

TRIBUTE TO WEST POINT  
GRADUATE RALPH WARE

**HON. BOB SCHAFFER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a young man dedicated to excellence in the service of his Country. On May 29, 1999, Cadet Captain Ralph Ware of Aurora, Colorado, graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

The United States Military Academy is among the most prestigious military academies in all the world. The Academy selects only the best and brightest young people of our nation to serve and study at West Point for four years. Once admitted, the cadet must endure the most rigorous training, testing his mind, body and spirit on a daily basis. As the cadet meets each challenge, he is transformed into a new, multifaceted person, capable of serving his country in the face of any obstacle. This transformation culminates in graduation, where each cadet celebrates the achievements of the past and the possibilities of the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate Cadet Captain Ralph Ware and all of the East Point graduates. With confidence, I look forward to their leadership in America.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DR. WILLIAM R. WILSON, JR.

**HON. SAM GEJDENSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. William R. Wilson, Jr. upon receiving his Norwich Rotary Club's Native Son award for 1999. Dr. Wilson is a distinguished son of Norwich and an extraordinary humanitarian.

Dr. Wilson is a highly skilled cardiac surgeon specializing in pediatric cardiology. He is chief of cardiovascular surgery at The Children's Hospital, University Hospital and Clinics in Columbia, Missouri. Dr. Wilson has performed more than 120 heart transplants, including on the youngest Americans.

However, Dr. Wilson is more than just a surgeon, he is a humanitarian. He has traveled across the world to use his skills to better the lives of people who live in nations which do not enjoy the medical care available in our great country. Thanks to Dr. Wilson, children around the globe have been given a precious gift—the opportunity to grow up healthy and happy. I have attached an editorial from the Norwich Bulletin commending Dr. Wilson which I request be included following my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I join residents from Norwich in congratulating Dr. William Wilson, Jr. on receiving this prestigious award. He is a humanitarian, a tribute to his family and a great ambassador for our country.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DR. WILLIAM R. WILSON, JR. IS NATIVE SON FOR 1999

William R. Wilson Jr., M.D., today will be awarded the Norwich Rotary Club's Native Son honor for 1999. Bill left Norwich many years ago, and since that departure he has distinguished himself both throughout this country and internationally as a cardiac surgeon and, specifically, a pediatric cardiac surgeon.

The son of Margaret Sullivan Wilson and the late W. Robert Wilson—and the brother of Margaret, known hereabouts as Peggy—Bill was born in Norwich in 1954 and grew up on Lincoln Avenue and Canterbury Turnpike.

During his early years here, Bill learned to golf and ski. He and his sister volunteered for Head Start, and Bill had stints locally with a bank and the American Ambulance Service.

His early learning took place at the John Mason and Samuel Huntington schools, Kelly Junior High and, finally, the Norwich Free Academy from which he graduated in 1972. While his curriculum vitae and individual honors are much too extensive to enumerate here, his education continued at Kenyon College, the University of Connecticut, the Medical Center Hospital of Vermont and Case Western Reserve University.

During his time in Kenyon, Bill served as a town volunteer firefighter. In the course of those duties, he responded to a horrific car accident where one person died at the scene, another at the hospital. That spurred his initial interest in medicine.

Bill's skill today—which includes surgery on infants and more than 125 heart transplants—takes brilliance, a steady hand and enormous dedication.

Bill was 35 before he finished training and went to work.

He has taught anatomy, been staff and chief physician, and today is chief of cardiovascular surgery at The Children's Hospital, University Hospital and Clinics in Columbia, Mo.

He's licensed in Vermont, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio and Missouri. He's led medical missions to Peru and the Republic of Georgia in the former Soviet Union.

Today, when he's not saving or improving the quality of human lives, Bill and his wife, Joan, and their children Bobby, Brandon and Alaina make their home in Columbia, Mo.

With family, job and an occasional round of golf, the demands on Bill's time are considerable. And though today he calls Missouri home, he will always be a Norwich native, one of whom this community is enormously proud.

The Norwich Rotary Club has made a fine choice in selecting Dr. Wilson as 1999 Native Son. On behalf of the community, we extend our congratulations to a man who has made us very proud.

Well done, Bill, and welcome home.

TRIBUTE TO MR. FRAN GRADISAR

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize and honor Mr. Fran Gradisar. Later this month, Mr. Gradisar will retire after 39 years as a leading veteri-

narian in Pueblo, Colorado, and I would like to pay tribute to him for his hard work, dedication and service to citizens of Pueblo and their pets.

After graduating from high school, Mr. Gradisar was drafted and served two years in the Army. Searching for a career after completing his military service, Mr. Gradisar remembered his admiration of dogs and decided to become a veterinarian.

He enrolled at Colorado State University, was accepted to vet school and in 1960, he graduated and returned to Pueblo to work for Dr. Ed Eden for several years. After gaining valuable experience from Dr. Eden, Mr. Gradisar established his own practice which he has maintained since 1964.

His dedication to the health of animals has instilled in the owners of his patients a sense of trust which now brings the third generation of some families to his office. Mr. Gradisar has not only cared for the animals which have visited his office, but he has also volunteered time and services to the humane society.

Individuals such as Mr. Fran Gradisar, who contribute to the community in which they live, and set a good example for all, are a rare breed. Today, as Mr. Gradisar opens the page on a new chapter in his life, I would like to offer my gratitude for his work ethic and for the inspiration which he has provided. It is clear that Pueblo has benefitted greatly from his practice. I would like to congratulate him on a job well done, and wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE HEALTH COVERAGE FOR HEARING AIDS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

**HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would provide coverage for hearing aids under the health benefits program for Federal employees.

Hearing loss is a health issue. If hearing loss is not treated, it can affect the general and psychological health of an individual. Studies show that people with hearing loss often suffer serious emotional and social consequences. Untreated hearing loss can lead to depression, anxiety, stress and chemical dependency which results in an increase in medical visits and hospital stays.

Many people feel that there is a stigma attached to hearing loss and try to hide it. This is especially true of employees who fear that they will be seen as less than competent in the workplace if they admit that they have a hearing loss.

Hearing loss affects about nine million Americans over the age of 65 and 10 million Americans between 45 and 64. About three out of five older Americans and six out of seven middle-aged Americans with hearing loss do not wear a hearing aid. More than one-half of the non-users cite the cost as a reason for not wearing a hearing aid.

Hearing aids are a major uncovered health care expense. The average cost of a hearing