

graduate of the POST Command College and holds an Executive Certificate from California Peace Officers Standards and Training.

My close friendship with Chief Johansen began in tragedy. He provided strength and courage to his officers, staff and families after a masked gunman charged into a hotel room during a training session and murdered two of his officers. His example helped sustain a shocked and grieving community. Gary's retirement to his home in Bend, Oregon, will leave a grateful community in his debt.

IN RECOGNITION OF EARTH DAY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today, we celebrate Earth Day. From its humble grass-roots beginning, Earth Day has grown to an international event. Events are planned in all 50 states and in the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe and North and South America.

Proudly, my home state of Wisconsin can claim some credit for this worthwhile event. Former Governor, U.S. Senator and Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson championed environmental issues during his 18 years in Washington. Of all Senator Nelson achievements, he will always be remembered for his progressive environmental record.

In 1963, Senator Nelson urged then-President John F. Kennedy to give national visibility to the importance of protecting the environment by taking a nationwide conservation tour. At every stop he would spell out, in dramatic fashion, the serious and deteriorating condition of our environment and discuss a comprehensive agenda to begin to address the problem. No President had ever made such a tour. While Earth Day was still seven years off, President Kennedy's conservation tour awoke the nation's attention to this issue.

After 28 years, Senator Nelson and other environmental advocates of his day may be proud of what Earth Day has grown to become. Since the first Earth Day celebration, this country has passed a number of important environmental measures—the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, Conservation Reserve Program to name just a few. Thousands of acres of wetlands have also been restored and nearly extinct species have been saved. Wisconsin can clearly see the positive effect of these important laws every time we enjoy the beauty of the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

As a nation and a world, we must not rest on our past achievements. In the next 35 years, America's population is expected to grow from approximately 266 million people to nearly 350 million. This growth brings development which may encroach upon many of the environmental accomplishments we have attained. With new found freedom and economic prosperity, many other nations of the world also project increased populations and environmental concerns as their industrial bases expand.

As members of Congress, we have a responsibility to ensure the protection of our environmental resources. I urge all my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, to remember the efforts of Senator Nelson and

others of his generation by joining me in passing legislation that protects the nation's and world's natural resources.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ILLINOIS & MICHIGAN CANAL

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th Anniversary of the Illinois & Michigan Canal. At its 150th birthday, the I&M Canal is one of the best-kept secrets of American history. In 1848, when the I&M Canal connected the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, it created a water highway between New York harbor and the Gulf of Mexico. The Canal opened the floodgates to an influx of new commodities, new people, and new ideas. The I&M, and the railroad and highway lines that soon paralleled its connection between Chicago and LaSalle, became the great passageway to the American West. At a stroke, the opening of the I&M Canal gave Illinois the key to mastery of the American mid-continent.

The dream of the canal had animated every vision and underlaid every plan for Illinois for 200 years before. As it was being built, the Canal's commissioners laid out a canal port called Chicago that would grow into a great metropolis. Creative Illinois investors patented new agricultural and industrial machines that would make this the richest economic zone the world had ever seen. That people from all over the world flocked to the region, lending their intelligence and their muscle to building the most populous inland American state, and Chicago the greatest city of the American heartland, is directly traceable to the 97-mile canal that linked the Great Lakes to the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal did not do the whole job by itself. But it started the ball rolling. In the wake of the canal, Chicago got its first street plan, attracted its first generation of merchants, created its board of trade and system of commodities trading. The railroads would complete the work, but only on the basis of what was pioneered by the canal.

In 1984, Congress recognized the I&M Canal's historic significance and future potential by designating the nation's first Heritage Corridor. Private citizens, business and government leaders are cooperating in unprecedented park, trail, and historic preservation projects. After years of economic decline, the newly revitalized Canal Corridor is now becoming a splendid living history museum of American enterprise, technological invention, ethnic diversity, and cultural creativity. The I&M Canal's mix of open space conservation, historic preservation and economic development is fast becoming a national model for regional planning and tourism promotion. The heritage of the I&M Canal is becoming a catalyst for Northern Illinois' future economic health and an inspiration for future generations.

A HISTORIC DAY FOR THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE AND ITS THOUSANDS OF IRISH-AMERICAN RESIDENTS

HON. THOMAS M. BARRETT

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize a historic day for the city of Milwaukee and its thousands of Irish-American residents.

Tomorrow, April 23, several officials who negotiated the ground-breaking Northern Ireland peace accord will be in the Common Council Room at Milwaukee's City Hall. The news conference is a precursor to the officials' participation in the ninth annual University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee George F. Kennan Forum in International Affairs. This year's forum, entitled "Prospects for Peace in Northern Ireland," was arranged long before the peace talks reported progress this spring and culminated in the Good Friday Agreement peace accords announced on April 10.

The officials attending the UWM Forum on International Affairs include: W. David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party; Anthony Cary, counsellor political at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C.; and Irish Consul General Frank Sheridan of Chicago. Other confirmed speakers include Bronagh Hinds, of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition of Belfast; Mitchell McLaughlin, Head, Island Wide Sinn Fein Organization of Belfast; Bridg Rodgers, Chairperson of the SDLP Negotiations Team.

The Good Friday Agreement ended twenty-one months of grueling talks and tense negotiations and one last 32-hour marathon session between Northern Ireland's political leaders. The settlement plan offers a hope for peace among sectarian groups that have waged a war of terrorism against each other for nearly thirty years.

Under the settlement plan, self-rule would be restored to Northern Ireland for the first time in 26 years and new institutions would be created to provide the minority Catholics with a greater voice and to meet the majority Protestant wishes that Northern Ireland remain a part of Britain. The settlement plan also calls for the strengthening of relations between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

Although some factions have voiced opposition to the settlement plan, the hope for peace continues to grow as the May 22 referendum date approaches. On that day, the people of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland will have the opportunity to vote for peace.

I think President Clinton said it best when he said "After a thirty year winter of sectarian violence, Northern Ireland today has the promise of a springtime of peace."

Milwaukee has long participated in the practice of healing and developing understanding among Irish youth. Since 1980, Milwaukee area families have participated in The Ulster Project, which brings Catholic and Protestant teen-agers between 14 and 16 years of age, at no cost, to the United States to live with Catholic and Protestant families with children of the same age. The Belfast teens, nominated by church and school officials in Northern Ireland, are selected for participation

based on leadership potential. The American teens and their families are recruited, screened, and selected based on their willingness and ability to accommodate the addition of another teenager to their household for the one-month long project.

The Ulster Project is important because it teaches young people the skills of conflict resolution in an environment far from the politically charged atmosphere of Northern Ireland. The teens participate in an intensely programmed and professionally supervised month of educational, ecumenically spiritual and social activities that promote interaction and reflection. The teens are also required to perform weekly community service tasks and are allowed time to have fun with the new friends they make from both America and their homeland.

The Ulster Project provides the teens with an alternative to the "them against us" mind set that has permeated the politics of Northern Ireland for thirty years and that, until recently, had prevented reason from prevailing in the peace talks. The Ulster Project teaches a "them and us" approach of inclusion and discussion and resolution. Teens returning to Northern Ireland after participating in the Ulster Project have been able to view the conflict in a different light and change their perceptions of Catholics or Protestants. The Ulster Project has become a real and effective factor in turning young people away from continuing the conflict and towards working for peace.

There are many more Ulster Projects across the United States that have provided the same opportunities to teenagers from Northern Ireland. The American people have deliberately gotten involved in the effort to restore peace to all of Ireland and their efforts have paid off. President Clinton also recognized the importance of peace in Northern Ireland and devoted the resources of his administration to working to resolve the conflict in Northern Ireland and he has been credited with keeping the talks going which lead to the peace settlement.

The Milwaukee community is obviously excited to host the key players from the Northern Ireland peace talks. And, to finally see the prospect of peace manifested in the peace agreement is an accomplishment in which the Irish in Milwaukee, and around the nation, can surely take pride.

A TRIBUTE TO THE COLORADO EMS FOUNDATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the American fire service, a history steeped in tradition about individuals risking their own lives to save the lives of others. As Chairman of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, I applaud the work of individuals and organizations, both past and present, who have preserved our communities and protected them against the threat of fire and other dangers.

Protecting communities against fire exacts a toll on fire departments, whether they are paid or volunteer. We, as private citizens, should

feel a sense of duty to help our first responders be properly trained and equipped to perform their work. For 350 years, they have responded to our calls without failure. As fire protection becomes a more expensive undertaking, the need for additional community support becomes more imperative.

This goes beyond public financing. The private sector can play a major role in augmenting local government efforts. Recently, I learned of an organization in the state of Colorado that awards grants and other types of aid to improve the readiness of first responders. Since its inception in 1996, the Colorado EMS Foundation has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars to Colorado-based fire departments and EMS providers, allowing them to purchase state of the art equipment that will help save lives and reduce property damages caused by fires.

The Colorado EMS Foundation is primarily funded by one family, the Dixons. They are private citizens committed to a safer Colorado. The Executive Director of the Foundation, Robert W. Dixon, is a paramedic and former volunteer firefighter. His experiences exposed the Dixon family to the problems many fire departments face regarding inadequate equipment, instilling in them a desire to help our domestic defenders. When I hear of stories about private sector initiatives supporting first responders, I want them to be heard by others.

I commend the Dixon family for their efforts in Colorado. I hope that others across the country hear of their work and follow their lead. The American fire and EMS services need more people like the Dixons, individuals who realize the challenges facing emergency responders and who are willing to take it upon themselves to make a difference and come to their aid.

TRIBUTE TO LAUREL ELEMEN- TARY SCHOOL FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Laurel Elementary School fifth grade students and their teachers. Recently, I was invited to be a guest reader at the school's Read-Aloud Day, an all-volunteer effort to demonstrate to children the importance of reading. My time with the students was very rewarding and one of my favorite experiences as a Congressman.

Laurel Elementary School, whose motto is, "Learning Together for a Better Tomorrow," opened its current building in 1993, retaining the original school's name which was on Laurel Street. The staff is committed to and accepts the responsibility for providing a comprehensive academic experience which challenges all students. The staff and community work collaboratively to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment. They are determined that all students will learn essential skills to become successful, lifelong learners.

The ability to read is one of the most critical keys to a person's success and happiness, so I am pleased that Laurel Elementary School is fostering a love of reading. As the son of two

public school teachers and the father of four children, I greatly value quality public education. It is my goal for all children to obtain the background knowledge necessary to achieve mature literacy and succeed.

The Fort Collins Read-Aloud Day has been held for the last eight years and is organized to promote community awareness of the importance of reading. This year, more than 100 volunteers are giving their time to local schools. I am honored to have been invited to participate at Laurel Elementary School.

CONGRATULATING THE STATE OF ISRAEL ON ITS 50TH ANNIVER- SARY

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate the State of Israel and all of the people of Israel as they celebrate the 50th anniversary of their nation's independence.

The desire of the Jewish people to establish an independent modern State of Israel is the outgrowth of the existence of the historic Kingdom of Israel established three thousand years ago in the City of Jerusalem and in the land of Israel, and was finally realized with the assistance of the world community following the slaughter of six million European Jews during the Holocaust.

The people of Israel rightly take great pride in having rebuilt a nation, forged a new and dynamic society, and created a unique and vital economic, political, cultural, and intellectual life despite the heavy costs of six wars, terrorism, international ostracism, and economic boycotts. Furthermore, under these difficult circumstances, the people of Israel have established a vibrant and functioning pluralistic democratic political system including freedom of speech, a free press, free, fair and open elections, the rule of law, and other democratic principles and practices.

Because of our shared experience in building new nations and recognizing the fundamental liberties of our people, the United States and Israel have maintained a special relationship based on mutually shared democratic values, common strategic interests, and moral bonds of friendship and mutual respect. In addition, the American people have shared an affinity with the people of Israel and regard Israel as a trusted ally and an important strategic partner.

I extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the State of Israel and her people for a peaceful, prosperous, and successful future.

FAUQUIER COUNTY HONORS SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, April 25, will be a special day in Fauquier County in the 10th District of Virginia. A very special