Glen Park School for their meaningful commemoration of this special event. As America debates various ideas and proposals to improve education quality and standards, we should recognize those pioneers who, generations ago, committed themselves to guaranteeing every child born in our country the right to attend school.

For those of us from the Bay Area, this year's Public Schools Week has a special significance. One hundred and fifty years ago this month, on April 3, 1848, the first public school in California opened on Portsmouth Square in San Francisco. Six pupils attended classes that day under the tutelage of Thomas Douglas, a Yale graduate hired by the elected Board of Trustees for the then-reasonable sum of $1,000 per year. Douglas offered his students instruction in a diverse array of subjects which included reading, writing, spelling and defining, mental and practical arithmetic, English grammar and composition, mental and moral science, ancient and modern history, chemistry and natural philosophy, geometry, trigonometry, algebra, astronomy, surveying and navigation, and Latin and Greek.

While these course offerings undoubtedly proved attractive to parents and students alike—by May, enrollment had grown sixfold to 37 children—one practical subject not included in the program of instruction was geology. Instruction in this field clearly would have benefitted Douglas' students. Two months after the beginning of classes, the teacher and many of his pupils left San Francisco for the Sierra foothills in search of gold.

The California Gold Rush, which began with the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848, initially resulted in the mad dash of gold seekers from San Francisco, and this forced the school to close. Nevertheless, its legacy as the forerunner of California's outstanding system of public education is irrefutable.

On April 23, 1998, Mr. Speaker, Oriental Lodge No. 144 and Glen Park School will observe Public Schools Week by remembering this significant event. The theme of the evening presentation at the school auditorium will be ''From Dream to Reality—From Portsmouth Square to Glen Park.'' The students of Grades 3, 4, and 5 will put on a multimedia presentation to focus attention on the development of public education in California amidst the tumult and upheaval of the Gold Rush. One class, I have learned, has even constructed a model of the first schoolhouse for the public to admire. The Masonic Lodge will present the school's distinguished principal, Marion Grady, with a new trophy case and a set of flags, which will be posted by the McAteer High School NROTC Color Guard. Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. and Anthony P. Wordlow, Grand Master of the California Masonic Grand Lodge, will join other distinguished guests at the event.

Mr. Speaker, this week's celebration of Public Schools Week is a reflection of centuries of activism in support of education by the Masons and, especially, the California Grand Lodge. Public Schools Week was instituted in 1920 by then-Grand Master Charles Albert Adams in response to a post-World War I education crisis that involved a critical shortage of teachers and the closure of 1,200 schools throughout the state. Adams and his fellow Masons hoped to focus attention on the problems facing public education and, in the process, encourage citizens and legislators to seek solutions for these obstacles.

For 78 years Adams and his successors have unquestionably succeeded. The California Masonic Foundation, created in 1970 to provide scholarships to deserving college students, has awarded over one million dollars to young people to help finance their educational needs. In the past year alone 129 grantees received $160,000 for this worthy purpose. The Masonic Student Assistance Program, now in its forth year, serves California's youth with programs that range from issues of substance abuse to the increasing epidemic of violence in our public schools.

Local chapters, such as Oriental Lodge No. 144, have willingly and ably assisted community schools as well. In recent months, Bay Area lodges have contributed, among other noteworthy gifts, materials for a library program for Glen Park's first grade students and valuable instruments for the music program at Lincoln High School. The numerous Masonic contributions to public education in California are truly a credit to the fraternity and its outstanding members.

Wednesday's event is a direct result of the determined and devoted efforts of several prominent Bay Area citizens, most notably Dr. F. Armand Magid, a forty-year educator, history scholar, and Masonic leader who has worked tirelessly in organizing this week's activities; Worshipful Master Neil A. Carlson of Oriental Lodge No. 144, whose direction and guidance have greatly aided his fraternity's numerous educational initiatives; and Principal Grady, whose obvious love for her young pupils has been shown time and time again throughout her career.

In his essay, ''When Is a Man a Mason?'' the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton wrote: ''When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response . . . such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry.'' The Oriental Lodge No. 144 and its many dedicated members have answered this call, showing us that examples from our past can and should be used to highlight the importance of our future.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to commend the Lodge, along with Glen Park School, the McAteer High School NROTC Color Guard, and the numerous other participants in the celebration of Public School Week for their commitment to public education in the Bay Area.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES LEIDIG, RECIPIENT OF THE 1998 MAPLE LEAF AWARD

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 1998

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention Mr. Charles Leidig of Maplewood, New Jersey, who is being honored with the 1998 Maple Leaf Award on this occasion of the 30th Annual Maple Leaf Award Ceremony.

Charles Leidig is being honored for his many years of extensive, and varied community service, especially amongst senior groups, his community neighborhood association, and for the Township of Maplewood. Charlie has lived in Maplewood since 1920, and has attended Seth Boyden Elementary School, Ricalton—now Maplewood Middle School, and Columbia High School, from which he graduated in 1937. After attending New York University, he worked for a major corporation in the areas of Trade Show Coordination, Advertising and Sales Promotion, and Industrial Relations. Charlie's work often required extensive travel, with as many as 27 trips in one year.

While he took an interest in his neighborhood and its activities, it wasn't until his retirement in 1984 that Charlie became fully involved. Following a neighbor's suggestion, Charlie joined one of the Maplewood Senior Clubs, the local chapter of the AARP. Almost immediately he became heavily involved, serving first as Program Chairman and then as Vice-president. He was the group's first President to hold office for four years. Even now Charlie continues to serve as Trip Chairman.

In addition to AARP, the St. Joseph Rainbow Club was another senior organization that benefited from Charlie's endless energy and imagination. He served as the group's Vice President for two and a half years, and in 1992, was honored with the organization's Senior Citizen's Award.

Charlie Leidig has also volunteered his time and talents to Maplewood through his service as Director of the Police Advisory Committee, the Recreation Advisory Board, the Senior Advisory Board, the Maplewood TV Channel Advisory Board, and as an Election Day volunteer at Town Hall. Additionally, Charlie has served for many years as a Holiday Decorations Judge, a Lions Blood Bank helper, member of the Fourth of July Committee, and an Economic Development strategist. Charlie was a very active participant in the Ron Karnaugh Olympic activities and most recently, served on the Neighborhood Association. He is also volunteers as a collector for the American Heart, Cancer, and Cerebral Palsy Associations as well as working for the United Way and Deborah Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, the family and friends of Charlie Leidig, and the Township of Maplewood in recognizing Charlie's many outstanding and invaluable contributions made to the community of Maplewood and to the State of New Jersey.

IN HONOR OF THE 16TH ANNIVERSARY OF LET'S CELEBRATE, INC.

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 1998

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, for sixteen years Let's Celebrate has helped fight hunger and homelessness in Hudson County. They have helped people ''move from hunger to wholeness,'' by providing counseling, job training, emergency food assistance, adult basic education and housing assistance.

Let's Celebrate now has 74 staff members, over 600 volunteers and 29 service and meal sites throughout the area. This impressive organization has helped countless families move toward self-sufficency.

The organization's innovative job program finds jobs for 85% of its trainees. Let's Celebrate trains the homeless in the food service