

moved into Waco so that she could attend Waco High School. She taught public school at Fulmore Junior High School in Austin, and she often said it was the hardest job she ever held. In 1982 she was elected State treasurer in Texas, making her the first woman elected statewide in almost 50 years. And she won an uphill battle to become the first woman in Texas history to win the race for Governor in her own right.

She often spoke about being motivated to enter politics in order to help others, particularly the women and minorities who traditionally had been shut out of positions of power. She once said, "I did not want my tombstone to read, 'She kept a really clean house.' I think I'd like them to remember me by saying, 'She opened government to everyone.'"

As Governor, she made it a priority to open positions of power to women and minorities and to advocate for what she called the "New Texas," a place where her daughters would never feel that they were held back because of their gender. Under her leadership, Texas student achievement scores rose and dropout rates fell. As Governor, she grew the economy, created an ethics commission, pursued insurance reform, established rehabilitation programs for prison inmates, and fought crime. And she even found the time to earn a motorcycle driver's license on the occasion of her 60th birthday.

Even after she left office, she never stopped working on new ways to encourage women to get involved. One of her last projects, the creation of the Ann Richards School for Young Woman Leaders, is slated to open in Austin in 2007. It will be a tribute to her legacy to see the remarkable new generation of leaders the school will nurture.

Today, her loving children Cecile, Daniel, Clark and Ellen, and her eight grandchildren, are testament in themselves to Ann's generosity of spirit and enduring influence.

Ann Richards had an ability to draw people to her with her warmth and good humor, and her sharp wit and homespun wisdom was legendary. She was never afraid to stick up for what she believed in. She will truly be missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING JEAN SMITH

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I honor Jean Smith of Tiospaye Topa School in Howes, SD. Jean was named the 2006 Teacher of the Year by the National Indian School Board Association.

As the computer teacher and technology coordinator at Tiospaye Topa School, Jean has played an integral and unique role in furthering the education of South Dakota's students. Her initiative, expertise, and kind heart has created an exceptional learning en-

vironment at Tiospaye Topa School. Her selfless dedication to educating students for almost 20 years is truly commendable. I am proud to have such a fine teacher influencing our State's future leaders.

Jean is a graduate of the University of South Dakota. She resides in rural Gettysburg with her husband, Frank, and children, Lindsay and Kyle. Today I rise with Jean Smith's friends, family, and colleagues in honoring her selfless dedication and service to South Dakota's students.●

RECOGNIZING REVEREND STAN GRUNEICH

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the appointment of Reverend Stan Gruneich of Flandreau, SD, to the post of National Chaplain for the American Legion. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Reverend Gruneich for his years of service and congratulate him on his promotion to this prestigious post.

Reverend Gruneich was chosen as the National Chaplain after years of serving as Department Chaplain for the American Legion Department of South Dakota. He has graciously provided guidance and leadership to America's veterans and their families throughout his tenure, and will now continue to do so at the national level.

It gives me great pleasure to commemorate Reverend Stan Gruneich on this special occasion and to wish him continued success in the years to come.●

RAPID CITY WEED AND SEED

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the hard work and amazing results of the Weed and Seed organization of Rapid City, SD.

The Rapid City group will cease operations later this month after nearly a decade of tireless efforts to rehabilitate a significant portion of the residential and business area in the community.

In partnership with organizations that included the Rapid City Police Department, the Center for Restorative Justice, Volunteers of America, the Project Safe Neighborhood/Gunwise Program and Good Housekeeping, dozens of individuals came together to address neighborhood crime, abuse, housing and aesthetic issues.

Primarily focused on the East North and East Boulevard neighborhoods, the Rapid City Weed and Seed organization worked with the Rapid City Police Department on a zero tolerance policy with an aggressive police presence in areas that were beset with crime, homelessness and urban blight issues.

The group worked with Rapid City leaders to aggressively enforce city codes involving housing. Vacated and rundown homes and businesses were torn down and replaced with new and thriving businesses and new homes. Other businesses, homes and apartment

complexes were expanded and renovated during this time frame. Efforts to revitalize Roosevelt Park resulted in the construction of a new ice arena and indoor swimming pool, as part of the city's 2012 economic development program. A business association was formed to bring together local business owners to discuss relevant issues of importance. The Weed and Seed organization also developed an "Adopt a Creek" program with 23 sections of Rapid Creek adopted by local companies, organizations and families. The first major cleanup of Rapid Creek since the tragic 1972 flood resulted in the collection of 18 tons of trash, including debris from the 1972 flood event.

Four townhall meetings were conducted with local residents and annual picnics were sponsored to develop a sense of camaraderie and connection between neighbors.

As a result of these efforts, the East North and East Boulevard areas have once again become a source of pride for the community. This sense of pride is now reflected in the residents and businesses located in the area. These results are due in large part to the collective work of the Rapid City Weed and Seed organization and the partnerships that were developed with city officials, law enforcement agencies and the local businesses.

Funded through a 5-year Weed and Seed grant of \$1.025 million, the local organization will cease operations later this month. I wish to recognize the vision and hard-working efforts of the dozens of Rapid City citizens and officials who have provided tireless efforts to rehabilitate and renovate a key part of the community.

I wish to recognize the help of executive director Patricia Pummel and board members Wayne Asscherick, Phyllis Boernke, Dave Bussard, Jim Castleberry, Patrick Clinch, Cynthia Clinch, Linda M. Colhoff, Richard Cooper, Lt. Ray Cornford, Darcy Dennison, Lee Dennison, Ken Edel, Fred Eisenbraun, Lawren Erickson, Dan Island, Adeline Kalmbeck, Jim Kinyon, Craig Kirsch, Eileen Leir, Burt Long, Carol Long, State legislator Alice McCoy, Jim McCoy, Dave Morgan, Lou Morgan, Sharon Oney, Kenneth Palmer, Gloria Pluimer, Alys Ratigan, Kerri Severson, Mickey Snook, Roberta Stevens, Betty Strobel, Raymond Summers, Patricia Trumble, William Trumble, Holli Vanderbeek, Jerry Walenta, Lt. David Walton, Les Wermers, Dexter Wittman, Rapid City Mayor Jim Shaw, former mayor Jerry Munson and Connie Ewing.

Thanks to the efforts of these individuals, other concerned and committed citizens, and officials in Rapid City, the East North and East Boulevard areas of Rapid City have been effectively rehabilitated. The efforts of this organization may serve as a model for other Weed and Seed organizations in the country. Although ceasing operations, the vision and tireless efforts of individuals in the Rapid City Weed and