

THE 5TH ANNUAL HEARTS FOR LIFE BENEFIT

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a very special event in the state of Michigan. The 5th Annual Hearts for Life Benefit, sponsored by Right To Life—Lapeer County, will take place on Monday, May 4, 1998, at the Lapeer County Center Building. The Master of Ceremonies will be the Honorable Michael P. Higgins and the guest speaker for the evening will be Monsignor James P. Lisante, director of Family Ministry and Pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle in West Hempstead, New York. He is a champion of pro-life causes.

An event like this one is very important for the pro-life movement. It reinforces the fact that at every level, we have people who value the sanctity of life working together. This is very encouraging. All who are involved with the Hearts for Life event should be commended not only for their efforts in planning it but for their efforts in promoting this very important cause. I extend my best wishes and appreciation to the Right To Life—Lapeer County.●

KATHERINE PATERSON, WINNER OF THE 1998 HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSON AWARD

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, my wife and I have lived our lives in Vermont. One of the great advantages of that is the wonderful Vermonters we have gotten to know over the years.

One of our valued Vermonters is Katherine Paterson, who has just won the 1998 Hans Christian Anderson Award for her authorship of children's books.

Mrs. Paterson has written 27 children's books, and she and her husband, the Reverend John Paterson, live on Cobble Hill in Barre Town, not far from our tree farm in Middlesex, Vermont.

While I was home for Easter Break, I read a wonderful article about her in the Saturday, April 11th, Times Argus, and I ask that it be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Times Argus, Apr. 11, 1998]

BARRE AUTHOR WINS WRITING AWARD—FOR KATHERINE PATERSON "THE CLOSEST I'LL EVER GET TO A NOBEL PRIZE"

(By David W. Smith)

BARRE TOWN—Author Katherine Paterson has just won what may be the most prestigious award in her field, the Hans Christian Andersen Award, but that doesn't make finding a last-minute seat on a plane to New Delhi any easier.

"It's hard to get a ticket to India," she said with a sigh, as yet another phone call interrupted her train of thought.

Paterson, the well-known Barre author of 27 children's books, needs to find her way to the other side of the world by April 20 to receive the award, bestowed every two years by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). An international jury of children's literature specialists selects a recipient who has created a body of work important to the genre. Paterson's work has been translated into 22 languages.

"An award for a body of work is the best kind," said Paterson. "None of your children get neglected."

Sitting in the parlor of her house on Cobble Hill Road, Paterson joked about the award and the prestige that children's authors accept in lieu of money, but also reflected with a sense of wonder on the amount of attention she's received in her 34-year writing career.

"It's thrilling. I'm surprised at how thrilled I was," she said. "It's the closest I'll ever get to a Nobel Prize."

Paterson's first attempt at serious writing was a book for the Presbyterian Church explaining questions of religious faith to children. "Who Am I?" was published in 1964, but from there it would be a long seven years until another of her works went to press.

"I feel I've paid my dues," she said.

Working in a small corner room of her house with a single skylight which she described as "the room that has books all over the floor," Paterson tries to rise each day and write for a few hours before breakfast.

"(It's when) your critical mind is lazier than your creative mind," she said. "I'm glad I have a critical mind, it just gets in the way when you're trying to get through the first draft." Paterson writes for children of all ages, but is best known by her novels for 10-14 year-olds, like "Lyddie." The Great Gilly Hopkins," "Bridge to Terabithia," and "Jip, His Story."

"I really am a writer for children and very happy to be a writer for children," she said. "They're your best audience. They want your book to be the best book they ever read."

The recipient of many awards, Paterson has also been subject to critical scrutiny. Her books have been singled out as containing everything from obscenity and profanity to religious blasphemy and have even been banished from libraries.

Never one to shy away from difficult subject matter, "Lyddie," deals with the sexual harassment and exploitation of mid-19th century factory girls, while "Terabithia" focuses on a child's grief at the death of a special friend. Paterson said that usually it is the adults, not the young readers, who are upset by her work.

"(Adults) don't want to believe that children feel things as deeply as they do," she said. "They want them to stay innocent."

Paterson said she felt her more controversial work was often released at the same time as other children's books which dealt with similar topics.

"We all breathe the same air," she said, "and we all sort of breathe in themes at the same time."

A play based on her novel, "The Great Gilly Hopkins," which was adapted by her son David, will be presented by the Center Stage Theater Group on May 8 and 9 at the Barre Opera House. The same play is being performed on Broadway.●

DEDICATION OF THE BETHEL CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

• Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, on April 26, the Bethel Church of God in Christ will celebrate "A New Work." Not only will this two year old ministry install a new pastor, Elder George Shepherd Christopher, but also, the congregation will dedicate its new church in Pittsburgh. The theme for the installation service comes from Psalm 118:23, "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our eyes."

The Bethel Church of God in Christ is a community based, Bible believing,

Christ centered, Spirit directed fellowship. For the past two years, this church has selflessly dedicated itself to community service. The congregation believes it is necessary to minister to the whole person for the glory of God. Having pledged to provide "Ministry to the heart of East Liberty and beyond," the church looks forward to the challenges and promises of the future.

Mr. President, the parishioners and clergy have worked and prayed tirelessly for both the new building and their new pastor. In closing, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending the Senate's best wishes to the Bethel Church of God in Christ. With God's help, this church will be a light for lost souls in East Liberty and throughout Pittsburgh.●

HONORING THE ARMENIAN VICTIMS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

• Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of the ethnic Armenians who died at the hands of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1923. Last week, we marked the 83rd anniversary of the beginning of a systematic, officially-sanctioned genocide that would eventually claim 1.5 million lives and force more than 250,000 to flee their homeland. As a result, there are fewer than 80,000 Armenians remaining in present-day Turkey.

I have spoken about these events every year of my term, on or near this date, in order to remind the Senate—and to remind the American people—of the sacrifice of these 1.5 million people who were murdered simply because of their ethnicity. In a country where we cherish the ethnic diversity of our citizens and welcome legal immigrants from around the globe, we sometimes forget about the ethnic strife that existed—and continues to exist—all over the world.

Unfortunately, ethnic conflict has led to genocide all too often, as we have seen during this decade in Bosnia, Rwanda, and elsewhere. More recently, there has been a resurgence of ethnic fighting in Kosovo, where the minority Serb population seeks to control the majority Albanian population.

Mr. President, human rights violations have become all too commonplace in the modern world. Beatings, rapes, murders, and "disappearances" have become routine weapons of war in battles where the perpetrators are rarely brought to justice. It is my strong view that the United States must continue to lead the fight for global human rights.

The recent death of Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot—who died before he could be tried for the murders of millions of Cambodians—reinforces the urgency of bringing those responsible for genocide to justice. I applaud the efforts of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal which is currently working to prosecute those responsible for the atrocities committed in Rwanda and the Former Yugoslavia.

As we honor the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians whose annihilation began 83 years ago, we must also remember the countless other victims of "ethnic cleansing" around the globe, and recommit ourselves to the effort to punish those responsible for these unspeakable crimes.●

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF SRI LANKA

● Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of independence of Sri Lanka. I believe it is appropriate that we so mark this occasion by offering our congratulations to her excellency, President Kumaratunga and the people of Sri Lanka.

In the five decades since Sri Lanka gained its independence from British colonial rule, Sri Lanka has held regular national elections as well as provincial and local government elections. The most recent parliamentary elections were held in August 1994, and the third presidential election was held in November 1994.

Sri Lanka has prospered economically since 1977, when it introduced economic liberalization policies which shifted the economy away from state controls, subsidies and public sector involvement to a market-oriented system in which private entrepreneurship flourishes. The U.S. is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner, accounting for 30% of the latter's exports, and over 90 U.S. companies have invested in Sri Lanka, with a heavy concentration in mining and textiles.

U.S. official relations with Sri Lanka date back to 1850 when John Black, an American merchant residing in Colombo was appointed the first American commercial agent in Galle. Fifty years later the agency moved to Colombo and became a consulate. It subsequently became an embassy in 1948 after Sri Lanka became independent.

The exchange of bilateral visits has played an important role in strengthening the cordial relations between our two nations. Then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visited Sri Lanka soon after its independence, and since that time members of this body as well as our colleagues in the House have regularly visited this lovely country.

Despite its prosperity and commitment to democratic principles, Sri Lanka has been plagued for many years by two domestic insurgencies, one mainly Tamil in the North, and the other mainly Sinhalese, in the South. The result has been the loss of many lives and heavy damage to property. The government has reiterated its commitment to addressing grievances articulated by these groups through dialog and the process of negotiation. Four rounds of unconditional talks with the Tamil Tiger separatists were held following the President's election in November 1994, and a cease fire was subsequently reached. This however,

was breached by the separatists after 3½ months when they resumed their terrorist activity.

As a result of these terrorist actions at home, Sri Lanka has placed counter terrorism at the forefront of its foreign policy. Sri Lanka was the Vice Chair of the United Nations Ad hoc Committee on Terrorism and played an important role in the drafting of the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing, being the first to sign the Convention at United Nations Headquarters on January 12, 1998.

I am therefore, Mr. President, pleased to acknowledge this occasion by expressing best wishes to the Government and people of Sri Lanka as they celebrate 50 years of independence. I know that we all look forward to continued cooperation and friendship with the Government and people of Sri Lanka in the years ahead.●

RECOGNIZING ARIZONA'S TOP TWO 1998 YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate and honor two young Arizona students who have achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in their communities. Eliza Robinson of Scottsdale and Jason Kelley of Prescott have just been named State honorees in the 1998 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on only one high school student and one middle school student in each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Eliza Robinson is being recognized for her many years of dedication and service to the Multiple Sclerosis Society, culminating with a term as spokesman for that wonderful organization.

Mr. Kelley is being recognized for his efforts to start a Youth Chamber of Commerce. Jason's organization will give other young people in his community the opportunity to participate in Chamber events similar to those sponsored by their local Chamber of Commerce, as well as interact with business leaders from the area.

In light of numerous statistics that indicate Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, it's vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions these young people have made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Mr. Kelley and Ms. Robinson are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

The program that brought these young role models to our attention—The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards—was created by the Prudential Insurance Company of America in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995

to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are critically important and highly valued and to inspire other young people to follow their example. In only three years, the program has become the nation's largest youth recognition effort based solely on community service, with more than 30,000 youngsters participating.

Ms. Robinson and Mr. Kelley should be extremely proud to have been singled out from such a large group of dedicated volunteers. As part of their recognition, they will come to Washington in early May, along with other 1998 honorees from across the country, for several days of special events, including a Congressional breakfast reception on Capitol Hill. While in Washington, ten will be named America's top youth volunteers of the year by a distinguished national selection committee co-chaired by our colleagues, Senators BOB KERREY of Nebraska and TIM HUTCHINSON of Arkansas.

I heartily applaud Mr. Kelley and Ms. Robinson for their initiative in seeking to make their communities better places to live, and for the positive impact they have had on the lives of others. I also would like to salute four other young people in my state who were named Distinguished Finalists by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for their outstanding volunteer service. They are: Chrissy Weiers of Maricopa, who has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to make her peers aware of the dangers of drugs; Christina Barela of Glendale, who helped organize a day camp for elementary school girls; Purvi Patel of Yuma, who designed and built a park adjacent to her school with five peers from the Gifted and Talented Education Program; and Tirzah Orcutt of Phoenix, who created a volunteer project to paint a mural on the Veterans Administration Medical Nursing Home Care unit in Phoenix.

All these young people have demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserve our sincere admiration and respect. Their actions show that young Americans can—and do—play important roles in their communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.●

GORTON AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2646

● Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, I rise to explain my support of Senator GORTON's amendment to the Coverdell A+ Accounts legislation. I was pleased to support the Gorton amendment because it returns the decision making authority over our children's education to parents, teachers, and locally elected school boards. After more than 30 years of top down control, it is clear that the hundreds of federal education programs and one size fits all policies from Washington, D.C. are not working.