

something which "Congress and the press were too busy with other things to notice." Calling SSM "A Beacon for Better Health Care," Broder observed how SSM was proving that good medicine is also an economic asset and how Sister Ryan began as a nurse and rose into management.

In his remarks, Broder offered this quote: "We are living proof that health care in the United States is capable of improving, despite many predictions to the contrary. We are proof that large and complex health care organizations can push themselves to step out of their comfort zones to exceptional results. And the more of us that commit to performance excellence, the greater will be our ability to deliver health care breathtakingly better than it's ever been done before. The nation deserves no less."

"Those words," Broder said, "and the performance behind them, deserve more attention than Washington gave them last week."

Today, Mr. Speaker, let us add our voices to the celebration of a successful health care system. At a time when hospitals are closing in vast numbers and the high cost of malpractice insurance is causing many physicians to limit their practices, we have found a health care system that works. The choice is ours. We can heal the health care delivery problem in this nation or we can let it overwhelm and consume us, to the detriment of us all.

SSM is a model for success. Today, in Congress, let us register a much-deserved celebration of that fact.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF JUDY
MARRON

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a saddened heart at the passing on of Judy Marron, beloved wife of Owen Marron, and devoted mother of six children.

Judy began her career in the State of California Department of Transportation, and then worked for the Heavy Highway Association until 1975. In 1978 Judy returned to employment as a clerk with the State Department of Transportation, rising through various positions to become executive secretary to the director of the department. In 1984 she became the national recruiter of engineers for the Department of Transportation.

In 1987, Judy went to work for the State Department of Health, where she retired as building manager for the department headquarters in Berkeley. She worked tirelessly to integrate women into the building trades and increase employment access for disabled individuals at the Berkeley facility.

Upon her retirement, Judy continued her activism and was retained as a consultant for various special projects, including a new health facility under development in Richmond, California.

Judy held memberships in the National University Alumni Association, American Association of Professional Women, The Association of Executive Secretaries in State Service, ACLU, National Wildlife Federation, Soroptomists of the East Bay, and the California State Employees' Association, SEIU Local 1000.

As an ardent advocate for the rights of working people, women, and disabled individuals, Judy contributed much to the labor movement. She provided valuable assistance to her husband, Owen, during his long tenure as executive secretary-treasurer of the Central Labor Council of Alameda County. Judy could always be counted on to help with marches, rallies, electoral activities, Labor Day picnics, Unionist of the Year events and other important functions to support the community and further the goals of the labor movement.

Judy leaves a legacy of activism filled with caring, commitment and devotion. Her family and all who were privileged to know and work with her will miss her.

TRIBUTE TO MR. LAZAR C. PIRO

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, Mr. Lazar C. Piro, as he is inaugurated for his second term as President of the Assyrian National Council of Stanislaus. Lazar was again chosen by the community to continue the Council's work to provide social, cultural and spiritual welfare to our Assyrian and non-Assyrian communities. As one of the founders of the Assyrian National Council of Stanislaus, Lazar interacts with local, state and federal agencies on behalf of the Assyrian community.

With 20 local Assyrian organizations as members of the Council, our community is fortunate to benefit from their leadership and guidance on matters concerning the community. I consider Lazar and members of the Council invaluable resources in the 18th Congressional District. The Council has provided a voice to so many who have made America their home.

I am honored to recognize the Council's achievements under Lazar's direction. Lazar has never shied from community involvement. In addition to his work at Piro Trading International, Lazar is a member of the Board of Trustees for the University of California. He is also actively involved with the Assyrian American Civic Club, the Assyrian Church of the East and the Assyrian Welfare Committee to name a few. Lazar and his wife, Francia, reside in Turlock and have three children and three grandchildren.

HONORING SOLDIERS FROM
TAMPA BAY

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of four brave soldiers from the Tampa Bay area who lost their lives while serving our country in Iraq. These four men went to war to protect us and our liberty and ultimately gave their lives to preserve our inalienable rights.

On April 3, Staff Sgt. Wilbert Davis, 40, of the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor, 3rd Infantry Division, died when his vehicle ran off the road

as he was driving journalist Michael Kelly to Baghdad. A native of Tampa, Davis grew up in College Hill, pitched for the Belmont Heights Little League team, all the way to the World Series, and graduated from Tampa Bay Tech High School. A devoted husband and father of four, friends and family recall how dedicated Davis was to service. Joining the Army in 1985, he served in the Persian Gulf War and in Bosnia, Kosovo, Korea and Germany.

Just one day later, Tampa lost Sgt. First Class Paul R. Smith, 33, of the 11th Engineer Battalion. Also a graduate of Tampa Bay Tech, Smith knew early on that he wanted to serve as a professional soldier and raise a family. This husband and father of two enlisted right out of high school and served in the Gulf War, Bosnia and Kosovo. A man who is remembered for his dedication to the soldiers he led, Smith has been nominated for the prestigious Medal of Honor for saving dozens of lives before losing his own. During a surprise Iraqi assault, Smith died while manning a .50-caliber machine to fend off the attackers.

On April 7, Lance Cpl. Andrew Julian Aviles, 18, of the 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion, 4th Marine Division, was killed when an enemy artillery round struck his amphibious assault vehicle. A young man with an infectious sense of humor and a promising future in store, Aviles was the student government president of Robinson High School, played on the football and wrestling teams and graduated third in his class. A member of JROTC, Aviles passed up a full academic scholarship to Florida State University to enlist because he felt an obligation to serve his country.

On April 17, another bright future was lost when Cpl. John T. Rivero, 23, of the Florida National Guard's C Company, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment was killed when his Humvee overturned on a mission with Special Forces. A computer science and engineering student at USF, Rivero grew up in Gainesville and joined the Guard in 1998. He was promoted to Corporal during his service in the Middle East. Friends and family remember his big smile and even bigger heart and talk about his dedication to doing his best at everything he tried.

On behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of these four courageous soldiers. These men shared a dedication to the ideals that have made this country great. Their bravery and patriotism makes us all proud, and we will never forget their sacrifice.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CESAR
CHAVEZ

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and pay tribute to Cesar Chavez, a human rights advocate and a man of justice and peace who worked tirelessly to end the oppressive conditions of so many American farm workers. Founder of the United Farm Workers of America, Mr. Chavez sacrificed his life to those who suffered hardship without any voice of support. Although the ten-year anniversary of his death passed on April 23, 2003,

the legacy of this great man and the inspiration of his mission carries on.

Cesar Chavez was born in 1927 as the son of a poor farm worker and general store owner. The loss of his family's land during the Depression forced him to quit school and work in the fields, where he gained a first-hand understanding for the dingy, overcrowded quarters that these workers must endure—often without electricity, bathrooms, or running water. Although he never owned a house or earned more than \$6,000 a year, he moved to California in the early 1960s with his family and began his lifelong mission to advocate an end to such conditions.

Mr. Chavez once said, "We can choose to use our lives for others to bring about a better and more just world for our children . . . and in giving of yourself you will discover a whole new life full of meaning and love." This great man was a selflessly giving leader who should inspire and motivate us all. Through the United Farm Workers of America his life was used for the benefit of future generations, proving that there can be strength and power in unity, no matter how hopeless the situation.

Cesar Chavez must not be forgotten, and neither can his work. In focusing on our treatment of farm workers, and teaching us how to care for fellow Americans, he also showed that there is much work still to be done. We must remember that there are still too many below-poverty wages, unsafe working conditions, and individuals who suffer from substandard living standards without proper benefits. We must use this ten-year anniversary to respond to the continued injustice that exists for farm workers that Mr. Chavez would not tolerate. By continuing the work of this fine man, the mission he had for human rights will carry on and the spirit of his great life will most directly be remembered.

IN HONOR OF MELVINA CONLEY,
PRESERVER OF THE "FREEDOM
SUITS" ARCHIVE, ST. LOUIS CIR-
CUIT COURT 1978–2001

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ms. Melvina Conley, a former employee of the St. Louis Circuit Court, Clerk's Office, who realized the value of old lawsuits filed by slaves seeking their freedom, and worked diligently for many years to protect and preserve the documents, now known as the "Freedom Suits."

A collection of lawsuits filed in St. Louis by slaves of African descent, who were seeking their freedom, have become the focus of a restoration project by the clerk of the St. Louis Circuit Court. Working with the Court in the state of Missouri and Washington University. This is a great find for St. Louis, a treasure within our own midst. I'm excited that we have a national gift, a part of our history, to share with the world.

So far, at least 281 lawsuits, along with the historic Dred Scott lawsuit (which figured prominently in the start of the Civil War), have been selected for preservation and placed on display on the web site maintained by Washington University at www.stlcourtrecords.wustl.edu.

Called the St. Louis Circuit Court Historical Records Project, the site includes details of the lawsuits—who filed, against whom, when and where—and a copy of the actual handwritten document. Lawsuits also included allegations of trespass, assault and battery, false imprisonment, as well as petition affirming status as a free man.

Found among approximately four million pages of aging court records dating back to 1782, the nearly 300 "freedom suits" (filed between 1806 and 1865) were found covered with coal dust, in the labyrinth of the St. Louis Circuit Court system.

As early as 1807, under Missouri territorial statutes, persons held in wrongful servitude could sue for freedom if they had evidence of wrongful enslavement. The territorial statute was codified in Missouri State law in 1824 and remained in effect until after the Civil War.

Most people using this law to obtain their freedom were enslaved Africans. Since their cases were all brought for the same reason, to obtain the basic right to freedom, collectively, historians refer to the cases as "freedom suits."

In an effort to protect the "freedom suits" and the hundreds of thousands of other old cases from decay, rats and other plagues, courthouse officials began removing them from vulnerable "off-site" storerooms to a more secure archive in the main Courthouse and the Old Globe-Democrat Building on Tucker Boulevard. In September 1999, St. Louis Circuit Court Clerk Mariano V. Favazza invited the Missouri State Archives, a division of Missouri's Office of Secretary of State, to initiate a project to preserve and make accessible the historical records. So extensive were the files, a cut-off date of before 1875 was used for the project. The court was founded in 1804.

The freedom suits brought by Dred Scott and his wife, Harriet, in 1846, became the first cases to go online in January 2001, attracting nearly a million information requests from visitors from around the world in their first year on the web. That fall, the American Culture Studies Program in Arts & Sciences agreed to expand this initiative by digitizing additional cases and creating a web-based search tool.

While I think everyone involved with the project for finding the documents and preserving them, Mr. Speaker, I especially want to make a special tribute to Ms. Melvina Conley, as Preserver of the "Freedom Suits."

A 33-year employee of the St. Louis Circuit Clerk's Office—from 1969 to 2001—Ms. Conley spent many years working as a data entry clerk.

In 1978, she began working in a second-floor office in the old and dusty archive section of the courthouse, where she commenced a search for the legendary "Freedom Suits" or "Slave Cases."

Because of her interest in history, Mrs. Conley was willing to do a job that others did not want to do. Sifting through the old files was literally a dirty business that few wanted.

At the time, the famous Dred Scott case was protected in a vault in the courthouse and she knew Dred Scott was not the first case filed and that there were probably many others. In 1979 she commenced a search of the archive's 444 drawers for suits. The first suit she found was of a mother and her two sons, ages 5 and 2. The mother had filed suit—and lost—to keep her young sons from being

"hired out." "I thought I had died and gone to heaven," Ms. Conley says now, describing how she felt at the time of the find.

Preserving the "Freedom Suits" in boxes, Ms. Conley became an unofficial historian, archivist and preserver of history in her duties as a data entry clerk. In 1999 when Circuit Clerk Favazza joined forces with city, state and federal agencies to preserve the files, Ms. Conley became a key instrument in helping to make that transition, as well, having helped to carefully preserve the Dred Scott suit and hundreds of other "Freedom Suits" for posterity in her adopted home.

Born in Charleston, Mo., Ms. Conley attended Cote Brilliant Grade School, and graduated from Sumner High School in 1957.

After high school she married John Conley who became a politician and served St. Louis and Missouri as a committeeman and a state representative. They have five children, four stepchildren, 16 grandchildren and one great grandchild. In 2001 Ms. Conley retired from her job as an Accountant 1, Supervisor, in the St. Louis Circuit Court.

Joining me in recognizing Melvina Conley's dedication to the nurturing of the "Freedom Suits" and the continued nurturing and care of the files by the St. Louis Circuit Court, is U.S. Representative MAXINE WATERS, of California and a St. Louis native.

Recently, the Honorable Ms. WATERS and I visited the archive located in the old Globe-Democrat Building, in the 700 block of N. Tucker Blvd., to meet with city, state and university officials. During our visit we were welcomed enthusiastically by Mr. Michael Everman, CA and Field Archivist, Local Records Program with the Missouri State Archives; and State Archivist Dr. Kenneth Winn. Ms. WATERS said she first learned about the project from a Los Angeles Times article and made arrangements to visit the archive. Both she and I were told by Favazza that "HBO and Hollywood producers" have made inquiries to his office about the lawsuits.

"The connection for me between St. Louis and Hollywood is just absolute," Ms. WATERS said. Honorable Speaker, I want to find the funds needed to ensure permanent protection for the documents and to keep them safe for future generations. This is just the beginning. I know I can count on my colleague, MAXINE WATERS, to help get national exposure. It is the history of our country, which originated in St. Louis. It makes you proud of their actions—if you can find a silver lining in slavery. You have to preserve your history or you will be doomed to repeat it.

HONORING TAIWAN AND
PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Republic of China President Chen Shui-bian on his third anniversary in office and for Taiwan's continued support and friendship with the United States.

Since his election three years ago, President Chen has continued to make strides toward full democracy by guaranteeing greater constitutional and human rights to the citizens