

Human Relations Service Award on October 25, 2006. This distinguished honor is awarded annually by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission "to the person who has performed outstanding and meritorious service to [the] community through personal efforts by enhancing the dignity and worth of its citizens." This award is given in memory of the late Big John Riley, who dedicated his time and efforts for the advancement of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

Just as Big John Riley gave to the community during his time, Virginia Day too works tirelessly, in various capacities. As the Manager of Evergreen Manors, since 1983, Virginia has been working hard for companies like Improved Dwellings for Altoona, Inc. She has also been involved with organizations such as the YMCA, the Altoona Housing Authority, the City of Altoona with Community Education and Training Agency, and ENCORE court advocates for youth. Through her efforts, Virginia has helped improve the lives of the citizens of the Altoona community.

To cite each individual accomplishment and contribution that Virginia has been a part of would be nearly impossible. Her involvement in the community over the years has been immeasurable and certainly in the spirit of the late Big John Riley. Miss Virginia Day has selflessly dedicated herself to the Altoona area, and we are all very grateful for her effort toward positive enrichment of the community, as she has certainly deserved this distinguished honor.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ASTRONAUT JOSEPH TANNER

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of NASA astronaut, Joseph Tanner for his outstanding service to his country in the name of space exploration, including his recent mission to the International Space Station on the Space Shuttle *Atlantis*.

Joseph Tanner was born in Illinois in 1950 and graduated from Danville High School in Danville, Illinois in 1968. He pursued a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Illinois graduating in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science degree. Upon graduation, Mr. Tanner joined the Navy where he earned his pilot wings in 1975 before serving as an A-7E pilot with the Light Attack Squadron 94 aboard the U.S.S. *Coral Sea*. He finished his active service with the Navy as an advanced jet instructor pilot with Training Squadron 4 in Pensacola, Florida.

In 1984, Mr. Tanner began working for the NASA Johnson Space Center as an aerospace engineer and research pilot. His primary flying responsibilities involved teaching the astronaut pilots Space Shuttle landing techniques in the Shuttle Training Aircraft and instructing the pilots and mission specialists in the T-38. In addition to his flying duties, Mr. Tanner held positions as the aviation safety officer, the head of the pilot section, and the Deputy Chief of Aircraft Operations Division. In total, Mr. Tanner has accumulated an impressive no less than 8,862 hours in military and NASA aircraft.

Selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in March 1992, Mr. Tanner reported to the Astronaut Office in August 1992 where he completed one year of initial training and worked in the Shuttle Avionics Integration Laboratory before being assigned to his first mission. Mr. Tanner also served as part of the Astronaut Support Personnel team at the Kennedy Space Center, supporting Space Shuttle launches and landings. Throughout his NASA career, Mr. Tanner has participated in four space flight missions.

The most recent space flight Mr. Tanner flew on was STS-115, the Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. *Atlantis* launched on September 9, 2006 with six crew members to continue construction on the International Space Station. The 12 day mission included several space walks to construct crucial components to ensure the future of the International Space Station, including the installation of two solar arrays to assist the station in generating power. Mr. Tanner performed two space walks on this particular mission, bringing his total number of space walks to seven. *Atlantis* landed in Florida at the Kennedy Shuttle Landing Facility on September 21, 2006 in the early morning. The Space Shuttle *Atlantis* accomplished its mission of delivering the first major new component to the International Space Station since 2002 and laid important groundwork for upcoming station construction.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the crew of the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* and especially to astronaut, Joseph Tanner.

IN RECOGNITION OF BISHOP-ELECT MITCHELL G. TAYLOR

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Bishop-Elect Mitchell G. Taylor. The Senior Pastor of the Center of Hope International and the Founder and President of the East River Development Alliance, Reverend Taylor has dedicated his life to serving his community, which includes Queensbridge Houses, the largest public housing complex on the North American continent, as well as the Ravenswood, Astoria and Woodside public housing developments. Reverend Taylor will be consecrated a Bishop in an Episcopal ceremony to be conducted next month in East Elmhurst, New York.

Reverend Taylor has rightly earned national renown for his work to improve the quality of life for residents of public housing. He is also the author of *Unbroken Promises*, a work offering an inspirational and optimistic message of trust, faith, and hope for a better future. As the Senior Pastor at the Center of Hope International, a non-denominational church founded by his father more than four decades ago, he has overseen the Center's Victory After-School program serving hundreds of school children and the Bread of Life Food Pantry, which has fed thousands of hungry families.

Reverend Taylor has been invited to deliver his inspirational message in lectures and speeches around the United States. Because of his leadership on issues involving public housing, he has been profiled in our nation's paper of record, *The New York Times*, and

dubbed the "Preacher in the Hood" by the CBS television network.

In order to more effectively serve his community, Reverend Taylor helped found the East River Development Alliance, or "ERDA". Working in close collaboration with government officials, tenant groups, parent-teacher associations, houses of worship, nonprofits, and other community organizations, ERDA has scored remarkable successes in expanding economic opportunities for the 30,000 residents in the surrounding community. ERDA also offers financial literacy and home ownership programs, enhanced extracurricular activities for local youth, college preparatory classes, free GED and computer courses, and job training and placement initiatives. With Reverend Mitchell's leadership, a neighborhood coalition was formed that undertook a successful campaign to attract a bank to the community.

In addition to his extraordinary and selfless service to his community, Reverend Taylor is a loving family man dedicated to his wife Barbara and their two children Telisha and Mitchell, Jr. They live in the Long Island City neighborhood to which he has devoted himself, and which he has called home for forty years.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of his meritorious and selfless service to his community, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Reverend Mitchell G. Taylor on his elevation to Bishop and in paying tribute to his enormous contributions to civic life.

HONORING MICHAEL PARENT HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael Parent of Eureka, California, who is being honored for his contribution to one of our nation's most precious rights—participation in the political system. Mr. Parent is being recognized for his outstanding contributions to the political process by the Humboldt County Democratic Central Committee as "Democrat of the Year, 2006." His commitment to the preservation of our political liberty is worthy of appreciation and recognition.

Mike Parent has had a long and distinguished career as an employee of the California Department of Forestry, serving as a Forestry Logistics Officer for over 29 years. During his tenure he helped to coordinate emergency response to wildland fires throughout the state. He was an exemplary employee and valued for his tenacity, organizational skills and commitment to duty.

Mr. Parent has exemplified the model citizen as an active volunteer and member of numerous local organizations. He served as President of the Fortuna Kiwanis Club and President of the Board of the North Coast Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Eureka. He worked tirelessly for these organizations and helped to improve his community and the lives of many young people. He was also a member and served as chairman of the Humboldt County Democratic Central Committee for five years. During his tenure he re-energized the Committee's community activities and public events and helped to grow the membership.

Mr. Parent is a native of Ohio, the oldest of 14 children. He is married to Barbara Ellis and father to Adam Parent, Ryan Nichols and Kevin and Melissa Ellis. Though retired from state service, he continues to offer his logistical expertise for national disasters through the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time to recognize Michael Parent for his leadership and commitment to his community and to the people of the state of California. I would like to add my voice to that of the Humboldt County Democratic Club in offering thanks to Mike for his hard work.

IN HONOR OF ANN RICHARDS

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the late Ann Richards who passed away on September 14th. I had the pleasure to meet Ms. Richards on one of her visits to Minnesota. A true inspiration to others, she will be remembered for her leadership, strength, charisma and humor as well as her lifelong commitment to public service.

As a member of the Democratic Party, Ms. Richards began her political career as Travis County Commissioner from 1977 until 1981. In 1982, she successfully ran a statewide campaign for Texas State Treasurer and became the first woman elected to statewide office in 50 years. In 1988, Ms. Richards gained national attention when she delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

After two terms as State Treasurer, in 1990, Ms. Richards ran a successful campaign for Governor of Texas, and served as Chief Officer of the Lone Star State from 1991–1995. During her tenure as Governor, she worked tirelessly to eliminate gender barriers, revitalize the Texas economy, and decentralize control over education policy. She valued diversity, appointing the largest number of women and minorities to state boards and commissioners of any Texas governor up until that time. An idealistic, strong woman with a witty personality, Governor Richards connected with Texans and people across the United States.

Unfortunately, in 1994, she lost a close reelection for Governor against Texas baseball owner, George W. Bush. Following her term as Governor, Ms. Richards continued her dedication to public service. She was a senior advisor to the communications firm Public Strategies, Inc. in Austin and New York, as well as a senior advisor with a Washington, DC-based, international law firm. Ms. Richards also served on several corporate boards and taught classes at Brandeis University and the University of Texas-Austin.

I extend my thoughts and prayers to her four children, and eight grandchildren. Governor Ann Richards was a loving mother and devoted public servant. She will be remembered and honored in the highest regard.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the life of Governor Ann Richards.

CONGRATULATING KENYA RAY
FROM PROVISIO EAST HIGH
SCHOOL

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I express congratulations to Ms. Kenya Ray for her outstanding achievement in the area of screenwriting.

I also applaud the initiative by Scenarios USA and their collaborative partners, BET and the Kaiser Family Foundation, in creating a national story and script writing contest that attracted 500 youth across America who addressed issues dealing with the topics "What's the Real Deal, on Growing Up in the Age of AIDS?"

I am filled with pride that one of my constituents developed the award-winning script—a story about three young women trying to survive and sustain themselves amidst an environment filled with danger and pain. I am anxious to read Kenya's story about these three women creating and maintaining strong and lasting bonds with each other and members of their families. Our community needs real stories that show real heroes conquering adversity and having happy and healthy lives.

I also want to commend the village of Maywood for supporting this project and I look forward to professional film-makers shooting footage in the Maywood community. I am delighted that Kenya will work directly with professionals in making her script "come alive." Furthermore, it is exciting to realize that Kenya's feelings and perceptions will be seen on BET next February and will be shared with young people across America via Rap-It-Up curriculum kits promoted through cable in the classroom.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 46th anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus. It was on October 1, 1960, that Cyprus became an independent republic after decades of British colonial rule.

I am very fortunate and privileged to represent Astoria, Queens—one of the largest and most vibrant communities of Greek and Cypriot Americans in this country. Among my greatest pleasures as a Member of Congress are participating in the life of this community and the wonderful and vital Cypriot friends that I have come to know.

As a full-fledged member of the European Union, Cyprus is playing a vital role in European affairs while also strengthening relations with the United States. Last year, the United States and the Republic of Cyprus signed a reciprocal Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Ship Boarding Agreement, which is aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Cyprus was the first EU member to sign this agreement.

Unfortunately, the commemoration of Cyprus' Independence Day this year, as in the past, is clouded by the fact that Cyprus continues to be illegally occupied by the Turkish military forces, in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. On July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, and to this day continues to maintain an estimated 35,000 heavily armed troops. The peaceful and cooperative spirit in the person-to-person, family-to-family interactions between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots is an encouraging sign for the successful reunification of Cyprus. However, it is time for Turkey to remove its troops from the island so that Cyprus can move forward as one nation. I remain hopeful that an end to this division will be achieved.

I believe that the United States must play an active role in the resolution of the serious issues facing Cyprus. Cyprus and the United States share a deep and abiding commitment to democracy, human rights, free markets, and the ideal and practice of equal justice under the law. Despite the hardships and trauma caused by the ongoing Turkish occupation, Cyprus has registered remarkable economic growth, and the people living in the Government-controlled areas enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living.

I also want to commend Cyprus for its critical support in helping citizens from many nations including the United States as they evacuated from Lebanon earlier this year.

The relationship between Cyprus and the United States is strong and enduring, and we stand together celebrating democracy and freedom.

RECOGNIZING "COMCAST CARES DAY 2006" IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the sixth annual Comcast Cares Day in Miami-Dade County on October 7, 2006. Several hundred dedicated Comcast employees and their families will join together to help the children of our South Florida community. Nationwide, over 30,000 Comcast employees will take part in hundreds of projects that are vital community service contributions.

This year, Comcast employees are donating their time to His House Children's Home. This exceptional program cares for South Florida children who have been abused, exposed to drugs, or neglected by offering them a home environment. In addition, His House provides necessary counseling and health care. And His House provides these services to over 200 local children in foster care.

Comcast employees will use this day to spend time with the children in the residential program and perform needed upkeep and maintenance on the residential building and surrounding grounds. The dedication to service exhibited by local Comcast employees and their families should serve as an inspiration to all the residents of South Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to offer this statement declaring October 7, "Comcast Cares Day 2006."