

Greene neighborhood for 41 years. During these four decades, Mrs. Turner has been an active participant in the life of her community.

While the Ft. Greene community was recently described by New York Magazine as undergoing "a new residential renaissance", the neighborhood was a different place in the '50's and '60's when Georgianna Turner first moved to South Oxford Street. Many of the brownstones had been converted to rooming houses and flop houses making everyday life quite a challenge. Mrs. Turner and a committed band of neighbors resolved to reclaim the block and worked tirelessly for decades to establish the Ft. Greene neighborhood, and especially South Oxford Street, as one of the premiere blocks in Brooklyn. Working with Mr. Percy Buchannan who was, then, the head of the South Oxford Street Block Association, along with other long term residents like Nancy Johnson, Hazel Slaughter, and William Turner (no relation). Georgianna Turner went from block to block galvanizing community support, exposing drug activity, and vociferously advocating for the changes that would make the neighborhood a better place to live.

Mrs. Turner remembers the years when she had to endure repeated vandalism to her home in response to her activism. She risked her life on the line by reporting drug activity. Ever fearless, Georgianna Turner and her cohorts in the South Oxford Street Block Association were not to be stopped. They worked hand-in-hand with local politicians, the police department, the sanitation department, the Board of Health, local churches—especially Queen of All Saints (where she has been a faithful member of 40 years), Lafayette Presbyterian Church—and whoever else would help them clean up the blocks from South Elliott to Clinton Avenue. She especially recalls their concerted effort to "get rid of the Atlantic Avenue meat market that was the scourge of the neighborhood, get the bums off the street, and get the trash cleaned up".

Before real estate speculators and the Brooklyn Academy of Music was envisioned, the quiet, determined approach of residents like Georgianna Turner paved the way for the real-estate and economic boom that Ft. Greene is experiencing today. Though she never sought fame or fortune for her community activism, Georgianna Turner has received countless accolades for her valiant efforts. Her legacy has been to create a clean, safe, stable community of which she and her colleagues in the South Oxford Street Block Association can be proud.

On August 18, 1999, Georgianna Turner celebrated her 100th birthday. I want to salute this "grand old lady" as we end the last session of Congress in the 20th century. She leaves Brooklyn with a legacy that will endure long into the next century. I urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the splendid work of one of Ft. Greene's finest jewels, Georgianna Turner.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF RICHARD E. SCHUMACHER ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE OHIO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to one of the truly outstanding individuals from the state of Ohio, Mr. Richard E. Schumacher. On December 31, 1999, Richard Schumacher will retire from his position as Executive Director of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

For thirty-nine years, Richard Schumacher has been a valuable asset to Ohio's retirees and his colleagues at PERS. He joined the staff at PERS in 1960, and since then has worked diligently to serve the state of Ohio and ensure that PERS remains strong far into the future. Beginning his tenure with PERS as an accountant, he steadily advanced through various positions including assistant director, controller, and deputy director. Finally, in 1991, Richard Schumacher was appointed as the Executive Director of the system.

Throughout his career, Richard Schumacher has upheld the high standards of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. In performing the duties of Executive Director, he has demonstrated the kind of integrity that Ohioans expect from our government leaders. His hard work for nearly four decades has helped PERS flourish into one of the premier public employee retirement systems in the country. Under his strong leadership, PERS assets have grown from \$440 million to \$53 billion. In the thirty-nine years Richard Schumacher has worked for PERS, he has watched the system grow to more than 350 employees, 125,000 beneficiaries, and 371,000 contributing public employees. Clearly, Richard Schumacher has undertaken successfully the task of building and growing PERS for Ohio's public employees.

Richard Schumacher is an outstanding public servant and a standard bearer in his profession. He has served on numerous boards and associations including terms as president and vice president of the National Association of State Retirement Administrators, the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Government Finance Officers Association, and the Government Accounting Standards Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it is often said that America succeeds due to the remarkable accomplishments and contributions of her citizens. It is evident that Richard Schumacher has given of his time and energy to assist Ohio's public retirees. For his efforts, we certainly owe him a debt of gratitude that mere words cannot sufficiently express. At this time, I would ask my colleagues of the 106th Congress to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Richard E. Schumacher. On the occasion of his retirement as Executive Director of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System, we thank him for his dedicated service and we wish him all the best in the future.

November 19, 1999

CELEBRATING OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the tenth anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia.

In 1989, the people of Czechoslovakia ended 41 years of dictatorship in a non-violent effort of civil disobedience. The moral authority of the Czech and Slovak peoples overwhelmed the discredited regime clinging to power after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

After World War II, the communist dictatorship installed in Prague sought to stamp out the rich tradition of democracy and intellectual debate in Czechoslovakia by imprisoning tens of thousands of dissidents and resistance fighters. Thousands of others were killed while serving in jails and labor camps or while attempting to flee the country. Asphyxiating central economic planning stifled the entrepreneurial spirit of the Czech people.

As revolutionary ideas swept across the continent in 1968, the flowers of the Prague Spring emerged from the cracks in the Iron Curtain. Alexander Dubcek's vision of "socialism with a human face" gained currency with the Czech population only to be crushed by Soviet tanks—sent by anxious leaders in Moscow.

When the people of Czechoslovakia marked the first anniversary of the Soviet crackdown in August 1969, it demonstrated that the resistance of that fatal Spring would not soon be forgotten. Nonetheless, resistance against the regime lost momentum for a number of years until the eighties when the dissident movement percolated once again in the churches and cafes of Czechoslovakian society.

The man who became the symbol of this movement would become one of the defining individuals of the last 20th century, Vaclav Havel. The famous playwright who mocked communist duplicity, conformity, and bureaucracy was jailed soon after he helped draft and distribute Charter 77, an anti-Communist manifesto originally signed by 242 people. Havel emerged as a dissident who trumpeted that "truth and love must prevail over lies and hatred."

Ten years ago this month in Czechoslovakia, the temperature of dissent reached the boiling point. Police brutally dispersed public rallies in Bratislava and Prague on November 16 and 17. Daily mass gatherings produced a national general strike on November 27 rallied by the motto "End of Governance for One Party and Free Elections." Forced to negotiate with this powerful opposition, the ruling leadership of Czechoslovakia yielded to the formation of the Government of National Understanding with Alexander Dubcek elected as Chairman of the National Parliament and Vaclav Havel as President of the Republic. In a remarkable month, Havel had gone from the theater stage to moving into Prague's Castle as president of a new Republic.

Just as few predicted the breakneck pace of Eastern Bloc dissolution after the fall of the

Berlin Wall, few envisioned the "Velvet Divorce" between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic in 1993. It was a tribute to the peoples of both sovereign nations that the split was non-violent, a sharp contrast to the violence which accompanied transition in a number of other post-communist societies in Europe.

I had the honor of sitting down with Vaclav Havel when I accompanied President Clinton to the NATO Madrid Summit in July of 1997 when the Alliance invited the Czech Republic, along with Hungary and Poland to apply for membership. We reflected on the changes that had transpired in this society, a subject which lends itself to further discussion on this tenth anniversary as well.

Inevitably, some of the idealism of those heady days of ten years ago has dissipated, as Czechs and Slovaks grapple with the day to day challenges of a democracy and a free market. After opting for separation, the Slovaks chose a repressive leader, Vladimir Meciar, who promptly took the fledgling nation on a u-turn away from democratic pluralism and economic reform.

Nonetheless, the Slovaks changed direction again and are back on a positive course. Relations between the neighboring Czechs and Slovaks have also markedly improved in recent months. In this sequence of events, I believe there are lessons to be learned. With freedom comes the ability to make good and bad choices—and bad decisions will be made time to time in any democracy. It is nonetheless eminently preferable to having decisions forced on a populace by a discredited, installed regime.

What the vibrant Czech and Slovak communities in the United States remind us each day is never to take our freedom for granted because it can be taken away or it can deteriorate into a unrecognizable state. They help us understand the pain that their friends, relatives, and brethren endured when they lost this gift. And they help us recall the remarkable achievement the Czech and Slovak people accomplished together during a remarkable month, one decade ago.

HONORING BRANDI DIAS

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a very brave young woman, Brandi Dias. Ms. Dias suffers from acute myeloid leukemia and recently had a stem cell transplant, using her own marrow to fight the cancer. I am happy to say that she is doing well.

After her own experience with trying unsuccessfully to find a bone marrow donor match, Brandi became interested in attracting volunteers to the National Marrow Donor Program. The National Marrow Donor Program facilitates transplants from volunteers and unrelated donors for patients of all racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. Brandi has focused on attracting and retaining volunteers to participate in the NMDP Registry, where people can search for matching donors.

Believing that donors are more likely to remain committed to the program if they participate in a thorough education program prior to joining the NMDP Registry, Brandi submitted a proposal for a pilot program that will include two-hour seminars covering the process of becoming a bone marrow donor.

I am proud to say that Brandi has received word that her Bone Marrow Donor Pilot Program proposal has been funded. The funding will allow for a donor pilot program in San Luis Obispo County and for four donor drives beginning in January 2000. The goal of this pilot program is to encourage and educate the public about the need for bone marrow donors and to assist in retaining donors on the registry.

And so I salute Brandi Dias today. She has shown courage in her fight against leukemia and transformed this experience into community activism that will benefit patients across San Luis Obispo County. I am proud to represent her in Congress.

RECOGNITING OF A VISIT BY A RUSSIAN DELEGATION TO THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DIS- TRICT OF WISCONSIN

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks I have read many news articles and heard many interviews which paint a very grim picture of the political and financial situation in Russia. I have seen economic analysts and political pundits shake their heads and ask in very solemn tones, "Who lost Russia?" If I were to believe the most outspoken American leaders and experts, it seems we should just give up on democratic development in Russia and allow the worst-case scenarios to become self-fulfilling prophecies.

But while gloomy forecasts cloud this country's media-based perception of Russia's future, I have good reason to hold out hope for a prosperous Russia and for a strong U.S.-Russian relationship. In September, I hosted a delegation of Russians through the auspices of the Library of Congress and the American Foreign Policy Council. After spending an exceptionally enlightening week with these individuals, I believe the real question facing the West is not who lost Russia—as if it were the West's to lose—or even whether Russia is lost. Rather, the question is how can we help enterprising and industrious Russians, like those I met, work to rebuild their nation.

The delegation that spent a week in my Congressional district in western Wisconsin came from different regions of Russia and different walks of life. As politicians, scientists and financial advisors, these men and women represented their nation well. They looked around a typical Wisconsin dairy farm, walked in a small town parade, toured a state university campus and strolled along the banks of the Mississippi River. All the while they shared with me, with my constituents and with each other, their thoughts about their homeland, its future, and the future of relations between our

countries. I was struck by the energy and optimism of these individuals, and by their sincere desire to see their fledgling democracy flourish.

Mr. Sergey Alksandrovich Klimov is the deputy head of the Votorynets district administration in Nizhney-Novgorod Oblast. Ms. Irina Lovovna Osokina is a deputy of the Moscow City Duma. Mr. Nikolay Mikhaylovich Tarasov is the Mayor of Orsk in the Orenburgh Oblast and a member of the legislative assembly. Mr. Dmitry Valeriyevich Udalov is chairman of the board of the agricultural finance company Russkoye Pole, and deputy of the Saratov regional Duma. Each of these individuals has specific reasons for participating in the delegation to my district, and each had specific interests in comparing the institutions, business ventures and political processes of our two nations. But by the end of their stay, each grew to be friends with the others, as well as with me and my staff, and our shared goals for peace and prosperity outweighed the differences between our respective ways of life.

On their way home, the delegation stopped here in Washington. They were not only impressed by our magnificent capital city, but by the fact that the American people have such direct and open access to their elected leaders and their government. I am glad to say that through this exchange program, myself and many other Members of Congress were able to open this Capitol—the People's House—to our World War II allies as a sign of support for their honorable efforts at home.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain and the end of Soviet Communism in Russia, the Russian people have strived to reap the fruits of democracy and capitalism. Many in Russia feel that the journey is hopeless and that capitalism will not work for them. I am confident that, based on the four outstanding people I had the honor of hosting, the doubters and naysayers both in Russia and abroad will be proven wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that we have a duty, not only as legislators, but as Americans and as citizens of the world, to help our Russian friends at this critical time in their history. Let us extend a hand both in friendship and assistance. Mortimer B. Zuckerman, Editor-in-Chief of U.S. News & World Report recently wrote: "Russia is not lost. It is still a much better friend of the West than it was under Communism." Mr. Zuckerman went on to say, "The Russians have, in fact, demonstrated an extraordinary resilience . . . The United States and the West will have to appreciate that Russia can only solve its problems its own way." He concluded, "Humility will serve us well. Not everybody needs to be like us." I couldn't agree more. Russia does have a bright future, and the United States has the opportunity to be a friend and partner in that future.

We will, of course, continue to encourage democracy and openness not only in Russia, but in all nations of the world. In the aftermath of the Cold War, such participation remains vital to our national interest. America must be active in the world community to help guide the many newly independent nations in their democratic development.

Mr. Speaker, I made new friends in September; friends I hope learned at least a little