

judged by a panel of educators and one winner was chosen in each congressional district. A seventh-grade student from North Pontotoc Attendance Center was selected as the winner from Mississippi's First Congressional District. Her name is Abigail Hamilton. Abigail wrote to me regarding prayer in our public schools.

I wanted to share Abigail's letter with my colleagues and congratulate her for participating in this program.

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF,  
*Ecru, MS, January 30, 1996.*

Hon. ROGER WICKER,  
*U.S. Representative,  
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WICKER: How would you feel if one day someone suddenly said you could no longer continue a tradition? Devastated? Grieved? This scenario describes what had been done to students, teachers, and the community of North Pontotoc. A tradition of student-initiated, student-led, prayer was taken from us. For approximately 20 years, we had this type prayer in our school.

On December 20, 1994, Mrs. Lisa Herdahl with the ACLU and People for the American Way filed a lawsuit against Pontotoc County Schools for having student-led, student-initiated prayer over the school's intercom. A court injunction last spring stopped prayer over the intercom. The court date deciding whether to continue student-initiated prayer is March 4, 1996 at federal court in Oxford, Mississippi.

George Washington warned: "reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." Research proves the accuracy of his warning. Birth rates for teenagers and cases of sexually transmitted diseases have risen since 1962. Also, SAT test scores have plummeted for 18 consecutive years since that year. What happened in 1962? The Supreme Court took prayer out of public school with the *Engel* case.

I support you co-authoring the school prayer amendment with Congressman Istook from Oklahoma. Please participate in the meeting to force this amendment to the House floor, and do not allow compromises that would defeat the purpose of this amendment. I wouldn't want a government written prayer or mandatory participation in devotion. I trust you are influencing other congressmen to be co-signers of this amendment.

Our Constitution guarantees us freedom of speech and religion. However, should one person be allowed to dictate the beliefs of a community? Thomas Jefferson said: "The will of the majority, the natural law of every society, is the only sure guardian of the rights of man."

Sincerely,

ABIGAIL HAMILTON,  
*7th grader NPAC.*

PRESIDENT VISITS YOUNG RESIDENTS OF HOMELESS SHELTER IN MOSCOW

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to note and commend the President for taking the time during his recent trip to Moscow to meet with, and encourage the work of Alexander Ogorodnikov, a former political prisoner and founder of the Christian Mercy Soci-

ety. Alexander Ogorodnikov established a private shelter for young homeless from all over Russia who find themselves on the streets of Moscow without a roof over their heads. During the Moscow G-7 Nuclear Security Summit in April, President Clinton visited a number of the residents of the shelter.

Naturally, Mr. Ogorodnikov's work has been very challenging. After 70 years of communism, the institution of private charity has been slow to make a comeback. Resources are scarce; property rights are unclear. Bureaucrats often seem more determined to stifle than assist private initiative. Criminal structures would prefer that idle hands look in the direction of criminal activity for sustenance and livelihood. Nevertheless, Mr. Ogorodnikov has persisted. His efforts have been reported and applauded by the Moscow press, and Mayor Luzkkov's office has been supportive of his work. Some international organizations are providing a measure of assistance.

As Moscow was preparing for the Summit, Mr. Ogorodnikov had invited President Clinton to visit the Christian Mercy Society shelter to observe private charity in action in Russia. This request was forwarded through the Beautiful Hearts charitable organization of Erie, PA, and by many Members of the Congress of both parties. For logistical and security reasons, the President was unable to visit the shelter itself, but Mr. Ogorodnikov and his Beautiful Hearts associates had arranged an exhibit about the shelter at a Moscow hotel where the President had other meetings scheduled. Despite the heavy demands on his schedule, President Clinton graciously visited the exhibit and met with some of the young residents.

Mr. Speaker, the G-7 Nuclear Security Summit was about providing nuclear safety in our uneasy world, about governments cooperating with one another to reduce danger to millions of people. Security can also be a function of mutual understanding and having genuine concern—even across borders—for other human beings, one for another. By visiting the young people of the Christian Mercy Society shelter, President Clinton exhibited that concern on behalf of all of us here in the United States, and I appreciate his kind gesture.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL STEVENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and pay tribute to a celebrated community servant, Mr. Michael Stevens. On Friday, June 21, 1996, Michael, along with his friends and family, will celebrate his retirement from the Iron Workers Union Local No. 395 in Hammond, IN. This retirement dinner will be held at St. Elijah Serbian-American Hall in Merrillville, IN.

We are all fortunate to have dedicated people, like Michael, involved in the labor movement in Indiana's First Congressional District. Michael embarked on his distinguished career as an iron worker in local No. 392 in East St. Louis, IL, in June of 1966. He then moved to northwest Indiana and joined Iron Workers Local No. 395 in Hammond in September 1967.

In May, 1974, he suffered from a disabling fall on the job. During his convalescence, Michael earned a degree from Mineral Area College in Missouri. Following his graduation in June 1979, he returned to ironworking out of local No. 395 in September of that same year.

In 1981, Michael was elected to the local No. 395's examining board. In 1981, 1986, and 1991, Michael was elected to represent local No. 395 as a convention delegate. In 1984, Michael was elected as local No. 395's financial secretary-treasurer and he was re-elected for three more terms in 1987, 1990, 1993. Michael retired this year after 30 years as a member of local No. 395, 15 years as an officer, and 4 terms as local No. 395's financial secretary-treasurer.

I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Michael, his wife, Bonnie, and his two children, Tina and Byron. They can all be proud, as Michael has worked arduously in the labor movement to make the American dream possible for others. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to congratulate Michael, who has proven himself to be a distinguished advocate for the labor movement. I sincerely wish Michael a long, happy, and productive retirement.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM SINCLAIR

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. William Sinclair. Please join me in congratulating Bill as he retires after spending almost two decades as the city manager of my hometown, St. Joseph, MI. For 18 great years he has dedicated his hard work and efforts into making St. Joseph a quality city and a great a place to call home.

Bill's career in public service reaches back to 1954 when began working as a surveyor and cartographer for the city of Detroit. His time in Detroit was interrupted for 2 years by a tour of duty in the U.S. Army. After spending a few more years in Detroit, Bill lent his engineering expertise to the cities of Birmingham and Rochester before calling the west side of the State his new home.

He has also been active in other aspects of the community. Bill has served on the Twin Cities Airport Board, the Harbor Authority, and has been a fixture in the Michigan Municipal League.

Over the past 18 years, local officials, city councils, businesses, and residents, alike, have all correctly sung the praises of this wonderful civic leader. He has been a fixture in our community and an integral part of its growth. His dedication, vision, and commitment has been an important ingredient in the rebirth of the twin cities area.

Mr. Speaker, I have been lucky enough to work with Bill Sinclair on many different occasions. Time and time again I have counted on Bill for his assistance, his advice and his abundant energy. I know that though Bill is officially retiring, looking out for the best interests of the people of the St. Joseph-Benton Harbor area will continue to be a major focal point in his life. Someone this dedicated simply could not have it any other way.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me on behalf of the people of Michigan's Sixth Congressional District in thanking Bill Sinclair for 18

years of dedication to St. Joseph, MI. I wish him and his wife, Hilda, a long, healthy, and happy retirement. All the best, Bill, and thank you for all that you have done.

TRIBUTE TO JIM WEATHERS

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor Mr. James J. "Jim" Weathers. Jim answered his Nation's call to arms, served his community, and most importantly raised a family. He provided a sterling example of what we hope to accomplish and strive to be.

Jim served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam war. Following his naval service, he participated in the Naval Reserve. As a member of New Lothrop Post 6579 of Veterans of Foreign Wars, he served as 9th VFW District Commander and captain of the VFW State Honor Guard and was instrumental in serving the needs of veterans. He was also employed by General Motors' Buick Motor Division for 32 years, 8 years as a driver.

Jim was born in Owosso, MI, on January 19, 1944, the son of Jerome and Gladys Weathers. He was a 1964 graduate of New Lothrop High School and resided in New Lothrop most of his life. He married Glenda Walworth on November 4, 1967, and raised a family.

Jim was a member of the West Flint Church of the Nazarene. He was also a member of the New Lothrop-Hazelton Township Fire Department and the Tri-County and Shiawassee Bike Club. Jim was very active with the New Lothrop Athletic Department.

Jim's extraordinary life was cut short during a recent biking trip. His family and accomplishments stand as a testimony to his commitment to service, dedication to country, and love of family.

Mr. Speaker, I know you will join me in paying tribute to Jim Weathers for his service to his country, his community, and his family. The people of mid-Michigan will miss him dearly.

CHURCH ARSON PREVENTION ACT  
OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN R. HOKE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 18, 1996*

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3525, the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996. As a member of the Judiciary Committee I heard testimony from law enforcement officials that they do have the tools they need to effectively fight these abhorrent acts. Those resources are provided in this legislation.

As other Members have recounted, there have been over 100 church fires across the United States since October 1991. Most of these fires have occurred at predominantly African-American churches located in the Southeast. The most recent string of attacks—in-

cluding two additional fires just last night—should serve as a wakeup call to every American who is dedicated to protecting our religious heritage, our commitment to free expression, and our unyielding determination to preserve law and order.

Through this legislation, we are sending a message: Racism will not be tolerated and race-based crimes will not go unpunished. The destruction of a house of worship is repulsive and those who commit such contemptible acts will be pursued and prosecuted.

Let us also send this unmistakable message to the twisted, hateful perpetrators of these heinous acts: The basic decency, tolerance, and compassion of the American people will flower in the ashes of these charred sanctuaries. And while we can never forget that there may be an ugly capacity to hate in all of us, as individuals and as collective members of society we must never tolerate those who give in to such tendencies. In many cases these beliefs and practices are embedded deep in the soul and no act of Congress will root them out. Therefore, every American must be vigilant to stamp out racism and hatred wherever it surfaces. Together we can ensure that in America, the principles of justice, equality, and brotherhood thrive in the warm glow of freedom.

TRIBUTE TO MS. IDA CASTRO

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ms. Ida Castro, an outstanding individual who has dedicated her life to the empowerment of Hispanic women. Ms. Castro was recently appointed by President Clinton as Director of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Castro was born in Puerto Rico. On the island, she directed job training and job development programs. Later on she taught labor law at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and worked at Hostos Community College in my congressional district, the south Bronx, helping mothers who were receiving Aid for Families with Dependent Children become economically independent through full-time employment.

Ms. Castro has been a long-time advocate of women's issues. She has fought to improve working conditions for women, insure equal pay for equal work, incorporate employment with family needs, and increase job opportunities for women in all fields.

Prior to her appointment as Director, she worked as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Workers' Compensation programs and later as the Labor Department's Acting Deputy Solicitor. Through her new position at Labor's Women's Bureau, Ms. Castro will continue working to provide better employment opportunities for women and encouraging them to develop their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Ida Castro for her new post as Director of the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau and in recognizing her contributions to the advancement of women in this Nation.

HONORING SAM LENA

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 1996*

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Sam Lena, a beloved public servant of southern Arizona who passed away on March 12, 1996. He will be greatly missed.

Sam Lena was born January 23, 1921, in Evergreen, LA. At the age of 20, he moved to Tucson for health reasons. For the ensuing 55 years, Sam was a distinguished member of the Tucson and the southern Arizona community. He was an outstanding softball player, and was well-known for being a strike-out ace. In one game as the pitcher for the Tucson Elks, he struck out 21 batters in eight innings. Sam was also a respected businessman and dedicated public servant.

His athletic skills and business talents gained him widespread recognition and respect throughout the community. This popularity encouraged him to move into a more formal leadership role. In 1965, he was appointed to the Arizona House of Representatives where he served two elected terms. In 1968 he was elected to the State senate where he served three terms and became a powerful force in southern Arizona politics.

From playing softball as a pitching strike-out ace to his extraordinary effectiveness as a public servant, Sam Lena infused his life with commitment and caring. He worked tirelessly for those groups and issues that were dear to him: Law enforcement, education, health care, social services, and the mentally retarded. Each of these areas benefited throughout Sam's tenure in the Arizona State Legislature, the Arizona State Senate, the Pima County Board of Supervisors, and as the special assistant to Arizona Governor Rose Mofford while he directed her southern Arizona office.

Sam made government personal. To quote his friend and protege of many years, Pima County Supervisor Dan Eckstrom:

Sam truly loved the many constituents that he served, from the youngest child to the oldest senior citizen. To him all people were the same. Yet, it was his special love for the indigent and disadvantaged that made him such the great community servant that he was. "Mr. Sam," as he was affectionately called by many, really enjoyed being out with his people, whether it was at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Lena's Liquors, the District 10 Democratic Club meetings, at Safeway, or just on the street. Sam was very approachable, willing to listen and always ready to help. He knew practically everyone in his district and everyone who knew him, knew him first as a friend.

Sam Lena worked diligently to ensure that society's resources were available to all. But more importantly, he spoke for those who are often unable to speak for themselves: The poor, the disadvantaged, the downtrodden. In many areas of health care, services to the poor, recreation facilities, education, and services for the mentally retarded, Sam Lena's peace making ability and genius as a consensus builder made new and better programs possible.

In addition to his official duties as an elected and appointed public servant, Sam Lena was an activist for the community. Through his personal efforts on behalf of Kino Hospital, this