

for half a century has dedicated himself to the 4-H program and the youth of the county. It was in fact 1948 when Melvin became president of the Gogebic County 4-H Council. From this leadership position, he would help the local 4-H launch a variety of valuable programs.

First, he played a major role in the establishment of the Gogebic Extension Camp at Little Girl's Point, which opened in 1950. He served as a leader in the establishment and operation of the 4-H Ski Hill on the George Mussatti farm in Bessemer. The ski hill opened in 1951 and was open every weekend through the early 1980's.

Melvin helped promote and organize many "Annual 4-H Winter Sports Days," and in his 18 years on the Gogebic County Fair Board he actively promoted many county fair activities, including coordinating the 4-H Parade.

Maybe most importantly in his 4-H work, Melvin has served as a positive and encouraging friend to the children involved with the Gogebic County 4-H program. I have it on good faith from a member of my own staff, a 4-Her from northern Michigan, that "Melly," as he was known, never failed to offer a warm, welcoming smile, a constant and an eagerly expected treat for those youth attending 4-H Camp or exhibiting their projects at the Gogebic County Fair.

Mr. Speaker, we know the face of this giving volunteer was bound to show up in other venues, as is the case with true volunteers, so it should be no surprise to learn Melvin also served as a Gogebic County Commissioner for 22 years. For the same amount of time he served on the Western U.P. Planning and Development Regional Commission and with the Gogebic-Ontonagon Community Action Agency.

Melvin was a member of the Gogebic County Airport Board for six years, a member of the UPCAP Executive Committee for 11 years, and he served on the Western U.P. District Health Board for 18 years. He was a liaison to the Michigan Townships Association for eight years. Melvin was active in dairy farm professional associations, and in other professionally-related efforts he was a part of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service for 30 years.

Repeated terms on the local Lutheran Church board and service as a Little League Counselor round out the valuable contributions made to the area families and the community.

It's no wonder that Mr. Jacobson was nominated for Governor George Romney Lifetime Achievement Community Service Award. Michigan's former governor served as an inspiration for volunteerism in the state before he became a national inspiration for last year's gathering in Philadelphia.

On May 30, 1998, V. Melvin Jacobson will be honored by friends and family at a 4-H Appreciation Banquet. I ask all my colleagues to join me in celebrating this lifetime of service to all the people of the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and to offer thanks on behalf of all those, children and adults, whose lives were enriched by this service.

MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

HON. JOHN E. SUNUNU

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Ashley Allyn, 16, of New Durham, New Hampshire. As a national winner of 1997-98 Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary "Voice of Democracy" broadcast script writing contest, Ashley concisely captures the importance of America's most basic freedoms in her well-written entry.

I hereby submit Ashley's work for publication in the Congressional Record and congratulate her for her thoughtful piece entitled "My Voice in our Democracy." Her words serve as a thoughtful reminder to all Americans that in a Democracy each voice does matter

[1997-1998 VFW Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition]

MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

(By Ashley Allyn)

"The doctor will see you now." That's something you might expect to hear if you've lost your voice. That is "voice"—defined in the dictionary as "sound made through the mouth, especially by human beings, as in talking, singing, etc."

But there is another sort of voice we need to be concerned about. Consulting the dictionary again, we find quite "the right to express one's wish, choice, opinion, or to make it prevail; as in, having a 'voice' in our government." We have all seen enough newspaper and television accounts of the tragic consequences in counties where the people have lost their voice.

My voice in our democracy started before I could even actually speak. Ours is a country with civil rights for all—no matter how young. I was protected by laws from the very beginning of my life. As I grew older, I was able to function within our democracy on a smaller scale—within my family, my peer group, and my school.

When I turn 18, my voice will grow louder, because I will be able to vote. But what about now? Under our Constitution, my rights as a citizen are protected. One of the most satisfying things about living in a democracy is knowing that I do have a voice. I have the right to free speech, the right to publish my feelings, the right to write my Congressmen, and the right to organize a group. Even children in elementary school have made their voices heard by launching a campaign addressing a concern. Anyone can make their voice heard by the leaders of this country—they must have to speak up. I can do it, too. With supporters behind any cause I choose, my voice will be heard in Washington.

Ha, you think. Congressmen don't listen. They're corrupt, they're not even real to me. Think again. Given an unusual chance most people could only dream about, I was able to meet our nation's senators, to work with them face to face, and get to know their personal quirks and mannerisms. I realized that they are just people like you and me. They're everyday people—but they're people who had the drive, the initiative, and the concern for their country to try to fix its problems. After that opportunity, I saw how important and valuable anyone's voice is and I realized that I wanted my voice to be heard.

Oh, I won't necessarily change the world at this stage of the game, but the knowledge that, in the very near future, that could be a

real possibility is something that will direct my educational goals and my extracurricular activities.

As a high school student, there are many opportunities for me to voice my opinion. I can debate issues in class, I can attend government related activities such as Model Congress and Youth in Government, and I can campaign for political candidates. By showing my support for a candidate, whether it be at the town or national level, I am telling my neighbors, my community, and my country that I care about what laws are passed and which programs are funded. I can petition my school board if I feel a change needs to be made in my school. I can write my state senator about a problem that I feel needs to be addressed in my state. There are countless ways a teenager can tell the rest of the world that they notice, observe, and strive to change their own little corner. And as my corner grows, so do the changes I can make. And as my voice grows, so do the others behind it.

My voice will continue to be heard, at different levels, as my school years and community involvements continues. But in a democracy, it is reassuring to know that it will never be along. Others may be making different points, and even opposing points, but they will all be heard. And that, of course, is our fundamental strength—that here in America we will always have a chorus of voices.

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW KENNEDY

HON. JOHN E. PETERSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of Matthew Kennedy who won a scholarship in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary Voice of Democracy broadcast script writing contest. Matthew is the son of Glenn and Shirley Kennedy who are serving as missionaries in Taichung, Taiwan and was sponsored by VFW Post 727. As the Pacific Areas winner, he is the recipient of a \$1,500 Silver Spring Memorial Post 2562 Scholarship Award. Competing with over 93,000 students, sixteen year old Matthew won one of the 54 national scholarships with his speech "My Voice in Our Democracy." I would like to insert his speech into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

My voice in our democracy is as powerful as a sweeping tide, as far-reaching as thought, and as valuable as the wisdom of Solomon. Its power is recognized and protected by our Constitution, its potent influence is proven by our nation's history and by current events; its value makes it my duty to steward it carefully.

Did the Founding Fathers believe the voice of a single citizen holds power? Absolutely. They established the freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. They wove into our democracy the great principles of popular sovereignty, limited government, representative government, and majority rule balanced by minority rights. They enshrined the fundamental worth of each individual's voice and the equality of all voices. To the minds of the Founding Fathers, even these freedoms and rights were not enough; they established the Ninth Amendment which recognized other unenumerated rights of the people. Is my voice really so powerful as to be precious? The Framers of our nation

apparently thought so; they protected it as the essential flame of democracy.

Try telling Robert E. Joiner one vote cannot make a difference. Less than twenty years ago he ran for the office of Southern District Highway Commissioner in Mississippi and won—by less than one ten-thousandth percent of the votes. Had his opponent garnered just six more votes, Joiner would have lost the election.

Just last April, Eugene Shoemaker won the seat of Orfordville, Illinois, village trustee by drawing from a hat. He and his opponent each earned one hundred popular votes. Had just one more villager voted, the election would have been decided by the people. As it was, the outcome was left completely to the fingers of chance.

The vote of each American counts toward the election of local, state, and national leaders. Its effectiveness is directly proportionate to the frequency of its use. My voice, and the voice of every American, does not, however, die in the ballot box.

Boycotts, like those instigated by the legendary Rosa Parks bus incident in Montgomery, Alabama, and citizens organizations, like those founded by the consumer advocate Ralph Nader, wield profound influence.

Demonstrations spotlight the views in the sight of the public. On generating social reform, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed this, "In order to clean house the one thing we need is a good broom. Initiatives and referendums are good brooms."

My voice, and the voice of every American, is carried on the wings of peaceable assembly and petition; it influences those around me and even trumpets itself through my everyday actions.

The worth of my voice, because of its power and effectiveness, is incalculable. To not exercise it is a foolish waste. Because our democracy provides many practical vehicles for my voice, and because our country's future truly depends on it, it is my duty to articulate it. Otherwise, I scorn the pragmatic provisions of our democracy; I become a parasite living off the nation's privileges without positive contribution to the nation; I toss aside my right to cry for change in society. Or as Edmund Burke put it, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." But when I vote, petition, write, speak, or act for the benefit of the nation I am, to the utmost, fulfilling my patriotic duty.

To the cynic, my voice may be merely the frail peeping of one person among two-hundred-sixty million, but to Robert E. Joiner, Eugene Shoemaker, Rosa Parks, Ralph Nader, and to me it is the soaring shout of freedom. My voice is the very essence of our democracy. Multiplied several million times, my voice is the throbbing heart of America.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES ACADEMY IN MIAMI, FL

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to an outstanding group of girls from Our Lady of Lourdes Academy who won second place at this year's national We the People competition.

These dedicated, remarkable girls spent countless of hours studying diligently to win the local and state tournament. Proudly representing the state of Florida this year in our national competition, these devoted 17 girls

made evident their pride in our county's heritage and demonstrated their vast knowledge of U.S. history and of current events.

Great statesman Edward Everett mentioned that "Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army." Mr. Speaker, education is indeed, a safeguard of liberty. Through education we are made free. These 17 girls have embodied the definition of liberty as they have edified on what our wondrous democratic nation has to offer. These students have learned to cherish the rights found in our constitution—the rights our founding fathers died for and for this I commend them today.

For winning second place this year, for the long nights and weekends spent in intense study and for the honor which they so greatly deserve, I ask my Congressional colleagues to join me today in congratulating the teacher Rosalee Heffernan and these high caliber students: Nina Bassil, Claudia Capriles, Alejandra Chamorro, Ana Del Cerro, Claudia Ferrer, Jennifer Garcia, Mariah Gidel, Miriann Guazzini, Annie Heffernan, Lauren Knickerbocker, Genevieve Koch, Monica Leal, Sabrina Munnings, Maria Ortega, Kristina Perez, Talia Romero, and Melissa Zurini.

A HISTORIC VOTE FOR PEACE

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, today the people throughout Ireland will make a historic vote for peace and progress. I would like to commend all of the leaders who have worked assiduously to reach this agreement to establish a political framework to reunite the people of Ireland.

For lasting peace to take hold in Northern Ireland, economic stability and growth must be achieved. The Republic of Ireland is often referred to as the "Celtic Tiger" because of the strides that its citizens have made in building their economy and in attracting foreign investment capital. The same pattern of growth and development as occurred in the Republic now needs to take hold in the North of Ireland.

Secretary of Commerce Richard Daley will lead a trade mission this June to promote economic development and private investment by U.S. firms. I support this initiative because long term stability is directly linked to economic prosperity. History has shown that the key to resolving longstanding tension is through economic expansion.

Mr. Speaker, today the people of Ireland are making a choice on whether they wish to move forward or return to the violence and the bloodshed of the past. This vote is an important step in the journey toward peace and trust. I commend the U.S. and foreign leaders who will make peace a reality by their work to encourage investment and growth in Northern Ireland.

JENNIFER'S LAW ACT OF 1997

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the brave efforts and profound hope

of my constituents JoAnn and Carl Rock in the search of their missing son, Robert, and to urge support for the Jennifer's Law Act of 1997. H.R. 2850, which was introduced by my distinguished colleagues, Congressman JAY JOHNSON, Congressman NICK LAMPSON, and myself.

I urge my colleagues to help all parents who may be seeking to locate a missing daughter or son. Jennifer's Law is necessary to bring relief to families that face endless nights of not knowing where a loved one may be and what has happened to them. This legislation is a simple way of closing a terrible loophole with painful and needless consequences.

Mr. Speaker, Jennifer's Law will bring peace and relief to thousands of American families whose sons and daughters have disappeared and remain missing. Each year, thousands of unidentified bodies are buried in the United States. While law enforcement officials are required to report unidentified bodies, they are not required to use the already established national repository for information that may have criminal investigation importance, the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) of the Federal Bureau of Investigations.

In New York City alone, Mr. Speaker, over 4,000 unidentified persons are buried each year in mass graves in Potter's Field without NCIC references. The circumstances of this oversight are stark and real; thousands of unidentified bodies may be identified and long-awaited closure brought to their families across the United States through the usage of the NCIC.

Many of these unidentified persons who are found dead or murdered were only children when they disappeared from their families. Those children may be alive or dead anywhere in this country. Federal legislation must be enacted swiftly in order to address the nature of this terrible situation.

Mr. Speaker, in my home state of California, for instance, law enforcement officials are required to report unidentified bodies to the NCIC, but that is not enough for parents like Carl and JoAnn Rock because their son could be alive or dead in another state, even as far away as New York City's Potter's Field. Their tragic story demonstrates the need for comprehensive action, not a piece-meal solution.

Last fall, JoAnn Rock and other families who have also lost their children came to ask the help of their Representatives as part of a group called Finding Our Children Under Stress (FOCUS). Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that they made their trip in vain.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support Jennifer's Law. It costs nothing but it gives in return the priceless gift of human compassion. This bill is a clear, obvious way to remedy a confusing and terrifying situation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share with my colleagues the experience of the Rock family in their own words. It is my hope that this story will inspire each of you to act upon their behalf and the behalf of thousands of families still searching for their missing loved ones.

I cannot begin to put into words my feelings, profound sadness and sense of loss as a result of the disappearance of our son, Robert. Bob was our son, our daughter Kristin's brother, a grandson, nephew, cousin and friend. All the people who know and love Rob have had their lives changed forever. Almost three years have passed with not a single piece of information about Rob's whereabouts. As a Magna Cum Laude graduate of