

the 2000 American Automobile Association Lifesaving Medal. This award is the highest honor given to members of the school safety patrol.

Daniel is a member of the Kent Gardens School Safety Patrol in McLean, Virginia. On January 12th of this year, he was on his way to his post when he saw an eight-year-old student running back toward his departing bus. Quickly sizing up the danger, Daniel yelled at the student to stop. The bus driver also heard Daniel's yells and stopped the bus, a mere three feet from the oncoming student who was approaching in the driver's blind spot.

I salute Daniel and the other young recipients of this year's award, Daniel Rogers of Maryland and Greg Lawson and Tasha Tanner of Ohio, for their lifesaving contributions to the safety of their fellow students. As members of their school safety patrols, these young people have made invaluable contributions to their schools and communities. I also commend the American Automobile Association for their sponsorship of this valuable program to keep our nation's young people safe on their trips to and from school.●

REBIRTH FOR RUTLAND'S PARAMOUNT THEATER

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on Saturday, March 18, the Paramount Theater opened its doors to the Rutland community for the first public performance on its stage in nearly 20 years. This was a memorable night for Vermonters who had the opportunity to see Arlo Guthrie perform with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra. This grand reopening also marked the successful completion of an important and historic restoration project.

The Paramount Theater is a Vermont treasure that was an icon of downtown Rutland from the time it first opened its doors in 1914 to the day those doors closed in 1981. Founded by Rutland businessman George T. Chaffee, the Chaffee Playhouse served as a venue for the entertainers of the day, allowing Rutland area residents the opportunity to see the likes of Will Rogers, the Marx Brothers and Harry Houdini, among many others. As motion pictures moved into the spotlight in the 1930s, Chaffee's Playhouse was taken over by Paramount and became known as the Paramount Movie House.

Then times changed, and after years of screening movies for fewer and fewer patrons, the Paramount closed its doors to the public in 1981. The ornate theater that had once served as a centerpiece for the Rutland arts and social scenes had become only a fond memory for those whose lives it had affected.

Now times have changed again, and over the past several years, downtown Rutland has undergone remarkable growth and revitalization. As the downtown community began to bustle

with more and more visitors, local residents and merchants felt the time had come to reopen the doors of the old Center Street theater.

Coming up with a good idea is often the easy part of a project. Finding a way to turn that idea into reality can be a much larger task. That was the case with the project to reopen the Paramount Theater, which required significant renovation and restoration. Through the tireless efforts of community leaders, a major fund raising effort was launched with contributions from individuals and local businesses, with grants also from the state and federal governments. More than 1500 people made personal contributions toward the renovation project. My colleague, Senator JEFFORDS, took the lead in making the case for the federal contribution, and I was pleased to support that effort.

Nearly 20 years after it closed, and after more than \$3.5 million in construction and renovation, the Paramount Theater has been restored to the beauty and splendor enjoyed by those Vermonters who attended its original opening night on January 15, 1914. The reopening of the Paramount Theater now will serve the Rutland community's need for an arts center, and, for new generations of Vermonters, it will once again be a focal point for the social life of a vibrant community.●

TAIWANESE-AMERICAN HERITAGE WEEK

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, this month I join people in New Jersey and throughout the nation in celebrating Pacific-American Heritage Month. The Pacific-American community represents an important part of America's future and I applaud their proud celebration of heritage and community.

Taiwanese-American Heritage Week, from May 7 to May 14, celebrates the unique and diverse contributions of the more than 500,000 Taiwanese-Americans in the United States. These Americans have played a significant role in our nation's life and their countless accomplishments can be found in every facet of American society. For instance, Taiwanese-Americans have succeeded as notable artists, Nobel Laureate scientists, researchers, human rights activists, and business leaders.

In addition to recognizing these contributions, this is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the success of democracy on the island of Taiwan. Since 1987, the Taiwanese people have possessed the rights to select their own leaders, practice the religion of their choice, and express their thoughts openly and freely. Taiwan is a vibrant and democratic participant in the family of nations.

The election on March 18 of opposition leader Chen Shui-bian as presi-

dent, and my friend Annette Lu as vice-president, represents the crowning achievement of the struggle of the people of Taiwan for full-fledged democracy and freedom. While Taiwan has established a model democracy, there remain political challenges. Gaining worldwide recognition of the legitimacy of Taiwan's government is paramount. With all that Taiwanese and Taiwanese-Americans have accomplished there is still more work to be done before Taiwan's status and global contributions are properly respected and appreciated.

Mr. President, Taiwanese-American Heritage Week recognizes the longstanding friendship between the United States and Taiwan. I commend the great accomplishments and contributions of the Taiwanese-American community.●

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to praise the work of Minnesota's hospitals and those across America as we recognize National Hospital Week. This year's theme, "Touching The Future With Care," focuses on the heart of the hospital system: its people. For those Minnesota doctors, nurses, administrators, and volunteers who consistently provide the highest level of quality health care in America, I commend your selfless efforts. You are very deserving of our recognition here today.

Hospitals are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing their communities with around-the-clock health care services. In my own state of Minnesota, 142 hospitals and 22 different health care systems provide Minnesotans with one of the most efficient and effective health care systems in the United States. This is not a result of mere chance. Rather, it is the combined efforts of our health care professionals—those men and women who devote themselves to the delivery of timely, quality health care, when and where it is needed.

As we all know, American hospitals have faced severe challenges over the last several years due to rapidly declining reimbursement rates under Medicare. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 made dramatic changes to the payment rates to hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and individual providers. In fact, Medpac, Congress' Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, reported that profit margins for hospitals across the country dropped nearly 40 percent between 1998 and 1999. This is the lowest level in 20 years. And to add insult to injury, the Congressional Budget Office reported that Medicare payments, which serve as one of the largest revenue sources to hospitals, would realize a 62% decrease over the next five years. Clearly, in an industry that is already