

mouth was hanging open because she wrote the way I and people I knew talked. It was a revelation to me.

"She was a beautiful lady, like my mother and my aunts. You didn't have to be a drunk living in Paris—you could be a nice lady and be writing books.

"It was an honor to know her."

"GRAND LADY" ADMIRER FOR PURE VOICE
(By Gary Petius)

The death of Eudora Welty, whose mind and heart pondered the separation between human beings, brought many together Monday in mutual grief and regard for the Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

"A giant tree has fallen," said David Sansing, historian and professor emeritus of history at Ole Miss in Oxford.

"William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Richard Wright, Eudora Welty: Who would think that this little state, with such a high rate of illiteracy, would produce these giants of literature, and all of the same generation?"

"Eudora Welty was the last of those, the great four."

Dean Faulkner Wells of Oxford, niece of perhaps the greatest of those four, William Faulkner, said, "A grand lady of letters is gone. We will always revere her words, as will coming generations."

Wells' husband, author Larry Wells, said Welty "spoke to all generations. It was that pure voice, that humanity. You can't afford to lose people like Eudora Welty.

"In matters of the heart, she was never wrong."

One of the people who knew her heart best is Suzanne Marrs, a noted Welty scholar and an English professor at Millsaps College in Jackson. In a Monday news conference, she was reminded of the famous Lou Gehrig farewell speech that echoed in Yankee Stadium decades ago. "Today," Marrs said, "I think I'm the luckiest English teacher on the face of the earth: I had Eudora Welty as a great friend."

Marrs recalled a crowded elevator ride she took long ago with her friend, who was surrounded by a bevy of starry-eyed writers attending a seminar in Chattanooga. When Welty noted that everyone else in the car wore an ID, she said, "Oh, I've forgotten my nametag."

"She was that modest to believe she needed a nametag among all those people who knew her greatness," Marrs said.

Her humility and talent connected with people on both sides of the political and philosophical aisle. Mississippi Gov. Ronnie Musgrove, a Democrat, and U.S. Rep. Roger Wicker, a Republican, honored Welty on Monday.

"Not only will Mississippians miss her," Musgrove said, "but people literally around the world will miss her wisdom."

In remarks made on the floor of the House, Wicker said, "Eudora Welty understood not only the South, but the complex family relationships and individual struggles that have combined to give America its rich texture. Her works of fantasy and tall tale narration included two of my favorites, *The Robber Bridegroom* and *The Ponder Heart* . . . , which are still read aloud frequently at the Wicker household."

A statement from Mississippi native William Ferris, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, read in part: "She chronicled the power of place in small towns and in rural areas with an intimacy and eloquence that was unique."

That eloquence charmed and inspired writers of various generations, including Eliza-

beth Spencer of Chapel Hill, N.C., who wrote the introduction to Welty's Country Churchyards. ". . . Her work will live on as the presence that we will miss so much," Spencer said.

In spite of that void, Sansing said, Welty leaves behind a wealth of literary heirs in Mississippi, including Larry Brown, Barry Hannah, Richard Ford and Greg Iles.

"There's no other geographic region in the world, on a per capita basis, that has produced so many really fine writers," Sansing said. "And there's no end in sight.

"(The late author) Willie Morris and I used to talk all the time about why this is so. And he always came back to one thing: It's the caliber of the whiskey we drink." Sansing paused.

"But I don't think Miss Welty drank much whiskey."

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
PURSUANT TO S. RES. 120

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, on behalf of the Republican Members of the Senate, I submit the following committee assignments for the Republican Party:

Special Committee on Aging: Mr. Craig, Mr. Burns, Mr. Shelby, Mr. Santorum, Ms. Collins, Mr. Enzi, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Inhofe, and Mr. Hagel.

EXPLANATION OF VOTE

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, on Thursday, July 19, I was unable to register my vote on rollcall vote No. 240, final passage of the fiscal year 2002 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. If I had been present to vote, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to note for the RECORD that I missed the vote on Monday, July 23, vote No. 247, because my flight arrived from Chicago 3 hours late at 8:30 p.m. Had I been here, I would have voted "yea."

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT
OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred July 17, 1990 in Salt Lake City, UT. Three men were charged with aggravated assault in the July 17 attack of a 17-year-old gay male. The three suspects, Roy Larsen, 20, Glen Chad Hosey, 20, and Brian Snow, 18, allegedly beat the victim with nunchaku in a city park.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe

that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, July 23, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,721,846,564,456.14, five trillion, seven hundred twenty-one billion, eight hundred forty-six million, five hundred sixty-four thousand, four hundred fifty-six dollars and fourteen cents.

Five years ago, July 23, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,171,664,000,000, five trillion, one hundred seventy-one billion, six hundred sixty-four million.

Ten years ago, July 23, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,549,898,000,000, three trillion, five hundred forty-nine billion, eight hundred ninety-eight million.

Fifteen years ago, July 23, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,069,977,000,000, two trillion, sixty-nine billion, nine hundred seventy-seven million.

Twenty-five years ago, July 23, 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$619,301,000,000, six hundred nineteen billion, three hundred one million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion, \$5,102,545,564,456.14, five trillion, one hundred two billion, five hundred forty-five million, five hundred sixty-four thousand, four hundred fifty-six dollars and fourteen cents during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO REBECCA KANE

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I am pleased to announce that Rebecca Kane, from Lee, New Hampshire, was recently awarded the Young Naturalists Award for her essay entitled "Bog Trotting." This prestigious honor is only awarded to 12 student across the country and I would like to congratulate her on this outstanding achievement.

After reading Rebecca's essay, I have learned a great deal about my New Hampshire bogs. Her description of the pitcher plants was fascinating, but even more interesting was the introduction of different theories related to bog formation.

The pictures provided along with the detailed descriptions of the landscape around her were breathtaking and showed a great deal of literary skill beyond 12 years of age. Rebecca's appreciation of the bogs and ability to translate that insight into a stylistic prose is remarkable and exhibits a veritable talent.

As the senior Republican of the Environment and Public Works Committee, I am always concerned about our nation's natural resources and none more so than New Hampshire's beautiful landscape. After reading this essay, the