

RECOGNIZING JOHN ANTHONY CLIZER FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize John Anthony Clizer, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

John has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years John has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending John Anthony Clizer for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PULITZER PRIZE WINNER NICHOLAS KRISTOF: INTRODUCING AMERICANS TO AFRICA—ONE ASPIRING JOURNALIST AT A TIME

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to enter into the RECORD a column by Nicholas Kristof: "The Drumroll, Please" in the May 23, 2006 edition of The New York Times and his column of March 26, 2006 entitled "A Woman Without Importance."

Mr. Kristof uses his New York Times column to bring to our attention important, little known and neglected human rights causes. In the past 12 months many of these causes have come from Mr. Kristof's observations during his many trips to countries in Africa. As a persistent, compassionate journalist advocating for women's rights in Africa, Mr. Kristof has no peer. To me, he is a quiet but powerful voice forcing our recognition that women and girls are without basic human rights in many countries in Africa and other countries as well such as Vietnam, Thailand, and Pakistan.

In a column of March 26, 2006, Mr. Kristof wrote about Aisha Parveen who at the age of 14 was living in northwest Pakistan when she was hit over the head while walking to school. She awoke to find herself imprisoned in a brothel where she was tortured and imprisoned for 6 years. When she escaped she married a man who helped her. The brothel owner sued the couple claiming he had married the 14-year-old Aisha Parveen. She was accused of adultery and was ordered to go back to the brothel owner.

Girls in Africa are often sold as sex slaves or servants. In some countries girls are inherited or used to payoff debts. Marriages are arranged for them when they are as young as 12 years. They have babies before their bod-

ies are able to deliver a child vaginally. With no medical help most labor for days to deliver a dead baby and are left with terrible birth injuries. If the mother is incontinent because of an injury called a fistula she is shunned by her family and her husband forced to live away from the village.

Mr. Kristof won the Pulitzer Prize for risking his life returning to the Darfur region of southern Sudan again and again to tell the stories of the people suffering from the remaining victims of a concerted effort by the Arab government in Khartoum to eliminate every last one of them. Kristof has chronicled genocide in Darfur as it has continued unabated for three years and goes on now in spite of a newly signed peace accord brokered in part by the United States.

Kristof has told the personal stories of people who have suffered from the rampages of the Janjaweed, the proxy murderers of the Government of Sudan in Khartoum. He has personalized the murders, the maiming, the rapes, the killing of children, by telling the heart breaking stories of people who have lost their homes, their children and parents, husbands and wives, their livestock, their lands and their freedom.

Perhaps because so little print had been spent on Darfur, Mr. Kristof, decided people were not familiar enough with Africa to become sympathetic to the plight of people who are targets of a ruthless, cruel genocide.

Maybe Mr. Kristof had the idea that more students should make travel to other countries part of their college education and more universities should offer such trips. As he announced in his video a "win a trip" contest in March he felt he got a great education from his trips when he was a student that he was sponsoring a "win a trip" competition because he had learned so much from his trips to other countries while he was a student that he felt more students needed to experience life in other countries. Kristof's idea of visiting other countries is visiting places where the people of the country live, not visiting tourist places like Paris and London.

In Mr. Kristof's video announcing the "win a trip" contest, the camera views him from above as he appears to be standing on a wide sand beach. Mr. Kristof begins by talking about spring breaks and how many American college students spend their spring breaks and summers reveling beaches. But as the camera closes in, it become clear Mr. Kristof is not on a beach and not near an American city or village recognizable to most Americans until the camera broadens its view to take in a skinny donkey with a rider and a few people wearing the long draped clothes and hoods common to desert peoples who are always needing protection from a brutal, relentless sun.

For years Mr. Kristof has used his column in the Times to chronicle the continuing slow genocide in Darfur with the individual stories of people who have been maimed, raped and had children killed in front of them and to stop the genocide in Darfur. He has told the stories of the individuals who have lost everything they had; families, homes, livestock and parents. He has traveled to places in Africa where women are the least of the least and has chronicled stories of women who are shunned by their families if they are raped or

worse go to jail even though they are the victims of crime.

The fact that 3,800 aspiring journalists from universities around the country applied to accompany Mr. Kristof on an admittedly "rough" reporting trip to "a neglected area in Africa" speaks volumes about the esteem in which these students hold Mr. Kristof. The number of applicants wanting to go to Africa gives me enormous hope for Africa and our country. There is no better way for Americans to know Africa than to go there. And for those who will not be able to go themselves they will benefit from the journalists like Casey Parks the winner of the first "win a trip" contest who is accompanying Mr. Kristof this summer to Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

My wish for Ms. Parks is that she has a long career as a journalist who will write so intimately and well of her journey, that the people of Africa will be seen as individual human beings to her readers. My hope for Mr. Kristof is that he is able to take a different aspiring journalist every year and convince Universities and colleges around the country of the value of establishing programs for students to live in countries they will not visit as tourists to see how the people of these countries live their lives.

[From the New York Times, May 23, 2006]

THE DRUMROLL, PLEASE

(By Nicholas D. Kristof)

In March I opened a "win a trip" contest, offering to take a university student with me on a rough reporting trip to a neglected area in Africa.

Some 3,800 applications poured in, accompanied by boxes of supplementary materials, ranging from senior theses to nude photos. After weeks of sifting through the applications, I finally have a winner.

She is Casey Parks of Jackson, Miss.—an aspiring journalist who has never traveled abroad. We'll get her a passport and a bunch of vaccinations—ah, the glamour of overseas travel—and start planning our trip.

Casey, who turned 23 on Friday, attended Millsaps College in Jackson and is now a graduate student in journalism at the University of Missouri. She has won a string of awards for her essays and other writing.

In her essay, Casey wrote about growing up poor: "I saw my mother skip meals. I saw my father pawn everything he loved. I saw our cars repossessed. I never saw France or London." (The essays by Casey and a dozen finalists are posted at nytimes.com/winatrip.)

"I so desperately want to leave this country and know more," she wrote. Now she'll have the chance.

We'll most likely start in Equatorial Guinea, bounce over to Cameroon and travel through a jungle with Pygmy villages to end up in the Central African Republic—one of the most neglected countries in the world. We'll visit schools, clinics and aid programs, probably traveling in September for 10 days. Casey will write a blog about it for nytimes.com and will also do a video blog for MTV-U.

But the point of this contest wasn't to give one lucky student the chance to get malaria and hookworms. It's to try to stir up a broader interest in the developing world among young people.

One of our country's basic strategic weaknesses is that Americans don't understand the rest of the world. We got in trouble in Vietnam and again in Iraq partly because we