

TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR C.J.
CHEN OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, soon Ambassador C.J. Chen of the Republic of China (ROC) will be returning to Taiwan after serving as his country's chief representative in the United States for the last four years. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and salute Ambassador Chen for everything he has done to improve the political, economic, and cultural ties between the United States and Taiwan during his service here in Washington, D.C.

The Republic of China has been one of our most important and loyal allies in the World; and Ambassador Chen has worked diligently to strengthen the ties that bind our two great Nations despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Taiwan. Today, U.S.-Taiwan relations are the best they have been since the late 1970s. In fact, Taiwan and the United States are friends and partners, not merely allies, and I think that in large measure this is due to the tireless efforts of Ambassador Chen.

An expert in international law and diplomacy, Ambassador Chen has spent 37 years in the diplomatic service of the Republic of China on Taiwan—with over half of his career spent here in the United States. In fact, he has been assigned to Washington, D.C., three different times, beginning as a third secretary in the ROC Embassy in 1971. In 1983, he began a seven-year stint as Deputy Representative for Taiwan's Representative Office, and in 2000, he started his present job as Representative. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, C.J. has also held several prominent positions within Taiwan's government, serving as Foreign Minister, Government Spokesman, and Legislator.

During the past four years, Ambassador Chen has forged many close personal relationships and made hundreds of friends—I am proud to count myself among that company—proving that he was one of the hardest-working diplomats and also one of the most gracious hosts, on Embassy Row. With respect, graciousness, and a keen sense of humor, wit, Ambassador Chen has helped many American audiences, large and small to more fully understand the sometimes difficult issues relating to Taiwan, such as Taiwan's recent Presidential elections and national referendum. He has also helped put into perspective Taiwan's military needs, Taiwan's efforts to join international organizations like the World Health Organization, and Taiwan's economic and political achievements, especially in the area of human rights and freedom of the press, where the actions of Taiwan stand in stark contrast to the brutal perpetrators of the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Mr. Speaker, I am personally sad that Ambassador Chen and his beautiful wife, Yolanda Ho, are leaving Washington. It is a little-known fact that Yolanda—a renowned designer in Taiwan's textile and apparel industry—actually designed the wedding gown for Linda Hall Daschle when she married the current Senate Minority leader, TOM DASCHLE of South Dakota. I hope that they will both look back fond-

ly upon their years in Washington as a valuable and rewarding time. The diplomatic and cultural community of Washington will certainly be diminished by their absence. Nevertheless, we are grateful for the time they could spend here, and I know that they will both continue to make lasting contributions to the future enrichment of relations between Taipei and Washington. I wish them all the best for a successful and happy future, which they so deeply deserve.

RECOGNIZING THE BRAMLEY
FUNERAL HOME IN DIVERNON, IL

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bramley Funeral home in Divernon, Illinois on the occasion of its 80th anniversary on June 6, 2004.

Bob Bramley helped his late father, Chester Bramley, in the family's mortuary business many years ago. Bob graduated from high school in 1939 and went to work as a clerk for the C & IM Railroad; served in the armed forces from 1942 to 1946 as a Master Sergeant in the Army Medical Corp. In 1947, he attended mortuary school in Saint Louis, Missouri and graduated in 1948. Bob and his wife Carolyn were married on December 27, 1947, and worked with his father until his father passed away in 1967. The Bramley's also operated an ambulance service, which discontinued service in 1981.

Tim Bramley, Bob and Carolyn's son, went to mortuary school in Carbondale, Illinois and received his license in 1979. Tim then went to work at the Bisch Funeral Home in Springfield, Illinois for 13 years. Tim left Bisch Funeral Home and went to work with his father when the Bramley's opened a second funeral home in Auburn, Illinois on June 4, 1991. Tim's daughter Sarah graduated from the Carl Sandburg Mortuary School in Galesburg, Illinois in May of 2003 and is currently serving as an apprentice with her grandfather and father.

In addition to the family's business, Bob has also worked for the Postal Service for 22 years, kept books for the Divernon School District for 30 years, and worked as the Village treasurer for 49 years. Bob also served many years the secretary and treasurer of the Divernon Fire Protection District and is currently the secretary and treasurer of the Brush Creek Cemetery Board, a position which he has held for 45 years.

Bob states that his wife, Carolyn, has always been there in the background; her help and support have been invaluable to him throughout the years. Mr. Bramley feels strongly about providing this service to the community, even though being in a small town is difficult because every person who passes away is your friend. Mr. Bramley has dedicated his whole life to the community and the village of Divernon has recognized June 6, 2004 as "Bob Bramley Day."

FALLEN HEROES

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the brave men and women who have served our nation by paying the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom and democracy.

While we should honor all our nation's veterans both living and dead throughout the year, on this particular Memorial Day, we pay tribute to the nation's World War II veterans. On May 29th, the World War II memorial, a fitting tribute to "the Greatest Generation," will be dedicated on the National Mall. Hundreds of thousands of World War II veterans and their families will visit the memorial which is a permanent reminder to us and to future generations that the sacrifices made by the soldiers who served overseas, their families, and the Americans who were on the homefront, saved the world from tyranny. From the beaches of Normandy to the Battle of Midway to the construction of the China-Burma-India Road, these soldiers fought for a cause bigger than themselves.

One of these heroes, Michel Thomas, resides in my congressional district and recently was awarded the Silver Star for his extraordinary courage during World War II. I, along with Senator John McCain (R-AZ), worked with the Department of Defense on Mr. Thomas's behalf so that he finally would receive the honor he so justly deserves.

Michel Thomas was born in Poland to a Jewish family with a thriving textile business. In 1933, he fled Hitler's regime in Germany for France. Thomas last saw his family in 1937. He later learned they were all murdered at Auschwitz.

During the war, he survived two years of concentration and slave labor camps in Vichy France and narrowly escaped deportation to Auschwitz. He joined the Secret Army of the French Resistance, where he was active for two years as a commando leader. In 1943, Thomas was caught by and escaped from Klaus Barbie, the notorious Butcher of Lyon. The next year Thomas served in Combat Intelligence in the 180th Regiment of the U.S. Army 45th Division, The Thunderbirds, and was nominated for the Silver Star for his bravery.

On April 29, 1945, Thomas, an agent in the U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), arrived at Dachau concentration camp on the day of liberation. Thomas interrogated and photographed the crematorium workers. Two days later Thomas captured the "Hangman of Dachau," Emil Mahl, who was subsequently convicted of war crimes.

In early May 1945, Thomas tracked a convoy of trucks to a paper mill outside Munich, where he rescued from destruction the Nazi Party's worldwide membership card file of over ten million members. The Nazi leadership had shipped the cards, along with tons of other important Third Reich government documents, to be pulped in the final days of the war. These documents became the heart of the collections of the U.S.-run Berlin Document Center, and were crucial in the Nuremberg war crimes trials and in the denazification of Germany.

In 1946, Thomas helped to capture Gustav Knittel, who was convicted of war crimes for

his role in the Malmedy massacre of American POWs at the Battle of the Bulge. I am proud to honor Michel Thomas for his heroism.

On Memorial Day, it is fitting that we honor all the men and women of the Armed Forces who have served their nation throughout history including those who are currently risking their lives around the world, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. I have been to both countries twice and have visited with soldiers from New York and across the country. I especially want to note the contributions of the 10th Mountain Division from Fort Drum under General Austin's leadership, and the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Division of the New York Army National Guard, located in my district, who just shipped out to Iraq on Monday. While they are serving in Iraq, I will be fighting to pass legislation to ensure that they receive full military retirement credit for their days of service at Ground Zero after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

I am pleased to note that today we are passing legislation to correct a longstanding inequity in survivor benefits for the spouses of our fallen veterans. The "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005" provides for a 5-year phase-in to eliminate the Widow's Tax. This unfair tax penalizes the widows and widowers of military retirees by reducing their Survivor Benefit Plan benefit from 55 percent of the retiree's pension to 35 percent once they reach age 62, normally the same age she or he is eligible for Social Security. The Social Security benefit the surviving spouse receives is often less than the reduction in the benefit, which results in a net loss of income. This legislation brings long overdue relief to the surviving spouses.

I will continue to support the members of Armed Forces in every way that I can. We owe all of them a debt of gratitude which we can never repay. They helped to make this country what it is today, and they have brought peace to other nations across the globe.

I would like to thank my colleagues from New York Representatives RANGEL and WALSH for organizing today's moment of silence for America's fallen soldiers.

HONORING THE FRATERNAL
ORDER OF EAGLES AERIE 629
(DORT HIGHWAY)

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to bring to your attention that during the month of February 2004 the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 629 (Dort Highway) of Flint, Michigan celebrated their 100th year of brotherhood.

The Fraternal Order of Eagles formerly known as the "Seattle Order of Good Things" was founded in Seattle, Washington on February 6, 1898. The organization's informal slogan is "People Helping People" (F. Hector Gauthier, North Uxbridge, Mass.) Six short years later, on February 17, 1904 the Flint Dort Highway Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 629 chapter was chartered with 61 members. Former Flint Mayor George McKinley was the chapter's first President and Floyd Simson a Pharmacist/Drugstore owner was the Sec-

retary. The club held meetings in the old Woolworth building twice a month until they relocated to the 2nd floor of the State Theater in June of 1905. In 1907 they moved to Castel Hall where they occupied the entire 3rd floor. As the organization's location changed so did its membership. In 1938 their Auxiliary was chartered with 71 members while located at the Smith and Waters building, which was purchased from Dort Motor Company in 1922. The club added a 10,000 square foot addition to the building which they called home until a fire destroyed the building and forced them to move to the second floor of the Samons building located at First and Garland. They remained there until 1980 when they purchased the building known as the Freeman Ice Cream Building. The organization began remodeling efforts immediately, with most of the work being done by its members. The building was completed in 1981 and a banquet hall was added just in time for their 1984 District Wide Initiation. New candidates from all the clubs in District Four were initiated during the event. The Fraternal Order of Eagles is an organization committed to the American people. Throughout its 100 years, they have strived on a daily basis to make this country a better place for all. This is an extraordinary club of men working for the betterment of our nation. I am proud to say that there is a chapter in my hometown of Flint addressing the needs of my community.

Mr. Speaker, many people have greatly benefited from the generosity of these fine men. They are indeed men of moral character committed to improving the welfare and dignity of those in need. I ask my colleagues in the 108th Congress to please join me in paying tribute to the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 629 (Dort Highway) Flint Chapter as they celebrate 100 years of solid brotherhood and in wishing them the very best in future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE MERCURY
NEWS FOR ITS ARTICLE "DIS-
COUNT CARD DOUBT"

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding piece of journalism that appeared in The Mercury News in San Jose, California. The article, "Discount Card Doubt" presents the realistic confusion Medicare beneficiaries face in choosing a discount card. As the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and individual card sponsors bombard beneficiaries with glossy marketing materials, I am proud to know that my constituents are receiving a fair and balanced account of the drug card debacle. I would like to thank Barbara Feder Ostrov for her exceptional reporting, and for informing the people of my district about the benefits and dangers of the Medicare approved drug discount card program.

It is with pleasure that I submit the attached article, "Discount Card Doubt," for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The article originally appeared in the May 26, 2004 edition of The Mercury News.

DISCOUNT CARD DOUBT

COMPLICATED SYSTEM: CHOOSING ONE OF 73
PLANS IS A HASSLE, SENIORS SAY

(By Barbara Feder Ostrov)

Betty Cozzi is trying to keep an open mind about the new Medicare discount cards. Last week, she dutifully sat through a presentation with a nice lady showing PowerPoint slides at Cambrian Center, the San Jose senior apartment complex where she lives.

But the whole thing is pretty annoying, in her view.

"They've made it so complicated," said Cozzi, who is 71. "We should be able to sit down and read the information without being talked to like we're second-graders. And I don't even know if the card will help me."

As Medicare drug discount cards go "live" next Tuesday, seniors like Cozzi are wading through a swamp of conflicting and sometimes downright inaccurate information as they assess which card they want to buy—that is, if they want to buy one at all.

The cards, which offer Medicare recipients discounts on both brand-name and generic prescription drugs, are the first of a series of Medicare prescription drug reforms providing temporary relief from rising medication costs until a larger benefit takes effect in 2006.

Some cards are free, while others can cost up to \$30. They offer discounts of 15 percent to 20 percent on the average retail prices for brand-name drugs, with deeper discounts of 30 percent to 60 percent on generics, according to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, the federal agency that oversees Medicare.

About 3.2 million seniors in California could benefit from the discount cards, saving about \$515 million on their medications in 2004 and 2005, the years when the cards will be available, according to a study released last week by the Business Roundtable, a trade group for chief executives of large corporations. The study also found that about 105,000 California seniors will qualify for a \$600-a-year credit for low-income people that can be applied toward drug purchases made with the cards in 2004 and 2005.

But seniors may find deeper discounts purchasing from Canadian pharmacies, U.S.-based mail order houses or even Costco, as a Mercury News analysis of 10 common drugs shows (see chart).

NOT MUCH SAVINGS

A little-known state program in which participating pharmacies offer prescription drug discounts to California Medicare recipients was the most expensive option for some drugs, the analysis shows.

Cozzi, a retired executive secretary, isn't poor enough to qualify for the \$600-a-year credit, but her income is limited enough that she only takes Plavix, an expensive drug that prevents strokes and heart attacks, every other day, rather than the daily dose her doctor recommends.

Plavix, which isn't available as a cheaper generic, can cost nearly \$1,500 annually, and Cozzi must also take other medications like Lipitor, which can cost an additional \$800-plus each year. She tries to save money by ordering her drugs through a U.S. mail-order service offered by her supplemental Medicare insurance.

Cozzi said she is just starting to research which Medicare discount card might be best for her, but it's a trying endeavor. There are 73 different Medicare-approved cards, and every one covers different drugs, with pricing that can change weekly. Once Cozzi buys a card, she won't be able to buy a different one this year.

She has a few options: She can call (800) MEDICARE and ask a representative which