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its 125 years of faithful service to our Nation and for its continued mission to help those in need at home and abroad.

Since Clara Barton founded the organization in 1881, the American Red Cross has offered aid and disaster relief to millions of individuals. From conducting blood drives and arranging family communications and other forms of support for our troops to providing relief for victims of natural disasters, the American Red Cross carries out emergency response around the globe. Local chapters help American communities respond to regional catastrophes and promote emergency preparedness with American Red Cross First Aid and CPR courses. Members of these chapters serve their communities by visiting homebound seniors, mentoring youth, distributing hot lunches, volunteering at homeless shelters, and offering transitional housing. They also educate young people on violence and substance abuse prevention and help in hospitals and nursing homes.

In 2005, a devastating hurricane season left millions displaced and homeless. The American Red Cross network of more than 800 chapters and thousands of volunteers provided food, shelter, counseling, and care to more than a million Gulf Coast families. Working in coordination with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the American Red Cross has also assisted with relief efforts for victims of hurricanes and landslides in Latin America and the recent earthquake in South Asia.

By donating their time and energy to selflessly serve others, American Red Cross volunteers demonstrate the compassion and generosity for which Americans are known. Their service paves the way to a brighter future for our citizens and people around the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2006 as American Red Cross Month. I commend the good work of the American Red Cross, and I encourage all Americans to continue to help the recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast region and around the world through volunteering their time, energy, and talents for others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7983 of February 24, 2006

Irish-American Heritage Month

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The histories of Ireland and the United States are deeply intertwined. For generations, the sons and daughters of Ireland have come to America with a spirit of determination and optimism that has strengthened

our Nation's character and enriched our history. During Irish-American Heritage Month, we celebrate Irish Americans and the significant contributions they have made to our Nation.

During the Great Potato Famine of the 19th century, approximately 1 million Irish came to America. And over the last 150 years, millions more have come from Ireland to the United States. In this country, Irish Americans have ably served in their communities, in the government, and in the Armed Forces. They have achieved great success in all walks of life. Actress Grace Kelly entertained us and influenced our culture; industrialist Henry Ford transformed factory production and transportation; and President Ronald Reagan dedicated himself to the spread of peace, liberty, and democracy, helping to change our country and the world.

This month, we recognize the proud history and many accomplishments of Irish Americans. Our Nation is grateful for the role they have played in defending and renewing the ideals that we cherish. Their hard work, firm values, and strong faith have made our Nation a better place.

NOW, THEREFORE I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2006 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month by celebrating the contributions of Irish Americans to our Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7984 of February 27, 2006

Establishment of the African American Burial Ground National Monument

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In Lower Manhattan, at the corners of Duane and Elk Streets, lies an undeveloped parcel of approximately 15,000 square feet that constitutes a remaining portion of New York City's early African Burial Ground. The site is part of an approximately 7-acre National Historic Landmark established on April 19, 1993. From the 1690s to the 1790s, the African Burial Ground served as the final resting place of enslaved and free Africans in New York City, New York. It contains the remains of those interred, as well as the archeological resources and artifacts associated with their burials. Prior to the date of this proclamation, the site was administered by the General Services Administration (GSA), and it will be the location of a memorial, to be constructed soon according to a design selected on April 29, 2005, through a competition