

I believe it is particularly important during such times as these to reflect upon the dream that America represents to so many people like Nick around the world. A strong family, an adventurer's spirit and a solid character are essential ingredients to brave the challenges of an unknown land. While it certainly isn't an easy task to come from afar and try to make a better life in the United States, people continually come to these shores in search of opportunity, freedom and personal liberty. America is a country full of opportunity for those who are willing to work hard. Nick's hard work and dedication has brought him through our legal process to a junction where he can call himself an American.

Today Nick will have earned all of the rights and responsibilities that come with citizenship. I know this is a proud day for Nick and his wife Abra and their family and friends. As I understand, Nick has already been shopping for a fireproof safe to house his new American passport. It is apparent that Nick is already taking his new responsibilities seriously.

So with that, I offer congratulations to Nick Cosma and his family on his day of becoming a citizen.●

TRIBUTE TO ODILE GROGAN

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following tribute by my nephew, Joseph P. Kennedy II, be printed in the RECORD in honor of Odile Grogan, a dear friend of all of the Kennedy family.

The tribute follows:

TRIBUTE TO ODILE GROGAN

(By Joseph P. Kennedy II)

More than 20 years ago, my good friend Rick Grogan has the great fortune of meeting a savvy and stylish Parisian, Odile Claude Emelie Basch, who was working in New York City, running programs in support of the arts.

The timing was perfect. Rick, turning his sights to a career in international business, found a companion conversant in languages, accustomed to travel, and filled with the same spirit of adventure that has always animated his life.

Before meeting Rick, Odile's consuming passion was the arts.

The Gallic phase of her arts education took place in the Left Bank of Paris, renowned as a world center of culture. She attended the Ecole Alsacienne, located near the Montparnasse cafés frequented by artists and writers for over a century. Her talents were then nurtured at the Lycee Fenelon in the Quartier Saint Germain-des-Pres, just a few yards from Pablo Picasso's former atelier on Rue des Grandos Augustins.

After receiving the Baccalaureate, she took up studies at the arts-intensive Finch College in New York City, whose students have ranged the artistic gamut from Grace Slick to Isabella Rossellini.

She went on to receive an M.A. in art history from Queens College and subsequently applied both her management and art history skills directing visual and performing arts patron programs under Phillip Morris' legendary chairman, Joseph F. Cullman III. Her guidance led to innovative partnerships between the company and such institutions

as the Whitney Museum, which opened a branch in the company's newly built headquarters.

It was during her tenure at Phillip Morris and Odile walked onto the canvas of Rick Grogan's life.

In Odile, he found someone at ease in every facet of conversation, with views as varied and forceful as his own. Whether discussing politics, cuisine, painting, or education, Odile proved not just a font of opinions and facts but a master of epithets and one-liners, in two tongues, no less.

Just out of Harvard Business School, Rick married Odile in 1981 and they moved to London, where Rick worked as a consultant for Bain Company. Rick thought they might spend a year or two in England before returning to the U.S.

Odile thought otherwise. As a tribute to her powers of persuasion, she convinced her deal-maker husband that London was just the right place for the family, conveniently located between France and America.

Rick bought the argument if not the logic and so they settled into life in England, their lives soon graced by Alexandra, Nicholas, and Charlotte, wonderfully gifted children who feel at home anywhere from Harvard Square to Picadilly Circus to Place de la Concorde.

In spite of all her household demands, Odile never neglected to devote time and energy to her beloved arts. A benefactor of the Serpentine Gallery in London's Kensington Gardens, she has encouraged policies to bring a wider public into museums, using the arts to uplift and liberate the human spirit across broader demographics.

Her cultivated judgment has also been sought by the Tate Museum, where she serves on the acquisition committee.

Several years ago, the enviable rhythms of the Grogans' family life were interrupted by a cycling accident in the French countryside. Rick lay near death in a coma.

Odile, at his side every moment, took full charge of his medical care and recovery. "He is my husband," she declared. "I can take care of him."

And so she did, sitting long hours by his hospital bed, watching for this eyes to open and recognition to light up his expression. With her help and the force of her spirit, Rick did awaken and recover.

The mishap was an awful physical setback but one that brought forth a remarkable discovery for Rick.

He learned that Odile was not just a caring wife and a loving mother, not just a skilled hostess and devoted patroness, not just a talented linguist and art history scholar, but an angel of mercy.

All the advantages of education and career mean little without love in our lives. When that love finds its greatest expression in our hour of need, we can indeed count ourselves among the blessed.

This past June, Rick brought together a wide circle of their family and friends to celebrate all that Odile has meant to him in their years together. The gathering at Versailles Palace was an extraordinary expression of Rick's love.

But the gilt and glitter of that magnificent setting paled in comparison to what shined forth in from the hearts of all there assembled in tribute to Odile.

In the many decades I have known Rick, he has enjoyed tremendous success in academics, athletics, and business. However, the triumph that counts the most is the crown of his heart, his incomparable wife Odile, my good friend's own angel of mercy.●

NATIONAL SCHOOL BACKPACK AWARENESS DAY

● Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, fall has come and across the country, students

are returning to school facing a public health risk from what many see as a completely benign and essential back-to-school supply, the school backpack.

More than 40 million American students carry backpacks to and from school each day. Health experts say that many of our children are hauling around too much weight, and that extra weight can adversely affect their healthy growth and development. Children carrying backpacks that are overloaded or improperly worn are putting themselves at risk for musculoskeletal pain, including back, neck, and shoulder pain, adverse affects on posture and the developing spine and compromised breathing and fatigue.

The good news for parents and kids is that many of these problems can be avoided by taking some very simple steps to help lighten the load. And the first step is education, raising awareness among parents, educators and kids about these potential risks and offering solutions to address them.

To that end, the American Occupational Therapy Association, AOTA, is sponsoring the first of its kind National School Backpack Awareness Day this week, on Wednesday, September 25. On that day, health professionals will hold events in schools across the country to weigh-in backpack-wearing kids and demonstrate the risks of injury that can result from carrying packs that are worn improperly, or are too heavy. Experts say that students should carry backpacks that weigh no more than 15 percent of their total body weight. Occupational Therapists, thousands of whom work every day in America's schools, will offer simple steps in how to properly pack, select and wear school backpacks.

Nashville, TN, Occupational Therapists will be at the Nashville State Technical Community College helping students learn more about the issue. In Knoxville, there will be a backpack weigh-in and Awareness Day event at Pond Gap Elementary School. I am proud to see these communities taking a leadership role on this important public health issue and I encourage other communities to take similar action on this day to help prevent health care problems that can arise.

Surely, we can all appreciate the bottom line lesson in this important public health education campaign, an ounce of prevention is worth of a pound of cure.●

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2989. A bill to protect certain lands held in fee by the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians from condemnation until a final decision is made by the Secretary of the Interior regarding a pending fee to trust application for that land; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.