

We must inform the generations who come after us and help them recognize, appreciate, and remember the people and the work that paved their way. This is how we can preserve our history and pass on the important and wonderful legacies left by such special people as Bella Abzug.

NOTING THE PASSING OF MARY STRASSMEYER

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, in my Congressional District, we are mourning the passing of an outstanding individual and journalist. Mary Strassmeyer died on April 20, 1998. Before retiring from the Plain Dealer newspaper, her "Mary, Mary" column provided a wealth of information about Northeast Ohio's social events, people and other items of interest.

Mary Strassmeyer began her career as a reporter for the Cleveland News in 1956. Four years later, she came to the Plain Dealer, become Society Editor in 1965. For 21 years, readers were entertained and informed through her "Mary, Mary" column. She was an exceptional journalist whose dedication was unsurpassed. During her lifetime, she was the recipient of numerous awards, including being named one of the best society editors in the country. She was also inducted into the Press Club of Cleveland's Journalism Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, throughout my congressional career, I enjoyed a close association with Mary Strassmeyer. She was a remarkable woman whom I admired and respected. I could always count on her coverage of events throughout my Congressional District, and I always looked forward to reading "Mary, Mary" for other tidbits of information. I am pleased that the Wednesday, April 22, 1998, edition of the Plain Dealer includes an article on the life and career of Mary Strassmeyer. In her memory, I include this article in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I extend my sympathy to Alex Machaskee and Mary's colleagues at the Plain Dealer, her family and many friends. We are saddened at her passing and she will never be forgotten.

[From the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Apr. 22, 1998]

MARY STRASSMEYER DEAD AT 68

SHE WAS A HARD-WORKING JOURNALIST WHO LOVED HER TOWN, HER NEWSPAPER AND WRITING HER COLUMN

(By Alana Baranick)

Mary Strassmeyer, retired Plain Dealer reporter who Mary, Mary column was an encyclopedia of people and places in Greater Cleveland, died of complications from diabetes Monday at Deaconess Hospital. She was 68.

She covered Cleveland's high society for 32 years and moved easily among British royals, Hollywood and Broadway celebrities and the Washington elite.

For 21 of those years, Strassmeyer wrote a column full of information about people, places and happenings in Northeast Ohio and beyond. She often included announcements about fund-raising functions for nonprofit organizations.

"Many charities and civic organizations benefited from a kind word in Mary's col-

umn," Plain Dealer President and Publisher Alex Machaskee said. "Mary Strassmeyer was an excellent journalist, and she also was a very good friend. She has a great sense of humor and enjoyed life to the fullest. I will miss her warmth and honesty."

Honesty was her trademark.

"Mary was to the print media as Dorothy Fuldheim was to TV," said Sam Miller, co-chairman of Forest City Enterprises. "She was a high-class lady. She never broke her word. When she said 'off the record,' it was off the record. It just shows you can be a decent human being and be a first-class journalist at the same time."

Strassmeyer did not kowtow to her subjects, no matter how much power they wielded. She was known for her dry wit and her take-no-prisoners approach.

She had a bemused affection for the "swells," as she called socially prominent folks, and reported stories as truthfully as she saw them.

She didn't mince words with people who were trying to get items in her society column, often telling them in a brusque voice, "You're going to have to do better than that."

Strassmeyer made a beachhead in The Plain Dealer newsroom when it was virtually devoid of women. She did it by exuding toughness on her beat and with her male colleagues.

Later, her desk was always covered and surrounded with roses, carnations and other flowers and plants, which came as thank-you gifts from people and organizations mentioned in her column.

Strassmeyer was a hard worker who loved her town, her newspaper and writing her column. She reluctantly retired in July because of poor health.

Her home in the Old Brooklyn section of Cleveland was on the same street as the house in which she was raised. For less than two years in the 1960s, she tried suburban living in Bay Village, but soon grew homesick for her hometown.

She graduated in 1951 from Notre Dame College in South Euclid, where she majored in English and history. She did post-graduate work in history at Toledo University.

In 1956, Strassmeyer joined the Cleveland News as a reporter. She was an education writer when the News closed in 1960 and she joined The Plain Dealer. She wrote features and travel stories and served as beauty editor before becoming the society editor in 1965.

While composing beauty columns for teens, Strassmeyer collaborated with a promotion department artist, Jeanne Harris, on a one-panel cartoon called, "Sneakers" which featured helpful hints on beauty, grooming and etiquette for teenagers.

The cartoon, which first appeared in The Plain Dealer in 1964, was soon syndicated internationally through King Features. In 1966, it was added to a display of American comics at the Smithsonian Institution.

She later wrote the words to photographer Bill Wynne's pictures for the book, "Coco, The Special Delivery Dog."

In 1976, Strassmeyer began writing a society column, called "Today," which was the forerunner of "Mary, Mary."

She added broadcast media work to her resume in 1979. For 10 years, she had a weekly radio show, first on WCLV-FM and later on WERE-AM. She also had a show on WKYC Channel 3 for a short time.

Strassmeyer earned a law degree from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law of Cleveland State University in 1981 and was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1983. Since then, she maintained her own practice.

She received numerous accolades for her work as a journalist. In 1969, Charlotte Curtis of the New York Times named her one of

the seven best society editors in the country. In 1982, "Mary, Mary" was described as one of the "wittiest, best written of all American gossip columns, filled with double entendres and literary references" in a Town & Country magazine article.

In 1994, she was inducted into the Press Club of Cleveland's Journalism Hall of Fame.

The Intown Club honored her in 1976 for her contributions to civic and cultural projects. Ten years later she became the first recipient of the WomenSpace media award for her support of women's issues and organizations.

Strassmeyer was the founder and first president of the Society of American Social Scribes. She was a member of Theta Sigma Phi, now known as Women in Communications, the Ohio Newspaper Women's Association and the Cleveland Play House Club.

She also belonged to Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church and Kappa Gamma Pi, a national honorary society for Catholic women's college graduates. She volunteered with Catholic Charities.

She was a world traveler, belonged to numerous travel organizations and co-owned Gerry's International Travel Agency since 1991.

"Anytime she got a vacation, she was off to Singapore or more exotic places," said Plain Dealer Reporter William F. Miller. "She could get along with virtually anyone."

Retired Plain Dealer Reporter Pauline Thoma said, "She was one of the world's best friends."

Strassmeyer is survived by a sister, Joan Palus of Parma.

TRIBUTE TO HONOR THE ST. EDMUND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 1998

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join all my friends and colleagues in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the St. Edmund Elementary School. This wonderful school has been serving the community of Brooklyn, NY faithfully for 75 years, and is well deserving of recognition and praise.

On September 17, 1923 seventeen months after the founding pastor, Rev. Denis A. Maloney, celebrated the first Mass for the people of the St. Edmund Parish, a new church and school building were ready to serve the people of its community. St. Edmund is committed to the development of a Christian community; The Dominican Sisters of Sparkhill made sure that the children would receive a proper education. Under their leadership the school flourished and there was a need for new classrooms. In 1931, during the Great Depression, the school was able to raise \$33,000 for new classrooms. This kind of support shows just how much the school meant to the community. Also, St. Edmund was one of the first Catholic schools to realize the need for women to have the opportunity for a full four year Catholic High School Education. Now as they celebrate the 75th Anniversary of St. Edmund Elementary School nearly four hundred boys and girls continue to celebrate a solid education in this parish school. Today the community's children continue to study in a faith filled community as they are given the tools needed to enter the new millennium.

For years, families have known this school as a living monument in the community, making

it a good place to study. I am certain that the strength of this community would not be what it is today without the commitment of this school. I am honored to congratulate the members of the St. Edmund's Elementary School for making it a source of community pride for the past 75 years.

TAX LIMITATION CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I fully support H.J. Res. 111, which calls for an amendment

to the United States Constitution prohibiting passage of tax increases without a two-thirds majority in each house of Congress, except in emergency cases such as military conflict. I have voted for it in the past, am a cosponsor, and am committed to passing the strongest tax limitation amendment possible.

Opponents claim, and will continue to claim, that constitutional amendments on taxing and spending make it harder to operate government as we know it. That is exactly the point—fiscal reality proves to us that we need an instrument, a tool, to control government spending and limit raising taxes.

The Federal Government has run deficits for over 25 years in a row, and for 56 of the last 64 years. This is not a short-termed trend, and points to a fundamental flaw in the political system that makes a constitutional solution both necessary and appropriate. Last year,

Congress passed the historic Balanced Budget Agreement as a first step toward fiscal discipline. However, only nine months later, Congress is already breaking the transportation spending caps by \$34 billion inviting criticism that fiscal discipline was just a fad for Congress. We need to pass H.J. Res. 111 to renew our commitment to fiscal discipline. Otherwise, irresponsible spending and higher federal taxes will continue to own us, cripple our economy and mortgage our children's future. Congress needs the legal and moral authority of a Constitutional amendment making it more difficult to raise taxes.

This Congress cannot afford to alienate our constituents by failing to pass this crucial legislation. I urge my colleagues to join us in restoring fiscal responsibility to this institution today, not tomorrow, and not next year.