

them to their core? Kids are the ones doing the dying. Sadly, we know that has not affected the NRA, or the politicians they have bought and paid for. And that is only because they are not the ones doing the dying. Their ability to turn a blind eye is indefensible.

At the board meeting last week, as students and parents asked the board repeatedly, passionately and eventually pleadingly to simply state for the record that they support the students and the march today to call for sensible gun reform . . . the board sat there stone faced and silent. It is said that it is hard to speak truth to power, but as I sat there watching 14 to 17 year old kids speak, I was stunned and embarrassed by every member of that board, as it became crystal clear that it is much harder for power to speak truth.

No matter what they tell themselves, there is no excuse that they would not stand up with their community and say "we proclaim that we are with you, that enough is enough and we will not stop until sensible gun reform is passed."

Unfortunately, everyone is not on your side. But a lot of people are. So keep doing what you're doing. Keep showing up. Keep speaking out and as soon as you can, vote for the people who will speak truth to power and will not continue to repeat the same generic rhetoric that too many elected officials spew.

If you do that, you are going to save this country and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you. I have felt despair for far too long and I couldn't find solace anywhere, most certainly not from our leaders. And then you stood up. And now I have hope.

I look forward to voting with you in November and voting for you in the years to come.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, we must stand with mothers like Deanne Haenke and show our students that we support them in their efforts. We as leaders must do better by our young people. We as a Congress must act now.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Deanne Haenke and to thank her for her compelling remarks.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOOR COUNTY RESIDENT JIM SARKIS

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2018

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the life and legacy of long-time resident of Door County, Mr. Jim Sarkis.

Mr. Sarkis was a businessman, philanthropist, and, most importantly, a beloved husband, father, son and friend. Jim fought cancer for 4 years, never letting it prevent him from having a positive attitude and showing kindness for others. Jim will leave a lasting legacy on Northeastern Wisconsin.

When reflecting on Jim's time with us, the verses read at his memorial, Hebrews 12:1–2a are most certainly fitting, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

A realtor by trade, Jim pursued many passions in life including golfing, reading, storytelling, and naturally the Green Bay Packers.

In addition to these, Jim's deepest passions were to family, community, and hard work that brought him wonderful success in life. Men like Jim, who are so passionate about their family and community, are rare to find and extremely difficult to lose.

Jim's extraordinary memory will be cherished by many of the lives he touched in Wisconsin and across the United States. It is not often that everyone in a community will think of a common theme or description of a giant from their corner of the world. But "if you don't know Jim Sarkis, you don't know Door County" truly captures Jim and his legacy. May his passion, dedication, and loving spirit be remembered and carried on by all who knew him.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this body to join me in honoring the legacy of Jim Sarkis and his lifelong dedication to his family, community, and the great state of Wisconsin.

RECOGNIZING THE CONSERVATION WORK OF SISTER JEREMIAS STINSON

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2018

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article from the Toledo Blade, dated the 20th of April 2018.

In doing so, I want to recognize the conservation work of the Sisters of St. Francis in Sylvania, Ohio and Sister M. Jeremias Stinson.

As the superintendent of Environmental Stewardship, Gardens, Shrines and Woodland Management, in Sylvania, Sister Jeremias has committed her life to protecting over 250 native species of trees under her care.

With Earth Day being this past Sunday, and a few weeks away from Arbor Day, we as a Nation need to recognize the part we take in our environment.

As said by Sister Jeremias, "To care for all creation, we have to balance the forces of creation. You have to make wise decisions."

[From the Blade, Apr. 20, 2018]

NUN OVERSEES CONSERVATION OF SAINT
FRANCIS' WOODED GROUNDS IN SYLVANIA

(By Nicki Gorny)

It's a bright spring afternoon at the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis in Sylvania, and Sister M. Jeremias Stinson is zipping around the grounds on a John Deere Gator, navigating stick-strewn paths through the woods as adeptly as the manicured lawns between buildings.

"We're going to fly," the 74-year-old nun tells a reporter beside her at one point, fully committed to showing off the full scope of the grounds within a time-crunched tour.

The tour, arranged just a few weeks before Arbor Day, celebrated in Ohio on the last Friday in April, covered just a sampling of the more than 5,000 mature trees that shade the grounds. As Sister Jeremias drove, she rattled off the names of species that stand tall in wooded areas and in deliberate clusters, like an arboretum between buildings just north of the Franciscan Center.

There are oaks, firs, and pines—250 native species in all to keep straight. Sister Jeremias, superintendent of the environmental stewardship, gardens, shrines, and woodland management, has mapped and documented them all.

The motherhouse holds the distinction of having the most diverse number of plant specimens in the region, said Sister Jeremias, who undertook a canopy study of the grounds that began in 2006. The grounds are also recognized as a conservation sanctuary, as approved in 1930 by the Lucas County Conservation District and Ohio Forestry Division.

"They're a great leader in promoting conversation on private lands," said Jamie Kochensparger, education and outreach director of Lucas County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Her agency is one of several at the county, state, and federal level to interact with Sister Jeremias and the religious community on forestry and conservation-related matters. With the vast majority of land in the United States under private ownership, Mrs. Kochensparger said, conscientious private partners play an important role in this arena.

"They've been great ambassadors for that," she said.

The distinctions reflect deliberate planning and maintenance on the part of the sisters, who arrived in Sylvania in 1916. Sister Jeremias sees practicality and spirituality in the number and diversity of trees on the grounds, pointing to their assistance as groundcover and windbreaks as well as their alignment with the values of St. Francis Assisi.

"Francis of Assisi; our founder, was extremely sensitive to all facets of nature," she said. "He respected it in all its forms."

"As Franciscans, we are each called—we are all called, but as Franciscans, we have a strong leaning and a strong responsibility—to look and care for all creation."

Sister Jeremias has overseen the grounds since 1974, when she submitted a proposal to leave her position as a local schoolteacher and "put full time into the witness to the dignity of manual work and contemplation." She started with the renovation of the Portiuncula chapel on the grounds, she said, and went on to maintain and, in many more instances, develop the shrines, paths, and other landscape elements that create to a prayerful environment on the campus.

Her work continues and forwards that of her predecessor, whose name came up frequently during her recent tour of the grounds.

"That fir tree over there, the tall one, was planted by Mother Adelaide," she said at one point, a variation on a theme that applied to some of the tallest trees on the grounds.

Mother Adelaide led the original sisters who established a convent in Sylvania in 1916. While some of the 89 acres they settled on were natively wooded, Sister Jeremias said, much was farmland. Mother Adelaide took it upon herself to obtain and plant trees on the campus to stabilize sandy hills, create windbreaks, and fulfill other practical functions.

"Her footprint is still here," Sister Jeremias said.

It's there, for example, in a cluster of Norway spruces behind the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. It's also there in a handful of original trees in the arboretum, whose establishment Sister Jeremias credited to Mother Adelaide, even if she's had to since replace many of the original trees that were planted there over the years.

This sort of maintenance has been an important part of Sister Jeremias' work on the grounds. She's overseeing several ponderosa pine seedlings in a patch near the Rosary Care Center, which will find permanent homes on the grounds as they grow larger. When the emerald ash borer more dramatically killed off 1,841 trees on the campus in 2006, she replanted an area that she now calls

the “new woods” on the grounds near Ten Mile Creek.

Whenever she removes trees from the grounds, with an eye toward long-term sustainability, she replaces them with new trees that maintain respect to species diversity and the individual site. While all species are native to the region, not all thrive in the same soil or at the same elevation.

“To care for all of creation, we have to balance the forces of creation,” Sister Jeremias said. “You have to make wise decisions.”

When Sister Jeremias proposed that she focus solely on grounds work in 1974, Mother Adelaide had died only about 10 years earlier. Sister Jeremias recalled that she began to notice downed trees and other effects of the community having gone without a dedicated grounds presence in these years.

It was a role for which the outdoorsy Sister Jeremias, who grew up in Port Clinton, tagging along to work sites with her father, a builder, felt she was well suited—and one that she’s been fulfilling faithfully for more than 40 years.

“I followed her footprint,” she said of Mother Adelaide.