

women who have dedicated themselves to the teaching profession and will soon retire after spending more than 30 years each as educators. Each of these women will end their career at the close of this school year at Elm Elementary School in Burr Ridge, IL, having touched the lives of hundreds of children, parents, and colleagues.

Catherine Nufer has been teaching for 36 years and has been recognized for her achievements in teaching writing and social studies. Her students have consistently excelled in State standardized tests in these areas. Ms. Nufer has taken courses over the years to keep current on new teaching standards, always striving to bring a fresh approach to the classroom.

Virginia Bojan is retiring after 33 years of teaching. She is known for her excellence in teaching language arts and science. To her students and colleagues, Ms. Bojan will be remembered most for her pleasant demeanor and use of humor in classroom lessons. Laughter and joy have been central to her teaching style, which will surely be missed at Elm Elementary School.

Nancy Taylor has been teaching for 34 years, during which time she led district-wide curriculum development initiatives in the areas of language arts and mathematics. Under her soft-spoken, gentle approach to teaching, hundreds of students have learned and flourished. She will be remembered for always striving to care for and understand each child as an individual.

Beverly Oliveri is retiring after 34 years of teaching. She has demonstrated leadership on curriculum development committees which have advanced the way mathematics is taught in District 181. Ms. Oliveri will be remembered by students and colleagues for her unique practice of utilizing storytelling in her classroom lessons, helping students to grasp new concepts by applying them to humorous real-life situations.

Patricia Trudicks has been teaching at Elm Elementary School throughout all 36 years of her teaching career. She was instrumental in introducing technology as an instructional tool and also played a vital role in developing Elm Elementary's Media Resource Center, which offers students and teachers access to educational enrichment materials. Ms. Trudicks has constructed creative, hands-on displays in the media resource center, leaving the hundreds of students she has served with educational experiences they will never forget.

I am honored to have this opportunity to publicly recognize these five women, who have dedicated their professional lives to educating children. They have made an invaluable impact on the minds and hearts of the hundreds of students they have served, providing their students with a broad base of knowledge that has endured well beyond their elementary school years. These five teachers are fine examples of excellence in education, and I proud-

ly salute them for their dedicated service and wish them well in their retirement.●

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

● Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, there are 542,000 reasons that we should all be involved in recognizing May as National Foster Care Month. These reasons represent the number of children currently in the foster care system, roughly 126,000 of whom are waiting to be adopted. Over 70 percent of these children entered foster care because of abuse or neglect. And, the average length of time that these children stay in foster care is almost 3 years.

For many of these children, the wait for a loving family where they are nurtured, comforted, and protected is endless. Every year, 25,000 children "age out" of foster care because they reach adulthood without ever being found a permanent home. These children are more likely to drop out of school and are more likely to be unemployed, welfare dependent, and homeless. In fact, roughly 30 percent of the Nation's homeless are former foster children.

As Senators, we cannot allow over half a million children to continue languishing in the foster care system, vulnerable to facing these negative outcomes. During this National Foster Care Month or at any other appropriate time throughout the year, I ask that you focus attention on the need to find secure and supportive families for these children.

Nurturing and stable environments can allow these children to achieve great success by helping them to overcome the challenges posed by involvement in the foster care system. One such example of the effect that a nurturing and stable environment can have on a foster child exists right in Congress's own backyard—the Mayor of Washington, DC, Anthony Williams. Mayor Williams' mother once told the story that when she visited the orphanage where she first met her son, she was told by the workers that he was not as advanced developmentally and intellectually as he should be for a child his age. These workers even indicated that little Anthony might have to be sent to an institution. And, they were right. His mother sent him off to two of the most prestigious institutions in our country—Yale University for college and Harvard University for law school.

I invite all Members to come to the Senate floor to speak about former foster children such as Mayor Williams, about foster children currently waiting for loving families, or about the significance of foster care in your own life, in your State, or in the life of a child. But, I want to ask more of you than simply sharing these stories. I would like to urge my colleagues to commit their efforts to ensuring that we institute legislative reforms for the child welfare system that will emphasize permanency for foster children,

whether that be reunification with families, adoption, or teaching youth skills to be able to live self-sufficiently after emancipation. The time is now for us to reform a foster care system that does not adequately address the needs of our most vulnerable children and families.

One of the areas that will require the greatest reform is the Federal financing structure of child welfare services. Currently, the Federal financing system is structured in a way that provides the greatest financial support for a child by the Federal Government when that child is in the foster care system. In other words, it creates a funding incentive to keep children in foster care, rather than moving them towards re-unification or adoption. We must revise this system so that funding matches the Federal priorities. This means that Government should fund the programs and approaches that are actually working to provide safety and permanency to children. Decisions regarding the placement of a child should not be influenced by the type of placement that would offer the greatest resources for the child, but instead be based on the best interests of the child. Adequate resources should be available for children involved in any area of the child welfare system. Therefore, the money and resources should follow the child, whether that is in foster care, in an adoptive home, or after re-unification with the biological family. The current financing system includes a patchwork of programs, many of which are funded through discretionary spending that is vulnerable to cuts in the appropriations process. Reforms must be instituted that allow the child welfare system to encompass a more comprehensive approach that includes prevention, re-unification services, adequate foster care services, adoption resources, and post-permanency support.

The time has come to fix these problems, to focus on the solutions in order to help our most vulnerable children. The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care released a report this week that summarizes a 1-year study of the foster care system. This study includes the feedback of advocates, State service providers, lawmakers, judges, and former foster youth around the country. I respectfully ask my colleagues to carefully look at the recommendations of not only the Pew Commission but of the hundreds of other individuals, groups, and States that have studied this system and have provided valuable ideas for reform.

Further, I hope that the leadership in the Finance Committee will hold hearings on the topic of Federal financing of the child welfare system to fully explore the problems in this system and the proposals for reform that will help to resolve these problems. I also ask all Members of Congress to make these reforms a priority during the remainder of this session and during the next session of Congress. I am personally committed to seeing reform done within

this time period. And, I am hopeful that we will soon enact legislation that will help the hundreds of thousands of children in foster care in our country. Let us work together to ensure the success of our future by promoting safety and stability for our children today.●

GIFT OF TIME FOUNDATION

● Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the efforts of an outstanding organization which has dedicated itself to aid in the development of our Nation's children. The Gift of Time Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing community service, academic, and physical fitness programs for children between the ages of four and eighteen.

The mission of the Gift of Time Foundation is: "To provide children with resources, opportunities and assistance that help them develop high self-esteem, self confidence, socially acceptable value systems, diverse cultural appreciation and family values by providing them with structured environments for membership in mandatory participation in physical fitness, academics, and community service programs. To provide children with personal character development assistance for self expression through structured positive activities alternatives."

The Gift of Time Foundation was spearheaded by E. Douglas McFarlin. His vision was to build a youth complex in St. Louis that would provide children with the proper direction to meet the challenges of our modern society. Mr. McFarlin has worked closely with business, community, and civic leaders to launch this important project. He is hoping that the St. Louis complex will be the first of many across the country.

Mr. President, organizations such as the Gift of Time Foundation can help a community in building character and values in its children. The efforts of Mr. McFarlin and his organization are to be commended for taking this challenge head on. I ask that you join me in recognizing this fine organization and wishing Mr. McFarlin the very best on his endeavors to bring this program to the children of our nation.●

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS MARTIN

● Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I rise today to salute Mr. Dennis Martin, a native Missourian and retiring Director for the Single Family Housing Division in the St. Louis, MO, HUD/FHA Field Office.

On March 7, 1969, Mr. Martin joined the St. Louis Area Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, St. Louis, MO, as a Single-family Construction Analyst.

Mr. Martin has been recognized for his outstanding contributions to the housing industry throughout his career by both private industry and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He has received several

awards, including a "Special Housing Recognition Award" for his accomplishments in the Housing Industry, the Patriotic Service Award and the Secretary's Award of Excellence.

Dennis and his wife, JoAnn, have two children, Deanna and Christopher. Deanna is a Chiropractic Doctor and is married to Dr. Jeremiah Freedman. Christopher is in law school at the University of Tulsa. Dennis and his wife are active in their church in Dardenne Prairie, MO, and he is active in a number of civic and Masonic organizations. Dennis also achieved the rank of Sergeant while serving in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1968. His parents are Clarence H. and the late Grace Martin of Dixon, MO.

I commend Dennis for his service to the community over the past 35 years. I am honored to share his accomplishments with my colleagues, and I wish him and JoAnn the best for the future.●

TRIBUTE TO SISTER CLARITA ANNEKEN

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Sister Clarita Anneken of Villa Hills, KY for her 63 years devoted to educating young men and women who attended Villa Madonna Academy.

Everything that we do in the United States Senate is done with the idea in mind that we are making the world a better place for those who come after us. Indeed the entire government is dedicated to ensuring that America will continue to protect the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness long into the future. However, let me remind the Senate that if the people of America are not educated to appreciate the sanctity of life, the glory of liberty, and the meaningfulness of pursuing happiness, that everything we do here will be wasted. No matter how wise the laws we enact, a people ignorant of these important principles will only resent wise laws, not benefit from them.

It is for this reason that I believe that the work of Sister Clarita is so crucial. Sister Clarita has dedicated her life to the education of America's future. For 63 years Sister Clarita has invested her knowledge, time, effort, patience, and understanding in the young people of Villa Madonna Academy. Her efforts have shaped the understanding of many young people who will be a part of America's future.

I believe that no good deed goes unrewarded. The reward that Sister Clarita will reap, however will be a reward reaped for many years, long after her teaching career is finished. It will be a reward which many Americans will share. It will be the reward of young, educated men and women who will be able to continue the great traditions of this country.

Sister Clarita's dedication to the young is an assurance of the brightness of America's future. And I thank Sister

Clarita for this assurance and for the bright future of America.●

WALNUT, IOWA, SAYS THANK YOU TO WORLD WAR II VETERAN

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated here in Washington on the Saturday before Memorial Day. It is a stunningly beautiful monument, located midway between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument. It is a long-overdue salute, an expression of profound gratitude, to the millions of Americans who served their country with courage, sacrifice, and selflessness in that war.

I would like to share with my Senate colleagues a remarkable story about how the small community of Walnut, IA, has expressed its gratitude to a local veteran of the Second World War, Erwin Arndt.

Mr. Arndt returned from the war to serve his community as an electrician, a volunteer firefighter, a city council member, and commander of the local AMVETS unit. Just about everybody in Walnut knows and respects Mr. Arndt. And there was much concern when he suffered a series of strokes over the past year.

All too typically, a man in Mr. Arndt's condition would have no choice but to become a dependent in a nursing home. But friends and neighbors in Walnut came to his rescue in a truly remarkable and inspiring way. They joined hands to give him the wherewithal and assistance he needed to continue living independently in his apartment.

A local restaurant helped to provide daily meals. Several citizens helped Mr. Arndt to keep his apartment clean and orderly, and take him to medical appointments. Still others organized shifts to keep him company in his apartment. Several especially kind citizens got together to purchase a motorized chair to help Mr. Arndt get around.

It was truly a community effort, an act of collective kindness that I find truly inspiring. Mr. Arndt's daughter, Karen DeWinter, is overwhelmed with gratitude for what the people of Walnut did for her father. She told me that she was especially touched that on her father's birthday, the local AMVET auxiliary held a party at a cafe, where they brought cards from local elementary and preschool children.

I want to acknowledge the people of Walnut, IA, for their extraordinary caring and kindness toward Erwin Arndt. Like millions of Americans of what Tom Brokaw has labeled "the Greatest Generation," Mr. Arndt served our Nation with dedication in both war and peace.

In their own special way, the people of Walnut have said thank you to this veteran and beloved member of the community. I would like to add my own gratitude, not just to Mr. Arndt but also to the good citizens of Walnut.●