

the United Methodist Church in Harrisonville, MO, and served as a board member for the Cassco Area Workshop. She also served as a member of the Bayard Chapter No. 179 Order of the Eastern Star. In addition, Dottie was a member of the Cass County Central Democratic Committee, the Cass County Women's Democrat Club, and was a Shrine Circus Mom. In 1993, Dottie was honored as the Cass County Democrat Woman of the Year.

Mrs. Vansandt is survived by a son, a daughter, a stepdaughter, eight grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker. Dottie Vansandt's public services makes her a role model for young civil leaders. I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in honoring this Missourian who will be missed by all who knew her.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MINDY ELVEY

### HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 1998*

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring our colleagues' attention to a Pennsylvanian who has refused to let a formidable obstacle stand in her way of making people's lives a little better. This outstanding citizen, Mr. Speaker, is Mindy Elvey of Altoona, Pennsylvania.

Mindy is a teenager growing up in a typical American city, but it is her outstanding actions, Mr. Speaker, which are nothing short of extraordinary. She is a 15-year-old who has battled leukemia and still receives monthly chemotherapy to fight this terrible and life threatening disease. However, Mindy has not allowed her illness to stop her from caring about those around her.

As a patient in a Pittsburgh Ronald McDonald House, Mindy was not permitted to visit the common television viewing room during a critical stage in her fight against leukemia because she couldn't risk infection while being exposed to others. While recuperating at her home in Altoona, Mindy made crafts and sold them to family and friends in order to purchase a new television set for the facility. Her concern for others who were sick and staying at the facility didn't stop there, and Mindy began a campaign to persuade local groups and businesses to donate more television sets to the Pittsburgh Ronald McDonald House. Her efforts have allowed 10 of the 15 bedrooms at the facility to have brand new television sets in them. Mindy Elvey had stated, "I just wanted to do something nice."

For her selfless determination Mindy Elvey is being honored tomorrow, along with other outstanding citizens from around the country, at the Seventh Annual "Make A Difference Day," hosted by USA Weekend Magazine and the Points of Light Foundation.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues' in the House of Representatives to join with me in congratulating Ms. Elvey for being chosen as a national honoree and for a job well done. Mindy has shown that no matter what difficult odds we may face, we can still make our world a better place.

#### NAFTA BELIEVERS CAN CHANGE THEIR MINDS

### HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 1998*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that I have been an opponent of NAFTA since its inception. I have voted against the free trade pact, and I have opposed efforts to expand it.

Many have accused me of being out of touch with modern economics and the "global economy." Nonetheless, I believe the facts have supported my position. NAFTA has been a disaster. Americans jobs have been lost and our trade deficit has exploded with Mexico. I am further heartened in my opposition to NAFTA by the recent conversion of one of America's leading journalists to my point of view: Hedrick Smith of the Public Broadcasting System.

Smith, who produces or hosts many important news programs and documentaries on PBS, recently showed NAFTA's ill effects on his excellent series, "Surviving the Bottom Line." In addition, Smith wrote an analysis of NAFTA in Washington Monthly magazine based on his research for the documentary. Both show a damning picture painted a self-described "long time free trader."

Smith mentions the familiar problems with NAFTA: The U.S. has lost several hundred thousand jobs and our balance of trade has gone from a \$5.4 billion surplus to a \$18 billion deficit with Mexico in four years.

However, Smith has also uncovered some interesting reasons as to why this happened. His reporting showed that some of the blame goes all the way across the Pacific Ocean to Japan and South Korea, where Pacific Rim industrial giants like Sony, Samsung and Panasonic have discovered a backdoor to the U.S. market. By setting up plants south of the border and exporting products made there to us they are able to avoid paying import duties because NAFTA eliminated those tariffs between Mexico and the United States.

Just when many foreign-based firms, such as Honda, Toyota and BMW, has discovered the prudence in investing in plants in the United States to avoid import tariffs, while also paying good wages to American workers who in turn can afford to purchase the products they make, NAFTA has given these companies a huge pool of one-dollar-an-hour workers who can also help them avoid the same tariffs.

Smith's reporting also confirms that rather than bringing the average Mexican worker up. NAFTA has had the reverse effect of depressing the living standard of American workers. The major culprit here is the notoriously weak Mexican labor unions, which are usually controlled by the government, and the power of the maquiladora trade associations in collusion with that government, which conspire to keep wages down lest the Mexican workers actually try to share in the wealth they help create. These low wages have a chilling effect that reaches far north of the border.

Smith's conclusion is not hopeful: "As long as Mexican wages are kept low as a matter of government policy, inadequate labor rights or collusion among employers, the living standard of the American middle class will continue to erode."

For the sake of our nation and for the sake of American working families, we must take a long, hard look at our nation's trade policies and the currently fashionable mentality that all free trade must be good trade. If we don't, I strongly suspect that Hendrick Smith's prophecy will come true.

#### TRIBUTE TO LUPITA AND TONY RAMIREZ

### HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 21, 1998*

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and pay tribute to Lupita and Tony Ramirez, for being awarded the Governor's Volunteer Award for outstanding service. Mr. and Mrs. Ramirez were presented with this award on April 20, 1998, by Governor George W. Bush. For over 29 years, Mr. and Mrs. Ramirez have been helping others, contributing to a better way of living for the citizens of Harlingen, TX. They utilize their talents in the volunteer spirit for humanity.

As true pioneer volunteers, Antonio and Lupita Ramirez began their volunteer activities in 1969. They realized that many poor citizens had no transportation to get to their doctor's appointments. In the same spirit, they rounded up twenty friends and turned their home, telephone, and cars into an information, referral and transportation center. They did not have money, but they had heart and determination.

The group organized and became the Harlingen Community Committee. Under the direction of Mr. Ramirez as President, they progressed from the Ramirez' home into a building to one of Harlingen's parks. The Ramirez became a tireless advocate for the poor people. They aided in starting "Su Clinica Familiar" where medical services are available to our low-income people. Mr. Ramirez also helped found Amigos del Valle, which provides housing, transportation, and a hot meal for the elderly in the community.

In 1971, because of high unemployment, they started employment training for the community. Another vital service to the people in need, the Ramirez added Adult Basic Education, teaching English, typing, bookkeeping, Spanish, citizenship, drivers ed, sewing, and upholstery.

In 1974, the Ramirez incorporated the organization and persuaded the city of Harlingen to approve their information and referral and social service agency. All the while volunteers were running the office and providing transportation for those in need. By now, the Harlingen Community Committee had grown and changed their name to "Harlingen Information and Social Service Organization," a multi-purpose center.

In 1983, after a severe freeze, and while the State and Federal officials debated responsibility for bureaucratic bottlenecks, the Ramirez provided emergency help for many farm workers unemployed by the freeze. The Ramirez' quick response to this emergency made it easier for the families to receive the much needed help.

For these efforts, Cameron County Officials and I recognized Antonio and Lupita Ramirez. On March 1, 1984, it was declared the "Tony and Lupita Ramirez Day," in Cameron County,