner is near the top of his list.

Even today, the crimes of people such as Asner in the service of pro-Nazi regimes strain our understanding of hate. National Socialist Germany today is an icon remembered only for its brutality, its mantra of genocide, and its culture of racism. And those last Nazis, who are waiting out their last days under the coming twilight, must not be allowed to go quietly into the night, as did too many of their victims. For the souls that were lost, and even more for those that remain, there must be justice. I commend Dr. Zuroff and the Simon Wiesenthal Center in the highest possible terms, and urge the U.S. Government to do all it can to help them in their cause.●

ARMSTRONG-RINGSTED COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Armstrong-Ringsted Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Armstrong-Ringsted Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$1 million which it used to help build an addition to replace a 1915 building. The new building includes a science lab, an activity center/gymnasium and 10 classrooms. This

school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received fire safety grants totaling \$107,000 to make improvements throughout the district.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Armstrong-Ringsted Community School District. In particular, I'd like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Rod Foster, Paul Stevens, Howard Taylor, Betsey Ulrich, Don Looft and former members Marti Kindrick, Dale Anderson, Jan Hampton, Tom Mart, Greg Buum, Lisa McConnell, Greg Anderson, Anita Larsen, and Rick Steinberger. I would also like to recognize superintendent Randy Collins, former superintendent Robert Raymer, board secretary Deb Obbink and building director Tom Mart.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Armstrong-Ringsted Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in those communities. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

BAXTER COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Baxter Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Baxter Community School District received a 2003 Harkin grant totaling \$508,893 which it used towards building new elementary school classrooms. The additions also allowed the district to add a preschool classroom and partner with a local childcare center. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received a fire safety grant in 1999 for \$8,893, which was applied to a new detection system, wiring and exit signs at the high school.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Baxter Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of superintendent Neil Seales, building committee co-chairs Jim Robinson, Julie McWhirter, and Larry Hesson, and the Baxter school board of directors.

Mr. President, as we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin School Grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Baxter Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

BENTON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Benton Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Benton Community School District received a 2001 Harkin grant totaling \$100,000 which it used to build a fire wall and renovate the stage area of the Keystone Center building. The area was transformed into two classrooms for art and music. The Federal grant made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Benton Community School District. In particular, I'd like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Brenda Schanbacher, Terry Harrington, Brian Strellner, Dan Voss, Tricia Schutterle, Bryce Brecht and Bill Boies and former board members Robyn Allen, George Martin, Connie Jacobsen, Elaine Harrington, Jeff Semelroth, Gary Kaiser and Chris Christensen. I would also like to recognize superintendent Gary Zittergruen and elementary school principal Tim Sanderson.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.