

Madam Speaker, we extend our sympathies to Mr. Spak's family, including his wife, Kristin Rickard Spak of Leesburg, Virginia; three children, Jessica Lynn White of Ashburn, Brian Thomas Spak of Boulder, CO, and Nicholas Michael Spak, of Boulder, CO; two grandchildren: Kelsey Lynn White and Austin Ray White, both of Ashburn; and a sister Janis Lee Bradley of Carson City, NV.

CONGRATULATING TRACEY
GROSSMAN

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tracey Grossman, recently honored as the recipient of the 2010 Daniel Ginsberg Award by the Anti-Defamation League.

The Anti-Defamation League's Daniel Ginsberg Award is given annually to young ADL leaders who show the enthusiasm and creativity of Daniel Ginsberg and ADL leaders whose interest and involvement covered virtually the entire spectrum of ADL issues. Since 1995, ADL has recognized many of their young and most dedicated leaders with this great honor.

Tracey's advocacy on behalf of the goals of Florida's chapter of ADL, and her guidance of Florida's ADL Glass Leadership Institute carries on the spirit of Daniel Ginsberg's great leadership.

I would like to congratulate Tracey, her husband Gabriel, and her parents Wes and Maddi for this great honor. I am proud to have their friendship and wish Tracey continued success in all of her future endeavors.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
DAVE KOEHLER

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Dave Koehler on his 20th Anniversary as the Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust.

Dave is a native of the San Joaquin Valley, born in Fresno, California. He is a graduate of Fresno High School and California State University, Fresno. Dave and his wife Sharon are the proud parents of two sons, Shannon and Spence.

Dave has always been an integral part of the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust. He began as a member of the Board of Directors, has served as the Chair of the Education Committee, and was subsequently named as the Executive Director.

Under Dave's leadership as Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust, the organization has grown immensely. The acquisition of the Parkway lands, which began in the late 1980s, continues to be a positive work in progress. Presently, the Parkway Trust has acquired 3,500 acres of protected lands which includes the Scout Island Regional Outdoor Environmental Education

Center and the Coke Hallowell Center for River Studies. These River Parkway Trust jewels serve as points of interest for all individuals visiting the Parkway.

As a result of Dave's dedication and tenacity, in conjunction with staff and volunteers, several ecological reserves and trails have been established along the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and California State Highway 145. The Parkway Trust has become a valued foundation of knowledge for all those who are interested in learning more about the river. Visitors from across our great state and nation are able to enjoy the history and importance of the majestic San Joaquin River.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise with me today to express our appreciation for Dave Koehler's diligent work as Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust and, on behalf of the thousands of visitors to the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust Lands, thank him for his continued dedication and commitment.

ST. PETERSBURG POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF HELPING KIDS

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, the St. Petersburg Police Athletic League celebrates 50 years of helping St. Petersburg's youth this Friday.

When first established in 1960, the PAL program provided recreational activities for the youth of our community. Today their mission has grown to include a wide range of after-school and summer programs that go far beyond sports. PAL volunteers and staff provide educational support, sports, fitness, art and drama programs and the offerings continue to grow and evolve.

The St. Petersburg PAL chapter now serves more than 500 youth per year. As PAL volunteer and former board member Ed Schatzman told The St. Petersburg Times recently, "We know kids are receiving wholesome programs and great contact with police officers that will be a key to their choosing a positive path to being good citizens."

One of PAL's primary missions is truancy prevention as more than 300 youth per year come to the program after they are caught by police officers skipping school. Through PAL, they receive help to improve their attendance, improve their academic performance, and are often referred to other agencies for help with drug treatment, counseling and school-based services.

Melissa Byers, PAL's Executive Director, told The Times that more than 60 percent of these students show improved school attendance as a result of the intervention of police and the PAL program.

Madam Speaker, The PAL program nationally and in St. Petersburg has proven to be a tremendous success in helping to build positive relationships between youth and police officers. They learn to build a bond of trust that keeps many young people from making mistakes that will haunt them for life.

Following my remarks, I will include the story from The Times by Kathy Ferguson

about PAL's great work in St. Petersburg. As Mr. Schatzman told the reporter, "Our St. Pete PAL has kept kids on the right path for 50 years; and if that isn't important, I don't know what is. The kids of PAL will make St. Petersburg's future bright."

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that my colleagues will join me in thanking the St. Petersburg PAL chapter, the police officers who volunteer their time, the board members and the staff for a job well done. There will be a grand celebration of their service in St. Petersburg this Friday as the community comes together to celebrate "50 Years of Making a Difference" and as they move on to their next 50 years of serving the youth of our community.

[From the St. Petersburg Times, May 9, 2010]
FOR 50 YEARS POLICE HAVE BEEN PALS TO KIDS—THE LOCAL POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE HELPS MORE THAN 500 KIDS A YEAR

(By Kathy Ferguson)

Boxing and double-dutch jump rope were all the rage in 1960 when the Police Athletic League of St. Petersburg opened its doors. Today PAL's athletics have grown to include basketball, track and flag football. Athletics may be its base, but sports are no longer PAL's only lineup. After-school and summer programs, Boy Scout troops, mentoring and a truancy plan help more than 500 youngsters every year.

This month, PAL celebrates 50 years of building positive bonds between police officers and youths. A 1950s-style, glamorous gala is set for Friday at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club in St. Petersburg. Tampa Bay Buccaneer football great Mike Alstott serves as honorary chairman.

Usually a Founders Club Breakfast is held. But this year's anniversary was too important for an early riser salute, Robin Grabowski, gala chairwoman, said.

"This is a major celebration for PAL," said Grabowski. "Everyone is invited to attend."

The gala will also applaud 50 PAL founders who supported through donations or service.

Ed Schatzman, who has dedicated 30 years to PAL, remembers its humble start.

"The north end of the basketball court ended abruptly at the basket because we couldn't fit a regulation court in the building," Schatzman said. "Our home team always had an advantage because our kids knew how to 'run up the wall' during games."

The first facility was on Fifth Avenue N, near 16th Street. Now PAL is at 1450 16th St. N, beside Woodlawn Elementary School.

Schatzman and his wife, Stefanie, sponsored a child for the summer program last year. Schatzman has been involved in PAL Scouts, served on the board of directors and helped with the after-school reading program.

"We know kids are receiving wholesome programs and great contact with police officers that will be key to their choosing a positive path to being good citizens," Schatzman said.

Planting seeds, executive director Melissa Byers said, is what PAL is all about. Its mission is crime prevention through athletics, education and recreation.

"We offer young people opportunities to enrich their self-esteem and team-building skills in a structured, nonthreatening environment," she said. The idea is to keep kids busy between the peak hours of youth violence and crime between 3 and 9 p.m.

Programs include daily fitness, art, drama, soccer, tennis, games, movies and homework time. Character development focuses on issues like gang involvement, making choices, stranger danger, bullying prevention and goal setting.