

friendships with both the children and the wonderful people who care for them.

Working with abused and troubled children requires a special person, a special love, a special faith, and a special heart. Reverend Knecht is and was a special man.

Reverend Knecht dedicated his life to helping abused and troubled children all across Indiana. His service to God, his church, and the needy children of Wernle Home will leave a loving presence of acceptance and stability in the lives of thousands of children who came to Wernle.

So today, I would like to commend the efforts of Rev. Paul Knecht. As he retires after 31 years of service, he will be missed. His life work has touched so many people, so many people and lives forever.

That, Mr. Speaker, is my report from Indiana.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN E. ENSIGN

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 29, I missed rollcall votes 460 and 461 due to an aircraft delay in returning to Washington from Las Vegas. Had I been present for these two votes, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 460 and "nay" on rollcall vote 461.

1996-97 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

HON. SCOTT McINNS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars I would like to introduce the following winning script from the Voice of Democracy Program. The winner of the contest from the Third District of Colorado was Tara Linton of Craig, CO.

"DEMOCRACY—ABOVE AND BEYOND"

The lyrics to "God Bless America" have been permanently etched into my brain. I can remember reciting the song over and over in preparation for a play my entire elementary school participated in to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the United States Constitution.

That play was like a welcome mat to the future for me. Not only did it introduce me to the exciting and rewarding world of the theatre, but it brought me closer to something else—democracy. The play retraced the path of democracy from America's past to its present. I thank my lucky stars that I had the chance to participate because, until then, I had no idea how democracy had gone above and beyond, shaping our country and its people. And now, nine years after singing about the "land that I love," I am proud to speak out on behalf of democracy.

Today's "performance," if you will, is divided into two acts. In act one we will see how democracy is responsible for the American Dream. And act two will focus on the contributions we all make to keep democracy rising above and beyond.

The curtain opens, and the American Dream is exposed. What we see is a plethora

of people, every American who has ever lived or will live. They represent democracy's past, present, and future, how it has changed and how it has stayed the same.

But one thing stands out more than anything else. We can't see it or touch it or interpret it with any of the five senses. It is deeper and more powerful than any sensation. It is a sense of love, patriotism, and gratitude rolled into one.

You see, nobody had to sit down and decide that the people of the future deserved a better life. But somebody did. A lot of somebodies, in fact, including the likes of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. The result of their desire to improve the world is what generations of Americans have experienced—the original American Dream. We have the opportunity to live in the society our forefathers only dreamed about.

It's as if we are all actors fortunate enough to have starring roles in the manuscript our founders began to write even before the formation of the Union.

Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin. Their masterpiece wasn't the Declaration of Independence, nor was it the Constitution; their masterpiece is us.

This draws the curtain on act one and leads us to act two: just how we Americans send democracy above and beyond.

With every effort at getting involved, the driving force behind democracy gets stronger. And we're encouraged to get involved at an early age. Many schoolchildren are directly exposed to democracy the moment they enter the school with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. With education playing a major role in democracy's success, the emphasis on saying the Pledge at school is a giant stepping stone for children to become familiar with the system.

But it only just begins in childhood. As we grow older we begin to make choices for ourselves and our country. Nearly every man and woman involved in the armed services does so for the preservation of democracy.

And all registered voters have the say in what the future should entail when they cast their ballots.

Why do Americans try so hard to keep democracy strong and prominent? Well, it all goes back to what we saw in act one. We came from a long line of people who truly care. Though democracy in America has faced a number of changes, one thing doesn't change: we care. About the past, the present, and the future.

The curtain has fallen over act two, but the performance isn't quite finished.

An actor knows that the hours spent memorizing, rehearsing and performing have been well worth the effort when the final curtain drops, and the audience, left in a state of wonder, fulfillment, and satisfaction, reacts with generous and sincere applause.

Will the manuscript our forefathers began writing hundreds of years ago ever come to a conclusion? We may never know. Like nearly all things, democracy will continue to grow and evolve—to go above and beyond. With every new life exposed to its benefits, democracy enters for an encore performance, sure to be even more spectacular than ever before.

And now, as the performance comes to a close, we should all take time to remember what democracy means to us. From the mountains, to the prairies, to the oceans, we stand beside her and guide her. America—the land that we love.

EXTENSION OF CONGRATULATIONS TO TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

HON. BOB RILEY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to Tuskegee University for being named second in the Nation for the number of black graduating engineers.

I always love to hear about institutions of higher learning making good use of their resources. By using different programs at the university, the school helps to advance its students' futures. One program is the Research Apprenticeship for Disadvantaged High Schoolers [RADHS], which is implemented during the summer of a high school student's junior year. Another program is the Freshman Accelerated Start-up and Training for the Retention in Engineering Curricula [FASTREC], which is introduced at the freshman level of college. These two programs, as well as the familiarity between the faculty and the students, help the University to produce fine and outstanding engineers. Every school does its best to help students decide what they want to study, and to help the students achieve their goals with whatever means possible. Fortunately, Tuskegee has developed an effective program. This program enabled 192 students to finish their undergraduate degree in engineering. Through the example of Tuskegee University, other institutions may have a model of a productive, resourceful, and successful program—a program which will benefit students, Alabama, and this Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HELEN CHENOWETH

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, September 29, 1997, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall votes 460 and 464. Had I been here, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 460 and "yea" on rollcall No. 464.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 462, 463, and 464, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

A TRAGIC LOSS IN BOISE, ID

HON. MICHAEL D. CRAPO

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 1997

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, a tragic but common event in many