

has been an influential force in assisting Arizonans in need. The woman of whom I speak is Ms. Terri Cruz, a woman whose accomplishments in life are reflected in the success of her community and its members.

Ms. Cruz has touched the lives of many citizens of Arizona through her active community involvement. In 1985 she was appointed by former Governor Bruce Babbitt to the Nursing Care Institution Administrators Board, while concurrently serving as the National Chairman of the Hispanic Senior Citizen Foundation Board. Other boards Ms. Cruz has served on are the YWCA, Maricopa County and Phoenix Human Resource Commissions and the Mayor's Commission for the Aging. In addition, she served as President of the West Phoenix LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) Council.

Ms. Cruz's work as a Job Developer for Operation S.E.R. provided training for high school students in clerical skills, general office procedures, and other areas, giving young people who may not otherwise have had the opportunity to gain these valuable skills become productive members of their communities.

Currently Ms. Cruz is the Social Services Counselor for Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc., based in Phoenix. Her primary responsibility is providing social services to clients. She helps solve problems they may be having with Social Security, food stamps, health agencies, and landlord/tenant problems. Many of these problems may have gone unchecked if it were not for caring individuals such as Ms. Cruz. As a tribute, Chicanos Por La Causa named one of their buildings after Ms. Cruz for all her work in helping individuals gain job skills and obtain employment.

Because of her lifelong dedication to helping others, Ms. Cruz recently was honored with a Jewell Award. This is an award that annually recognizes "a woman who has given generously and selflessly for the betterment of our community," in metropolitan Phoenix. Her extensive background in job training and development, her commitment to working within business, industry, social and community organizations and government to help others truly has made her deserving of this award.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me today in honoring this giving and caring individual, my friend, Ms. Terri Cruz.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J.C. WATTS, JR.

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2001

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be here yesterday due to my daughter's grade school graduation in Oklahoma, and missed Recorded Votes No. 126 (Motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Con. Res. 56—National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day), and No. 127 (motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1885—extending section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act).

Had I been present, I would have voted yea on both of the above motions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2001

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on May 21, 2001 my flight was extremely delayed by over three hours. As a result I missed rollcall vote No. 126 and No. 127. Please excuse my absence from this vote. If I were present, I would have voted yea in support of H. Con. Res. 56 the Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Resolution.

THE STORY OF EMILY ROSS

HON. STEVE C. LaTOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2001

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a courageous young woman from Westlake, OH, who recently contacted me to share her story and the need for increased funding for Muscular Dystrophy research. Emily, a sophomore at Westlake High School, has Friedreich's Ataxia, one of the many neuromuscular diseases that fall under the umbrella of Muscular Dystrophy. Emily was diagnosed when she was five.

Emily's parents, Charlie and Carolyn Ross, shared with me two articles Emily wrote about her daily struggle with Muscular Dystrophy and how she is overcoming the challenges the disease places before her. The first was written when Emily was in eighth grade, "A Day in the Life of Emily Ross." The second, "Onward and Outward!" was published in the April 2001 edition of The Bay Press. I am submitting the writings of Emily Ross into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so they will become a part of the official record of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, Emily believes that God chose her to have Muscular Dystrophy because he needed someone to help find a cure. I applaud her courage and grace, and hope that others will be as touched by her story as I was.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF EMILY ROSS

(By Emily Ross)

When I wake up in the morning, I shut off my alarm and begin my day by stopping to think how I am going to walk across my bedroom floor. Attempting to go into the bathroom is scary because my feet are stiff, my balance is terrible and I manage to bang into every piece of furniture in my bedroom! I get downstairs to the kitchen for breakfast by scooting down on my behind step by step. Going into the kitchen for breakfast I have trouble opening the peanut butter jar, pouring a glass of milk or getting any cereal into my mouth because my hands shake. I hope my teeth are clean because I cannot squeeze the toothpaste. Buttons, zippers and socks are a challenge. I'm already tired but off to school I go with my Mom and my dog, Oats.

At school, my Mom helps me to the door because my feet trip easily on the uneven sidewalk. I cannot open the heavy doors by myself. Once inside, I hop on my battery-powered scooter and go to my locker. If I'm not shaking too badly I can get my combina-

tion lock opened in three tries! Headed to my first class I face crowded hallways, funny looks from other kids and hurtful comments like "there goes the cripple." Sometimes some of the kids will lie on the floor pretending that I have hit them with my scooter which really hurts my feelings. I'm constantly being asked to move out of the way because they say my scooter takes up too much room. After class I'd like a drink of water but the water fountains are too high. At lunchtime I never buy a school lunch because I cannot reach the food on the shelves or get my scooter through the narrow gate. I tried to walk through the lunch line several times but everyone is pushing and I'm scared I'll lose my balance. I dropped my tray once and believe me, once is enough!

It's now sixth period and I'm starting to get really tired and I have two more class periods to go. The bell rings and school is finally over. It's pretty tricky getting my scooter down the hallway with everyone pushing and shoving their way out to the buses. I finally get to my locker, hope I can get it open in time so I don't miss my bus, grab my coat and panic when I can't zip up my backpack. All my papers fall out all over the floor. I frantically stuff them back inside my backpack, park my scooter, and struggle past 800 other kids waiting to catch their bus rides home. My bus finally arrives and I gratefully sit down for my ride home. An aide helps me up to the side door of my house and helps hold my hands steady so I can aim my key in the lock and she also helps me to turn the doorknob so I can get safely inside. Once inside I let my backpack and coat drop on the floor and I fall onto the couch where I am grateful to God that I have made it another day. Oats, my dog, is the only one I can talk to when I get home from school, she always understands me.

My name is Emily Ross. I am 13 years old and in the eight grade. I have Friedreich's Ataxia which is one of forty neuromuscular diseases listed under Muscular Dystrophy. It is a hereditary degenerative nerve disease which affects the hands and feet resulting in fatigue and loss of feeling and balance. I was diagnosed when I was 5. I thank God allowed me to have MD because he needed someone to help find a cure. He's chosen me and has led me to a team of doctors that have asked to take a biopsy of muscle and nerve tissue in a "one of a kind" research program which The Muscular Dystrophy Society is sponsoring. They are hoping to determine how they can replace or regenerate the protein that is missing in the cells of all Friedreich's patients. Even if a cure is years away, this study may allow for a medicine that could help me and many others to stop shaking and stop our muscles from weakening anymore.

Not all of my days are stressful because I have the love of my family and many good friends who help me throughout each day. My Mom, Dad and my brother, Hunter, help me squeeze the toothpaste, open the peanut butter jar and button my clothes. My school has allowed me to start my school day one hour later than everyone else and when my friends see me coming up to the door, they hold them open for me. Sometimes it's even a really cute boy which makes my day start off pretty darn good!!! My scooter is sometimes being used by my crazy science teacher but she always comes zooming down the hall just in time for me to get to English. My teachers have been wonderful with kind understanding and a willingness to adapt to my special needs. because of my school's support, I am a straight A student. And, if my