

holds for everybody—all of us—each one—together working and learning and building and helping each other. This is the fundamental hope of democracy—perhaps the only true flicker of hope in a world too full of brutal despotism and senseless terrorism and violence.

No, democracy is not just a slogan. Mikhail Gorbachev may have been sincere when he said it, but he was dead wrong. You know that brave men and women have fought and died for the spirit and the hope and the promise of democracy. They did not sacrifice for some hollow, empty slogan. They sacrificed for you and for me—people like us—and all the generations that will come after us. For we are the spirit and the hope and the promise of democracy. Within our democratic spirit can be found the true meaning to their sacrifices. And so we owe them something—something above and beyond a debt of gratitude. We owe it to them to keep the promise and the flame of democracy alive. And so, in the end, where democracy is concerned, let us remember not the words of Mikhail Gorbachev, but rather the words of Abraham Lincoln: that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

MRS. FLAHERTY GOES TO
WASHINGTON

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the House's attention a stirring anecdote about the triumph of the little gal, and of Congress' ability to improve substantially the lives of constituents. This story should be characterized as "Mrs. Flaherty goes to Washington." Mrs. Flaherty discovered a flaw in the law governing VA employees' ability to earn money at a second job, and with the help of Representative JIM SENSENBRENNER, this little lady made a difference.

CIVICS 101: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

(By Mary Flaherty, RN)

During last year's presidential campaign, much of the debate focused on the role the federal government should play in the lives of the average citizen. Many believe there is nothing we can do individually to change things. I confess I once shared that view, but something happened to me that disabused me of that notion. Indeed, it has convinced me that one truly can make a difference.

Several years ago, as a senior professional nurse at the VA Hospital in Milwaukee County, I sought permission from my superiors to work after hours in a private nursing facility. My family's economic situation dictated the need for such a "moonlighting" job. However, my VA bosses denied my request, noting that type of work was prohibited by law. Incredibly, I learned this same statute allowed professional nurses to "moonlight," but not in their chosen profession. Yet, in a remarkable demonstration of inconsistency, other VA personnel—pharmacists, speech pathologists and licensed practical nurses—enjoyed exemptions from this restriction.

Initially, after my request was rejected, I felt frustrated and embittered. But then I began to contemplate what courses of action could be taken to amend this obviously unfair and discriminatory law.

Among other things, I sought the advice of an old Washington friend, wise in the ways of

Congress. Surprisingly, I got a positive reaction. I was told the merits of my case were unassailable. What you must do, he said, is make Congress aware of the law's inequitable and unreasonable restrictions. Reminded of former House Speaker Tip O'Neill's famous adage that "all politics are local," I was urged to contact the Congressmen representing districts in the metropolitan Milwaukee area.

With that advice, I attended a town meeting hosted by Representative James Sensenbrenner and, at the appropriate time, I seized the microphone and the moment. The Congressman listened sympathetically as I explained my problem. He then asked me to furnish him with additional details, and promised to do whatever he could to help me upon his return to the nation's capital.

Not long thereafter, Congressman Sensenbrenner was able to persuade his colleagues in the House of Representatives to adopt legislation that would permit me and all other VA nurses to engage in "after hours nursing." Many months later, the Senate approved the same measure, and with the President's signature, it became law.

This very personal triumph exemplifies what one person can do, even when the odds for success appear insurmountable. The lesson here is: Don't get mad or give up, but instead get involved in the political process and pursue your objective with bull-dogish tenacity. My own experience graphically illustrates that the so-called little guy or gal can make a big difference when properly motivated.

In short, the next time you feel moved to change the world, give it a go. You may be astounded at what you accomplish.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC
EDUCATION

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the Members of the House the significant findings of a study that was published in the February 1997 issue of *Neurological Research*. The study explored the link between music education and intelligence in children. The results of the study demonstrated that music training—specifically piano/keyboard instruction—is far superior to computer instruction in enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills necessary for learning math and science.

The experiment, a follow-up to the groundbreaking studies indicating how music can improve spatial-reasoning ability, set out to compare the effects of musical and non-musical training on intellectual development.

The experiment included three groups of preschoolers: one group received private piano/keyboard lessons; a second group received private computer lessons; and a third group received no training. Those children who received piano/keyboard training performed 34 percent higher on tests measuring spatial-temporal ability than the others. These findings indicate that music uniquely enhances higher brain functions required for mathematics, science and engineering.

What does this mean to Members of the House? It means that in this year's sweeping deliberations on education reform and appropriations bills, we should maintain music as a

core academic subject and recognize, wherever possible, its dramatic and positive impact on cognitive development. The importance of school-based music training as a basic tool for maximizing our children's educational aptitude and opportunities cannot be overemphasized. It was widely accepted that music education provided our youth with cultural benefits, but it has now been scientifically documented that sequential music training also provides significant benefits and advantages in the skill areas of mathematics and science.

I urge my colleagues on the authorizing and appropriations committees to give the results of this study serious thought in your deliberations as Congress determines the scope, character, and priorities of Federal support of our education system.

TWELVE OUTSTANDING WOMEN

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Ms. GRANGER. It is with great pleasure, and even greater pride that I rise today to honor 12 outstanding women from the 12th District of Texas. On March 26, a dozen Fort Worth women will be recognized by the Fort Worth Commission on the Status of Women with the 1997 Outstanding Women awards. These awards are given annually to women who have strengthened the Fort Worth community through their local involvement and leadership.

As a lifelong resident, former major and now Congresswoman from Fort Worth, I have witnessed first hand the breadth of their activities and the inspiration of their example.

The backgrounds and activities of these women are varied and well representative of our community.

Rachel DeRusse Newman, recipient of the Commissioners' Award for Advocacy for Children, has worked hard to become a corporate officer. Her career path has been difficult but her commitment and persistence have been unmatched. Knowing her path would have been easier with a college degree, Rachel Newman is working to ensure that Fort Worth's children get the best education possible. While serving as a Fort Worth Independent School Board trustee, she has worked to restructure the bilingual program, broaden a multicultural curriculum, and establish a Hispanic Scholarship Campaign Drive.

Elaine Yoko Yamagata, recipient of the Commissioner's Award in the Arts, has been a strong leader for the arts in our community. She was responsible for bringing 80 Nagaoka citizens to participate in Sun & Star 1996, as well as coordinating meetings in Fort Worth for the Japanese American National Museum, located in Los Angeles. Yamagata is also active in Fort Worth Sister Cities International, the Van Cibus Foundation, Fort Worth Symphony, and Fort Worth Opera and was a great help to me during my time as mayor.

Opal Roland Lee will receive the Commissioner's Pioneer Award. While working as a home-school counselor, Opal has made time to charter many organizations and still volunteer with the Historical Society, Genealogical Society, Evans Avenue Business Association, Metroplex Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity,