

[From the Commercial Appeal, Apr. 17, 1997]

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROMOTES

ACHIEVEMENT

(By Regina L. Burns)

A 25-year Memphis City Schools educator, John White, is finding that expelled and board-suspended students, along with teen parents, can be motivated to achieve using high expectations instead of the police and corporal punishment.

White, principal at Pyramid Academy for seven years, points to his school's recent championship at the sixth annual African-American Knowledge Bowl as proof of his philosophy.

"It just made me feel so good. I was just bubbling up with joy," proclaimed White, 53, who pushed for the alternative school's name change from Comprehensive Pupil Services Educational Center.

The April 7 competition at the National Civil Rights Museum was sponsored by the Memphis City Schools Adolescent Parenting Mental Health Team, said Sherry Hardy, a school social worker in the Adolescent Parenting Program.

"The schools that participated are involved in our Rites of Passage effort," explained Hardy. The Rites of Passage program is designed to help young African-American men and women with development and responsibilities as they move toward adulthood.

Dr. Theresa Okwumabus, supervising psychologist for the Adolescent Parenting Mental Health Team, initiated the Knowledge Bowl and the Rites of Passage program. She said, "The students interacted in a positive way with other children and experienced success in knowing about their culture and their history."

Five students from Pyramid Academy helped bring home the trophy. They are 11th-grader Edwina Jefferson, ninth-grader Alicia Currie, 12th-grader Mlesha Harris, ninth-grader Cortisa Thomas and 11th-grader Tamika Williams. Their teacher is Erma Sanders, a social studies instructor.

The second-place winner is Chickasaw Junior High. Raineshaven Elementary captured third place. Other finalists were Caldwell Elementary, Ida B. Wells Academy and Whitehaven High school, according to Hardy.

"I'm an advocate for having an alternative school in every school. When I came here, this was a holding tank. We changed the name. We got rid of the police. We don't need the police. I think it sends the wrong message," explained White.

He said his school has its share of difficulties but they are minimal. Each morning students and faculty gather at a "daily briefing."

"We reiterate our expectations on a daily basis. We ask any student who feels like rappin', tappin', singing or cursing to come down front. If anyone has had any difficulty, we have someone for them to talk to," he said.

IT'S TIME FOR BILLBOARDS TO  
PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE

**HON. JOHN LEWIS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Billboard Fair Share Act, legislation that would levy a 15 percent tax on the revenue from billboards and direct that money to help pay for our transportation system.

The billboard industry benefits as much as any other industry from our National Highway System. In fact, the industry even charges customers according to the number of cars that pass by the billboard on a given day. Despite its reliance on taxpayer-funded roads, the billboard industry contributes nothing to the construction and maintenance of our Nation's roads. It is time that the billboard industry paid its fair share.

The Billboard Fair Share Act would levy a tax on each billboard of 15 percent of gross revenues generated from the billboard. This is the same amount that billboard companies usually pay a property-owner for the right to construct and maintain the billboard on the property-owner's land. The revenue generated from this tax would be divided between surface transportation and funding for enhancement projects under ISTEA. In both cases, it would be used to improve our national system of roads.

As Congress works to reauthorize ISTEA while balancing the budget, it is important that we ensure that all road users contribute to providing transportation funding. While the billboard industry may not be a traditional road user, it is equally clear that they directly benefit from road construction. In fact, the billboard industry is entirely dependent upon roads.

All highway users must be willing to help build and maintain our Nation's roads. It is time for billboards to pay their fair share.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR SAN  
PEDRO CREEK WETLANDS RESTORATION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the President's 1998 budget request for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As you know, the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of important flood control projects around our Nation. I urge continued support for full funding of the Continuing Authorities Program which will ensure that important flood control projects around our Nation can proceed on schedule. Full funding will also ensure that there will be no delays in construction of projects that have already been started.

Mr. Speaker, I recently presented testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development regarding two local issues important to residents of the San Francisco Bay area. I respectfully request that my testimony appear in the RECORD for the benefit of my colleagues in the House.

TESTIMONY OF CONGRESSMAN LANTOS BEFORE  
THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

March 31, 1997

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony to your Subcommittee as you begin to consider the Energy and Water appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998. We in Congress face difficult challenges and painful choices as we work to reduce the federal budget deficit. I applaud your record in this area and you can count on my continued support of serious efforts to

cut wasteful spending. I am delighted to present information regarding two projects important to my community which fall under your Subcommittee's jurisdiction and to urge your continued support for these significant projects.

As you know, the Congressional district that I represent is geographically unique and diverse. My Congressional district comprises the San Francisco Peninsula which is home to the residents of the City of San Francisco and northern and central San Mateo County. The Peninsula is flanked by the Pacific Ocean to the West and by the San Francisco Bay to the east. Steep coastal mountains run up the middle of the Peninsula.

To the east of these mountains are the densely populated cities of San Mateo County which are located along the San Francisco Bay. The Bay front itself consists of the San Francisco International Airport, Candlestick Park, light industry, salt flats and the Port of Redwood City. Residential neighborhoods and commercial areas lie between the Bay front and the mountain ridges. To the west of the mountains, which follow the San Andreas fault, are the coastal communities of San Mateo County, including Pacifica, which lie on the Pacific Ocean.

The City of Pacifica is located a few miles south of the City of San Francisco. It is surrounded by the Central Coast Ranges and by the Pacific Ocean. City limits include three ridge systems and their adjacent valleys and hillsides, set against a coastline of beaches and rugged headlands. San Pedro Creek has the largest drainage area and flows four miles through the narrow San Pedro Valley and the Linda Mar District to the Pacific Ocean. Linda Mar is the most populous of several seaside communities in Pacifica. This area has experienced numerous floods in recent history with flood damage occurring mostly in the lowest reaches of the creek.

San Pedro Creek has historically flooded on a 10-year cycle. The mountains and hills around San Pedro Valley are steep and rainfall and runoff can be rapid and intense. Currently, the lower reaches of the San Pedro Creek channel can contain within its banks, at maximum, an 8- to 10-year runoff event. The last major flooding occurred there in 1982 when more than 300 homes were flooded and more than \$5 million of damage occurred.

The City of Pacifica has been working closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers for more than 15 years in developing a flood control project to provide 100 year flood control protection in the Linda Mar Valley. A number of plans were originally proposed, but were stalled due to lack of funding and environmental concerns. Two alternative projects were considered as possible solutions to the flood problem. However, due to environmental concerns and prohibitive mitigation requirements associated with either alternative, a third alternative was developed by the City and residents in the community. This alternative would consist of a diversion structure, an underground bypass channel, a floodwall, and the creation of a wetland-flood basin.

The City and the Corps now propose to restore the tidally-influenced, freshwater wetlands associated with the lower reach of San Pedro Creek to provide flood control in the Linda Mar District of Pacifica. The restoration design as proposed will restore 10.1 acres of one of the rarest wetland types on the Pacific coast of North America. The project will also enhance a significant fisheries resource, i.e., a steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) run, and restore wildlife habitats for migratory waterfowl and other associated wildlife.

Mr. Chairman, the San Pedro Creek Wetlands Restoration and Flood Control Project