

initiatives to encourage mentoring, and we set aside \$14 million in grants for the Justice Department's Juvenile Mentoring Program.

Children bring so much hope, joy, and love to our lives; in return, we owe them our time, our attention, the power of our example, and the comfort of our concern. It is a fair trade, and one that enriches the lives of us all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 10, 1999, as National Children's Day. I urge all Americans to express their love and appreciation for the children of our Nation on this day and on every day throughout the year. I invite Federal officials, local governments, communities, and all American families to join in observing this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also urge all Americans to reflect upon the importance of children to our families, the importance of strong families to our children, and the importance of both to America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7239 of October 8, 1999

Columbus Day, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Although Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the New World took place more than 500 years ago, the momentous changes it brought about still resonate today. His journey triggered a historic encounter between Europe and the native peoples of the New World; helped open new continents to exploration, trade, and development; established a reliable route to the Americas; and was a major milestone in the inexorable trend toward expansion and globalization.

Columbus could not have imagined the full impact of his arrival in 1492 or how his journey would shape human history. The zeal for trade that motivated the Spanish crown to fund Columbus' voyages still exists today as we work to strengthen our commercial ties with other nations and to compete in an increasingly global economy. Columbus' own passion for adventure survives as an integral part of our national character and heritage, reflected in our explorations of the oceans' depths and the outer reaches of our solar system. A son of Italy, Columbus opened the door to the New World for millions of people from across the globe who have followed their dreams to America. Today, Americans of Italian and Spanish descent can take special pride, not only in Columbus' historic achievements, but also in their own immeasurable contributions to our national life. From business to the arts, from government to academia, they have played an important part in advancing the peace and prosperity our country enjoys today.

We are about to embark on our own journey into a new millennium of unknown challenges and possibilities. As we ponder that future, Columbus' courage and daring still capture the American imagination, inspiring us to look to the horizon, as he did, and see, not a daunting boundary, but a new world full of opportunity.

In tribute to Columbus' many achievements, the Congress, by joint resolution of April 30, 1934 (48 Stat. 657), and an Act of June 28, 1968 (82 Stat. 250), has requested the President to proclaim the second Monday in October of each year as "Columbus Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 11, 1999, as Columbus Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also direct that the flag of the United States be displayed on all public buildings on the appointed day in honor of Christopher Columbus.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7240 of October 15, 1999

White Cane Safety Day, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The white cane is widely recognized as a symbol of independence for people who are blind or visually impaired. This simple device has given freedom to generations of blind Americans by enabling them to move through their communities with greater ease, confidence, and safety.

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, former President of the National Federation of the Blind who died just a year ago this month, was an early advocate of the white cane and the full integration of blind people into every aspect of society. Dr. Jernigan used the white cane himself and recognized its power as a means to allow blind people to leave the confines of their homes for the outside world—to go to school and to work and to make ever-greater contributions to their communities.

Thanks to enormous advances in technology, people who are blind or visually impaired now have additional tools—such as voice recognition software, computer screen readers, and braille translators—to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities on the job. My Administration has proposed increased investment in such assistive technology as well as a \$1,000 tax credit to help people with disabilities offset the cost of special transportation requirements and work-related expenses. I have also strongly urged the Congress to pass the Work Incentives Improvement Act so that Americans with disabilities can go to work without jeopardizing their Medicare or Medicaid coverage.