

The region continued to grow as 110 bungalow-type houses and another 125 homes were completed in 1913. In 1920, Palmerton was already home to a Red Cross Detachment, two banks, a four-year high school, and several churches. The Stephen S. Palmer Junior-Senior High School was opened in April 1925 for grades 7 through 12. The Palmerton Community Chest was formed and the first automatic telephones in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania were installed.

Although the coal and zinc mines that originally fueled the Borough's growth have long since closed, the 5400 residents of Palmerton Borough continue to thrive as they move toward the new millennium. Two major initiatives will help prepare the Borough for the 21st Century: the flood-control project at the Aquashicola Creek and the Brownfields initiative at Horsehead Industries' West Plant promoted by State Representative Keith McCall, county and borough officials, the local Chamber of Commerce, and myself.

Since my election to Congress in 1984, I have spent a great deal of time in Palmerton but one visit last year is especially prominent in my mind. The event was a re-dedication of the town swimming pool, which had been renovated after 50 years of use. I have been to many events like this one over my career, but I was struck by the optimism of the crowd. It seemed like the entire town had come out to note how they were committed to looking after the future needs of their community. It brought home to me the community spirit that is at the heart of Palmerton.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud to congratulate Palmerton on its Centennial Anniversary. Knowing that Palmerton's best days are ahead of it, I send my sincere best wishes for continued growth and prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO MS. GRETCHEN SNEEGAS, 1998 MIDWEST REGION YOUTH ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR, FROM INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable young woman from Indianapolis, Indiana. I am proud to announce that Ms. Gretchen Sneegas, a sixth grader at New Augusta Middle School, will be honored today (April 30, 1998) as this year's Midwest Regional Youth Advocate of the Year by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Ms. Sneegas is one of six individual youth activists and one teen tobacco-control group to be honored by the CAMPAIGN in 1998.

The Youth Advocates of the Year Awards, now in their third year, were created to encourage tobacco control activism and leadership among the nation's youth.

Ms. Sneegas was nominated by Susan Chitwood, Community Development Director of the Indianapolis division of the American Cancer Society, for her dedication to tobacco control efforts from the state house to the school house. An aggressive advocate for change, Gretchen pushed for a state ban on cigarette vending machines, even going so far as to provide state lawmakers with photo-

graphic evidence of how easy it is for kids to buy cigarettes in this way. She has also learned how to reach out to her peers and motivate other young people to get involved in this fight. When Indiana's State Legislature overrode the Governor's veto of a bill that prevented local governments from restricting the sale of tobacco products, she mobilized young people from all across Indiana to stage a protest at the State Capitol.

The Youth Advocates of the Year Awards recognize that kids are not just part of the problem—they can be a powerful part of the solution.

This award is presented during the same week of Surgeon General David Satcher's timely report on *Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups*. This report underscores the urgent need for comprehensive legislation to reduce youth smoking. According to this report, smoking rates among minority groups, particularly teens, are on the rise. In Indiana alone, 37.8 percent of High School kids currently smoke cigarettes, and 13.9 percent of High School kids use smokeless tobacco. The Center for Disease Control projects—of these Indiana teenagers who smoke—140,645 kids currently under the age of 18 will die prematurely from tobacco-related disease.

I thank the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids for selecting Ms. Sneegas. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S.—I applaud the CAMPAIGN for its dedication to providing opportunities encouraging youth to get involved in tobacco control activities in their communities and at the state and national levels.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to acknowledge and honor inspiring young individuals like Ms. Sneegas who have worked hard to keep America's kids tobacco-free. They are youth leaders who actively take a stand for and with other kids demanding tobacco-free lives and healthier futures—and they make a difference!

THE NATION'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to an article that appeared in my home town newspaper, the Daily News Journal, on Sunday April 26, 1998, concerning the future of our nation's transportation system.

Mr. Kevin Backwell, Vice President, AAA Auto Club of the South, which has over 157,000 members in west and central Tennessee, makes a strong case for the need to invest in our country's infrastructure.

This bill is especially important to the future of Middle Tennessee, because of the rapid growth we have experienced over the past decade. As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, this bill invests in the future of Middle Tennessee by looking toward new, innovative transportation systems, such as the Middle Tennessee Commuter Rail.

This bill represents a strong commitment to the economic future and the quality of life of Middle Tennessee.

[From the Daily News Journal]

MAINTAINING HIGHWAYS IMPORTANT FOR NATION

To the editor,

The good news coming out of Washington in recent weeks is that Congress is finally addressing the concerns of America's motorists with the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), and is prepared to make significant investments in the nation's transportation infrastructure.

However, it would seem that critics of this legislation have forgotten what it's like to drive on our nation's highways and bridges; to sit in long lines of congested traffic; dodge potholes; or to watch in frustration as the nation's economic backbone crumbles from a failure to properly maintain the system. Due to years of chronic underinvestment, according to federal government reports, one-third of all major roads in the United States are in "poor or mediocre condition" and a fourth of the 570,000 bridges in the country are either "structurally deficient or functionally obsolete."

ISTEA does not propose to pave over America. The great need—and primary goal of both the House and Senate bills—is to repair existing roads and bridges. Outmoded and poorly maintained roads and bridges cost lives and impair personal mobility. They also negatively impact productivity and economic activity. In a booming economy, there is no excuse to allow the continued deterioration of the very transportation system that sustains economic growth!

When a corporation makes capital investments in outmoded plants and equipment, we applaud its actions. Congress is now increasing capital investments in our badly deteriorated transportation infrastructure, and members who supported it are to be commended.

At first glance, the size of the increased investments in transportation funding appear large. We need to remember that they are spread out over the next six years. It is also important to remember that every penny proposed for surface transportation investment comes from revenues collected from motorists through the federal gasoline tax. We pay taxes at the gasoline pump to maintain our roads and bridges. We are asking that those tax dollars be invested as they were intended—not buried away in a trust fund to mask other federal spending practices.

As the conference committee negotiates the final details of the bill to send to the president, we urge our leaders to remain firm in their resolve. Investing in transportation is investing in America's future. It is investing in safety. It is the right priority for the 21st century.

KEVIN W. BAKEWELL, APR
Vice President, Public & Government Relations, AAA Auto Club South, Tampa, Fla.

SENSE OF CONGRESS ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDING OF MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 1998

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, almost sixty years ago, the most tragic event of the 20th

Century began. In its early stages, it was hard to see. But it was there. It was a knock on the door late at night. It was a forced train ride to a far away place. Shamefully and secretly, the Holocaust began. Before it was over, more than six million Jews would give their lives. Yet the impact of this tragedy did not stop there. As the author and Holocaust survivor Elie Weisel once said, "Not all victims were Jews. But all Jews were victims."

And so while the world lost the Holocaust victims, the Holocaust victims' impact was not lost on the world. If nothing else, this horror awakened the world to the need for a Jewish nation. For too long, Jews were adrift in the world. Without any hope. Without any home.

50 years ago this month that changed. The descendants of Abraham and David once again created a nation called Israel. Against all the odds, the Jewish nation began. And survived. And grew. And conquered. Today, Israel is a thriving nation of almost six million citizens. It remains the only democracy in the Middle East. And it continues to serve as one of America's staunchest allies in the world.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the birth of the modern Israel, we can take great pride in the role America played in helping to create this beacon of hope in the Middle East. And we can draw strength from the courage, conviction, and commitment of this Democratic nation.

Yes, there have been struggles. But the suffering has increased the resolve of these heroic people.

Yes, there have been tragedies. But the cost of freedom has never been cheap, and the Israeli people have always been willing to meet it.

And yes, there have been all kinds of setbacks. But what does not destroy Israel makes it stronger.

After 50 years, the nation of Israel remains. Proud. Prepared. And free. God bless this nation, their people, and their future. And may God preserve their special place in the world and in our hearts.

HONORING THE QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to applaud the achievement of the Queens Borough Public Library which has grown to become by far and away the busiest library in the entire nation. The following article from the Washington Post describes how the library has continually sought input from a growing immigrant community. The Queens system checks out over 15.3 million books and materials a year, and spends more money per capita on books than any other major urban American library. The Queens Borough Public Library should serve as a model of how one institution can bring together people of various races and ethnicities for the good of an entire community.

A BOROUGHFUL OF BOOKWORMS—MOTIVATED IMMIGRANTS MAKE QUEENS LIBRARY BUSIEST IN U.S.

By Blaine Harden

NEW YORK, April 27—Pin-Pin Lin treks twice a week with her two sons and a big

shopping bag to a crowded library in the borough of Queens. The Taiwanese immigrant herds her boys as they plunder books from library shelves and toss them in the bag.

Sitting between her sons at a library table while they riffle through the books, she looks up words in an English-Cantonese dictionary and frets about any "no-good" English words they might read, speak or think.

"I no want to miss anything," explains Lin, who every Thursday morning, when her boys are in school, attends English language class at the Queens library. "If I don't learn about American culture and speak English, I could lose them. If they think I not understand, they not do what I say."

Book-obsessed, worrywart immigrants like Pin-Pin Lin are the driving reason why the Queens Public Library is far and away the busiest in the United States. Most library books in Queens do not go out of date. They wear out from overuse and fall to pieces.

The library circulates the nation's highest number of books, tapes and videos—15.3 million a year.

In the sprawling borough that lies across the East River from Manhattan, library card holders check out more books per capita than users of any big city library system in the country. The 1.95 million residents of Queens use the public library five times more frequently than residents of the District of Columbia, twice as often as residents of Prince George's County and a third more frequently than people in Montgomery County.

The Los Angeles library serves about 1.4 million more people than the Queens library, but last year people in Queens checked out 4 million more books.

"We have complaints all the time from our older clientele, who want quiet and who want space. Well, our libraries aren't quiet and, for the most part, they aren't spacious," says Gary Strong, director of the Queens Public Library, one of three public library networks in the city. There is also a library system in Brooklyn and the New York Public Library serves Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island.

"The people who use our library are highly motivated," Strong adds. "They want jobs. They want to learn how to live in America."

Queens has the highest percentage of foreign-born residents of any borough in New York, a city that at the end of the 20th Century is sponging up one of the great waves of immigration in its history. Nearly half the residents of Queens speak a language other than English at home. More than a third were born in a foreign country.

The extraordinary love affair between immigrants and libraries is a century-old story in New York, as it is in other American cities that have been immigrant gateways. The most crowded libraries in New York have always been in neighborhoods with the largest population of recent immigrants.

That love affair continues at the end of the century, but with complications, especially in Queens. The book lovers who elbow each other for space in the library's 62 branches are more than ever before a mixed bunch—racially, linguistically and culturally.

The busiest branch in the nation's busiest library system is in Flushing, which has been inundated in the past decade with Chinese, Korean, Indian, Russian, Colombian and Afghan immigrants. Until a handsome new library building opens this summer, the Flushing branch is crammed into a former furniture store.

Inside, there are not nearly enough little chairs for all the little kids who wiggle and squeal and devour picture book after picture book. Stacks of blue plastic-coated foam pads are available so kids and parents can sit on the tile floor.

Queues form behind computer terminals that allow immigrants to search home country periodicals using Chinese, Korean and Roman writing systems. "Watch Your Belongings!" signs are in English, Spanish and Chinese.

There are no public bathrooms—space being too precious to waste on nonessentials. But there are librarians who speak Russian, Hindi, Chinese, Korean, Gujarati and Spanish.

"Have you ever wondered where the new South Asian materials are?" asks a sign taped to a pillar in the Flushing branch library. "Well, wonder no more. They're here! You can find materials in: Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Malayalam and Urdu."

"We have gone from a dozen countries to a hundred countries," says Strong. "We are not just waiting for them to come to us after they have solved all their problems, after they have a job and after they have the kids in school. We go after them. We advertise. We do not check their immigration status."

Immigration had already transformed Flushing from a staid middle-class Italian and Jewish community into a polyglot boom town when Ruth Herzburg took over eight years ago as library branch manager. Herzburg quickly discovered that the branch was falling behind the newcomer mix.

Herzburg tentatively put a small collection of Korean-language books out on a shelf five years ago. "Those books walked off the shelves. Before that, we didn't really know the Koreans were here," she said.

As immigrants make the transition from their native language to English, Herzburg says they hunger for basically the same kinds of books—translations of potboiler American fiction like Danielle Steel, self-help books and computer books. Many immigrants to Queens have technical skills, she says, and they demand science, technology and business books.

By spending more money per capital on books and other materials than any other major urban American library system, the Queens Public Library has marshaled its resources to seduce each new group of immigrants and lure them into the branches.

The seduction starts by sending library emissaries to immigrant associations that work with recent arrivals. In the languages of the immigrants, they explain how the library can show them how to get a driver's license, navigate the Internet and learn English. The library runs the largest English-as-a-second-language program in the country and says it could double its enrollment if it had more space and money.

"Starting with survival skills, they get introduced to the library and it is often the beginning of a lifelong habit," said Adriana Acauan Tandler, head of the library's New Americans program and herself an immigrant from Brazil.

Using census data and a demographer and by commissioning polls among Queens residents, the library has been able to spot holes in library usage. The biggest hole in the late 1980s was among Spanish speakers.

The library went after them with an aggressive public relations campaign. It translated applications for library cards into Spanish, purchased spots on Spanish radio and pulled together a Spanish collection of 100,000 items in 10 branches.

"In just three years, we found that Spanish speakers were using the library as much as anybody in the borough. They read everything from Cervantes to 'Superman.' The secret of our success is that we give people what they want, instead of what we think they should have," Acauan Tandler said.

What adults want, above all else, is translations of American bestsellers in their own language. The library tries to buy them