

In no time, these lands that were preserved so residents could always observe native Florida would look nothing like native Florida.

Just how large an army is working at the task was revealed in a recent story in the St. Petersburg Times. Several hundred volunteers have been helping the county's Environmental Lands Division maintain the almost 16,000 acres for which it is responsible.

The sad fact is, even that number of people can scarcely scratch the surface of the work that needs to be done in the county's preserved lands. If more don't help, the battle eventually will be lost.

It is clear that government will not be able to take up the slack, at least not as it is currently configured. Because of budget cuts, the staff of the county's Environmental Lands Division has been reduced by 14 positions and now numbers only 34. And only a handful of those are assigned to full-time maintenance duties in the preserves.

The lands division now is hoping to grow its volunteer ranks by 10 percent each year to offset its staff cuts. All ages are welcomed—even youths from 12 to 18 can volunteer with parental involvement.

A variety of tasks is available to volunteers, from the hard but essential job of removing invasives such as air potato and Brazilian pepper, to leading hikes, doing research and staffing educational centers.

The problem, of course, with relying so heavily on volunteers is that they don't generally spend as many hours at the tasks as paid employees, and they usually insist on flexibility. Some, like Bill Brown of East Lake, can offer a half-day every week to the effort. Few spend as many hours as Reggie Hall, a volunteer who devotes much of his life to maintaining the Ozone Preserve in North Pinellas.

The combined effort of all those environmental volunteers led to recent recognition for the program from the National Association of Counties and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

The role of volunteers will be even more important in the next few years, as budgets continue to tighten and the pressure on Pinellas environmental lands grows. If you are over 12, and you have a few hours to spare helping to preserve these precious open spaces, consider signing up as an environmental lands volunteer.

HONORING THE WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE IN THE 56TH INAUGURAL PARADE

HON. BETSY MARKEY

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Ms. MARKEY of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Windsor High School Marching Band for being selected to march in President Barack Obama's inauguration parade.

In May of 2008, a mile wide tornado cut a 35 mile path through northern Colorado. The tornado resulted in one death and displaced hundreds of residents in the Windsor community. It would be easy to focus on the tragedy of the Windsor tornado when acknowledging the successes of the Windsor High School Marching Band, but to do so would overlook the extraordinary achievements of the band under any circumstance. In 2008, the WHS Marching Band won division first place in three

different regional competitions, as well as "High Musical Performance," "High General Effect," and the 2008 Colorado Bandmasters Association Class 3A "State Marching Band Championship."

For President Barack Obama's inaugural parade, the WHS Marching Band performed an original composition by Frank Sullivan entitled "The Four Freedoms." This piece is a musical interpretation of President Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union Address to the United States Congress. In the "Four Freedoms" address, FDR made the case for American assistance in World War II by enumerating the four universal freedoms worth fighting for: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Want, Freedom of Worship, and Freedom of Fear. The state of Colorado and I were privileged to be represented by the Windsor High School Marching Band at the historic inauguration of our 44th president, and I congratulate them on their much deserved success.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MOHONK MOUNTAIN HOUSE, A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Mohonk Mountain House, a National Historic Landmark located in Ulster County, New York, which is part of the 22nd Congressional District that I proudly serve. This year marks the 140th anniversary of the founding of the Mohonk Mountain House, and I am delighted to have the opportunity to recognize the resort's rich historical heritage, continued vitality, and its many important contributions to our local community.

Founded as a modest retreat in 1869 by Albert Smiley with his purchase of 280 acres of land and a 10-room tavern, the Mohonk Mountain House has grown into a world renowned resort with over 2,200 acres and 265 guest rooms. Adding to the splendor of this mountaintop resort are an array of award-winning amenities including a state-of-the-art, eco-friendly spa, an outdoor ice-skating pavilion, and a warm and welcoming professional staff. The Mohonk Mountain House is also acclaimed for its many charming attributes such as the numerous and stately wood-burning fireplaces, balconies with glorious views and the 19th Century tradition of afternoon tea. Also, during a stay at the Mountain House, guests can get a glimpse of the resort's historic past in the enhanced museum located in the National Historic Landmark Barn.

Not surprisingly, some of the most remarkable attributes of this Victorian castle retreat are not inside the resort but surrounding it. The Mountain House is situated at the heart of a 26,000-acre natural area which is comprised of private preserves, a state park preserve and the resort property, all within the majestic Shawangunk Mountain range. Equally beautiful during all four seasons, this extraordinary landscape affords resort guests the opportunity to swim in a glacial lake, horseback ride on miles of natural trails, enjoy the bountiful gardens and hike the many and varied trails, both on the resort property and throughout the surrounding preserves. In addition, guests and

local residents alike can enjoy opportunities to participate in rock climbing, caving, golfing, cross-county skiing and snowshoeing.

Since its inception, Mohonk Mountain House and its owners, the Smiley family, have been active stewards of the land. In 1963 the Smileys, working with Mohonk Mountain House guests, established the non-profit Mohonk Trust. The goal of this trust was to protect and manage the land for public use. Renamed in 1978 as the Mohonk Preserve, the mission of the Smiley family has continued, and, in fact, sets the standard for mountain stewardship by using science to guide land management. These efforts have helped to ensure that this remarkable landscape is preserved for generations to come.

Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the Mohonk Mountain House as it enters its 140th year as a family owned and operated resort. I am confident that the Smiley family will not only continue to be outstanding stewards of the land, but also leaders in the hospitably industry and in the management of this National Historic Landmark.

TARP REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 15, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 384) to reform the Troubled Assets Relief Program of the Secretary of the Treasury and ensure accountability under such Program, and for other purposes:

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 384, the Troubled Assets Relief Program, TARP, Reform and Accountability Act.

Since this capital purchase program, TARP, was implemented, billions of dollars in taxpayer money have been disbursed to institutions with little to no accountability or oversight over these funds. A congressional oversight panel for TARP funding recently concluded that the Treasury Department essentially does not know how TARP fund recipients are utilizing these funds, and a report released last month by the U.S. Government Accountability Office urged TARP administrators to improve the program's internal controls to better monitor how the funds are being spent.

H.R. 384 amends the TARP provisions of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to strengthen accountability, close loopholes, and increase transparency of the administration of this program. This bill requires any existing or future institution that receives TARP funding to provide quarterly public reporting on its use of the funding and stipulates that the Treasury Department administer a public database that includes the reporting, data collection, and analysis of use of TARP funds.

Last week the House voted unanimously to require our committees to hold periodic hearings on waste, fraud, and abuse in Government programs. As a cosponsor of this bill, H. Res. 40, I believe that Congress has an obligation to restore accountability and oversight

to government. H.R. 384, the TARP Reform and Accountability Act, is also critical to restoring the American people's faith in our Government and takes us one step closer to getting our country back on track.

Importantly, H.R. 384 requires that a certain amount of TARP funding be committed to foreclosure mitigation and stipulates that the Treasury Secretary develop a comprehensive plan to prevent and mitigate foreclosures on residential mortgages. This legislation also establishes a program to stimulate demand for home purchases and clear inventory of properties so that qualified home buyers can purchase homes at affordable mortgage rates. We cannot move quickly enough to provide assistance to homeowners across the country.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 384.

RECOGNIZING DR. JOHN B. WEBB'S
90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a lifetime of service and community involvement from Dr. John B. Webb, who, on January 24, 2009, celebrates his 90th birthday.

The past 90 years have seen many changes in Dr. Webb's life, most of which was spent practicing veterinary medicine. After graduating from Auburn University in 1957, Dr. Webb returned to his hometown in Pensacola, Florida, to begin his own practice. When he opened his first clinic, Dr. Webb was the fifth veterinarian to begin practicing in Escambia County, Florida, and the 575th to begin practicing in the state of Florida. Today, Dr. Webb serves as one of the oldest licensed veterinarians in Escambia County.

Over the years Dr. Webb has received numerous awards for his ongoing role in the northwest Florida community. He served 15 years on the Escambia County Board of Directors for the Florida Farm Bureau as well as 25 years on the board of trustees for the Langley Bell 4-H Center. He is also a past president of the Escambia County Extension Council as well as the Pensacola Interstate Fair.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Webb for many years now and I am honored to call him a friend. A strong supporter of conservative principles and values, Dr. Webb has always offered his support and friendship to Vicki and me. As he celebrates his 90th birthday, I have much to thank him for from our years of friendship.

For many years to come, the northwest Florida community will continue to benefit from the lasting impression made by Dr. Webb, whose involvement in the community has expanded opportunities to the surrounding area. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Dr. John B. Webb upon his 90th birthday and for his exemplary service in the First District of Florida.

A TRIBUTE TO BISHOP JOHN J.
McRAITH

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. GUTHRIE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Bishop John J. McRaith for his faithful service to the Catholic Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky. He has served the church and his community with distinction for over 26 years. Bishop McRaith, the third bishop of Owensboro, resigned from his position on January 5, 2009.

Bishop McRaith graduated from St. John's Prep School in Collegeville, Minnesota, and Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. Then, he graduated from the School of Theology, St. Bernard Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1960 and was subsequently ordained a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota, on February 21, 1960.

Bishop McRaith began serving the Diocese of Owensboro on December 15, 1982. The diocese encompasses 32 counties and covers approximately 12,500 square miles. It includes 79 parishes, three high schools, two middle schools, and 13 elementary schools. In a testament to Bishop McRaith's dedication, he would typically log more than 25,000 miles a year traveling across the diocese.

Known for his humble spirit, Bishop McRaith is quick to credit others with the successes over the last 27 years, including one of the highest church attendance rates in the Nation. Last week he said, "The good things that have happened while I was here, many, many people made them happen."

Beyond his service to the Catholic Church of Western Kentucky, Bishop McRaith serves the community as a board member for Brescia University, the Daniel Pitino Center, the McAuley Free Clinic in Owensboro, and Lourdes Hospital Foundation in Paducah.

Bishop McRaith's devotion is an example for all Kentuckians to follow. I thank Bishop McRaith for his many years of service and commitment to western Kentucky.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE
PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION
ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, Modern medicine can prevent an inconvenient infection from ballooning into a debilitating illness with a relatively simple physician's visit and subsequent treatment. And here in America, with the best medical practices and practitioners in the history of the world, we have the capabilities to keep our Nation's children healthy and their futures bright.

But we aren't doing it.

Up to now, we've chosen not to guarantee the health of our children, instead forcing upon millions of parents the difficult choice of seeking treatment for an ailing child or buying food. Making that potentially life-saving doctor's visit or keeping the lights on.

Today, we have the opportunity to erase that awful dilemma for the working mothers and fathers of more than 4 million children, including tens of thousands in my home State of Kentucky, by extending the State Children's Health Insurance Program. By supporting the SCHIP expansion we help guarantee the inalienable rights of America's children to survive, thrive, and grow up to become healthy adults.

By expanding SCHIP we can prevent the future health problems of our youngest generation so that they never grow up to be burdens on the system. It makes economic sense, but more importantly, it is our moral obligation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, as we fight to ensure that a sick child in this great Nation never has to go without care.

HONORING MICHAEL TOLLEFSON

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Michael Tollefson upon his retirement as the Superintendent of Yosemite National Park. After thirty-six years with the National Park Service, Superintendent Tollefson will be honored on Saturday, January 17, 2009 at a party to be held at Curry Village Pavilion, in Yosemite National Park.

Michael Tollefson was raised in Seattle, Washington and graduated from the University of Washington in 1970 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in marketing and finance. He later returned to graduate school to study park management. As a young adult he served in the United States Army Reserves for eight years, attaining the rank of Captain. His introduction into the National Park Service began early in his career. Mr. Tollefson served as the Chief of Interpretation at Virgin Islands National Park. He also spent time as the Chief of Operations at Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, as a District Ranger at Denali National Park and Park Ranger at Katmai National Park all in Alaska. His time in Alaska provided unique challenges in dealing with Alaskan brown bears, fragile coral reefs and endangered humpback whales. He officially began his National Park Service career as a seasonal ranger at North Cascades National Park in 1972.

In 1983, Mr. Tollefson attained his first superintendency position at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve in Alaska. He managed the 3.3 million acre park for four years. While there, he implemented regulations guiding cruise ship operations in the park for the protection of the Humpback Whales. After four years, he became the Associate Regional Director for Operations in the National Park Service's former Pacific Northwest Region. He was stationed in Seattle and provided support for all aspects of operations to the twenty national park units in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

In 1995, Superintendent Tollefson moved to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in California's Southern Sierra Nevada. During his tenure, he was responsible for guiding the restoration of over two hundred acres in the Giant Forest Sequoia Grove to protect the