

"Great Streets" is North Michigan Avenue that stands in the 7th District of Illinois which I currently represent. West Urbana, Illinois, also received the distinction of being a "Great Neighborhood."

As I close, I want to recognize APA as a non-profit public interest and research organization devoted to promoting quality planning. Since its founding in 1978, it has served more than 41,000 members. I honor the National Month of Community Planning and the efforts of planners to pioneer concepts that influence our communities both now and in the future.

HONORING THE VISITATION
SCHOOL

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, Visitation School has been a presence in the Kingsbridge community since its inception in 1932, and was approved by the Archdiocese of New York in 1928, under the direction of the first pastor, Monsignor Stafford.

Visitation School was initially staffed by the Sisters of Charity; their motherhouse was and remains today on the grounds of the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, New York.

The first Principal of Visitation was Sister Mary Angelita Meiswinkle of the Sisters of Charity, who was principal from 1932 to 1949. She set the firm foundation for this Roman Catholic elementary school that continues to flourish as we celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary.

In 1980 the current principal, Sr. Rosemarie Connell, was appointed. She oversaw a time of sweeping change, with an emphasis on strong religious principles, discipline, and a commitment to academic excellence. In her long tenure, she has created and maintained a dedicated and experienced teaching staff made up of Catholic laypersons and religious sisters representing several communities, including the Sisters of Charity, Sparkill Dominican Sisters, and School Sisters of Notre Dame.

She established a full-time kindergarten; weekly computer classes for kindergarten through grade eight; high school advanced-placement programs for math and Spanish; science lab; a state-of-the-art computer lab; and the institution of an after school program.

In 1995, the New York City Council recognized her for her "continuing dedication and service to the education and improvement of the lives of Bronx children and their families." In the year 2000, she received the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Compassionate Educator Award for her years of service to children in the Archdiocese of New York.

For 75 years, the Kingsbridge community has benefited from the presence of Visitation School as it continues its great legacy of faith and determination to deliver a quality Catholic education to children in the community. Visitation School remains a rare place where mind, heart, and spirit grow in grace and strive for excellence.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. PATRICIA
SHIMMENS

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a constituent of mine who has spent her entire career serving her fellow citizens. Mrs. Patricia Shimmens, the Executive Director of the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission, is retiring after three decades of public service.

Patricia, or Pat, as her friends call her, has been a stalwart advocate for those in Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties who most need help. As the Executive Director to the Housing Commission, she oversees the administration of 250 units of public housing and 50 housing choice vouchers. She also administers several other programs that assist the homeless in Luce, Chippewa, and Mackinac Counties.

Throughout her long and illustrious career, Pat has enjoyed many achievements and accomplishments. Under her watch, in 1996 and 1998, the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission built two new developments equaling 50 single family units. In 2001, Pat spearheaded the drive to find housing for the homeless in Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. In that capacity she coordinates services to the homeless, including shelter and opportunities for self-sufficiency to and through the Tri-County Safe Haven Emergency Shelter.

Pat has been a leader in the housing field, participating in organizations that advocate for affordable housing both nationally and in Michigan. For 23 years, she has been a member of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), the nation's leading housing and community development advocacy group. She has been a member of the Michigan Housing Director's Association for 15 years and Past President for 4 years.

Pat has been involved in numerous other organizations as well. She is a former President of her local Business and Professional Women's Organization. She recently sat on the Commission for Labor and Economic Growth in conjunction with the Local Work Force Development Board for the Tri-County area. She currently serves as the President of the Northern Transitions Inc. which provides services to the developmentally disabled.

Over the years, Pat has been recognized in many ways for her commitment to community. In 2005, she received the ATHENA award, which recognizes excellence and leadership in women who contribute time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the community.

Pat first brought her talents and tireless energy to the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission on November 1, 1982. But, even before joining the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission, Pat was dedicated to strengthening the eastern U.P. Prior to her time with the Housing Commission, she was employed for 8 years with the Eastern Upper Peninsula Employment and Training Consortium. Throughout the years Pat has developed a reputation as a passionate advocate for housing and homelessness issues. When a new rule, regulation or law affecting public housing authori-

ties would come down, Pat was known for being quite vocal at public housing authority conferences. Those who know her say that when she was arguing forcefully for or against something, it was best to stay out of her way and let her say her piece. In one instance, she gave a lengthy, impassioned and forceful argument regarding rules affecting the ownership of pets in public housing authorities.

After she completed her argument, the conference leaders asked, "Do you feel better now?"

In a manner typical of Pat's straightforward demeanor, she replied, "Yes, thank you, damn it!"

While her tenure at the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission has been marked by many financial and administrative successes, what Pat says she will miss most are the people with whom she has developed relationships.

As Pat recently put it in her own words, "Many children have passed through our doors and I would like to think their life was just a little bit better having a nice home to live in that was also affordable."

Madam Speaker, over the last 30 years, countless families in Luce, Chippewa, and Mackinac Counties have relied upon the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission. All of them can thank Mrs. Patricia Shimmens for her hard work, passionate advocacy and tireless dedication to helping make life just a little better. As Mrs. Shimmens celebrates retirement, I wish her the best of luck as she has more time to spend with her husband, Bob and more time to garden, and enjoy the outdoors. Given her tireless spirit, I also expect that she will continue her volunteer work throughout the eastern U.P. community.

Today, I would ask, Madam Speaker, that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in thanking Patricia Shimmens for 30 years of public service and congratulating her on a well deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH RICCA

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Joseph Ricca of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Mr. Ricca has worked tirelessly for our community and because of that work has been selected to receive the Eleanor Roosevelt Humanitarian Award from the Shrewsbury Democratic Town Committee.

A product of the Shrewsbury public school system, Mr. Ricca still resides in town with his wife, Mary Ann and 8-year-old son, Joseph Peter. He graduated with a B.A. in State and Local Government from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and later went on to receive his Master's Degree in Business Administration from Anna Maria College. After school, he joined the Massachusetts Secretary of State's Office serving numerous positions until being named Chief of Staff in 1987.

In 1988, Mr. Ricca began work for the Dukakis for President Committee. During the campaign, Joe was responsible for campaign activities in Iowa, New York, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. He later used this experience to