

HONORING KEITH WOODS

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Keith Woods. Keith Woods has left the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce where he served with distinction—and flair—for 13 years. During his tenure, Mr. Woods made the Chamber into one of the most active in the state with a broad diversity of programs including classes, a speaker series, connections with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the creation of the popular Wednesday Night Market.

Keith's strong leadership in the business community and his well-known sense of humor have earned him a national reputation. He is known for the quick quips and insightful jabs that at various times run the gamut from self-depreciation to stinging sarcasm. He is Santa Rosa's toastmaster as well as the city's master of the roast.

He has also been honored three times by the California Association of Chambers of Commerce, including an award for Executive Director of the Year. Even beyond California's borders, Mr. Woods has had an impact, spreading the word at national chamber events about the importance of community involvement.

With Keith Woods at the helm of the Santa Rosa Chamber, there was always excitement, enthusiasm and new ideas in the business community. Thanks to Keith, it was never simply "business as usual." It is my great pleasure to pay tribute to Keith. I am very proud to be representing him.

TRIBUTE TO PASSAIC VALLEY
REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the storied history of an important school in my district, Passaic Valley Regional High School in the Township of Little Falls, New Jersey. Saturday, September 16, 2000 marked the 60th anniversary of this fine institution of learning. It is only fitting that this school be honored, for it has a long history of caring and commitment to its students and the community at-large.

Passaic Valley Regional High School was recognized for its many years of leadership in Little Falls, which I have been honored to represent in Congress since 1997, and so it is only appropriate that these words are immortalized in the annals of his greatest of all freely elected bodies.

Passaic Valley Regional High School opened its doors on September 16, 1940, to some 610 students from Totowa, West Paterson and Little Falls, New Jersey. The school is governed by the Passaic Valley Regional High School, District #1 Board of Education which is composed of nine Board members from the three towns.

As a school committed to the development of well-rounded students, Passaic Valley has

added many other programs to augment its strong academic curriculum. These include a wide range of athletic, musical and literary activities, which are designed to stimulate and encourage the individual growth of each student.

It should be noted that the remarkable success of the Passaic Valley Regional High School is due to its community support. The Passaic Valley Regional High School, District #1 Board of Education, school administration, teachers and friends of the school have aided and fostered its growth and development. Thanks to the help of these individuals and the collective of their efforts this school is now a stellar force in the community.

I applaud the many outstanding and invaluable contributions that this school has given to the community. Education is one of the cornerstones of our culture. This wonderful school has added much to the rich history of the State of New Jersey, and we all should be proud that we are able to celebrate a day in its honor.

Mr. Speaker, as a former educator in New Jersey, I can say that I can think of no other school or faculty that works harder or care more about the students. Perhaps the greatest tribute Passaic Valley Regional High School is success of its former students. Alumni from this prestigious high school have risen to prominence in a variety of fields.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, the Township of Little Falls, Passaic County, the State of New Jersey, the students, teachers, staff, Principal, Passaic Valley Regional High School, District #1 Board of Education, Superintendent and me in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community and the 6th anniversary of Passaic Valley Regional High School.

NORTH COAST HEALTH MINISTRY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize North Coast Health Ministry for their exemplary work in helping the uninsured and underinsured access health care services. As a volunteer organization, it fills an important need in my district for thousands of working families.

North Coast Health Ministry operates clinics that are staffed by physicians, nurses and other staff who volunteer their time and services to provide comprehensive health care services. Started in 1986, NCHM has established relationships with health care professionals and three local hospitals to treat referred patients when they need additional care and treatment, including surgery and recovery.

Since its inception, it has linked with other free clinics in the area to establish the Ohio Association of Free Clinics. This expanded network improves access to health care for the working poor throughout the state. Through the determination and initiative of the NCHM, the Ohio Association was recently awarded a \$600,000 grant to continue and expand its services.

I ask my colleagues to rise in recognizing the exemplary efforts of the North Coast Health Ministry and the many volunteers who

have contributed to it. I commend them for their kind works and congratulate them on their grant.

REPUBLICANS GIVE \$200 MILLION
GIFT TO DRUG INDUSTRY**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the Medicare bill before us gives a \$200 million gift to the nation's drug manufacturers—undoubtedly a pay-off for the industry's massive, \$80 million contribution to the Republicans and Governor Bush.

In section 429, as passed by the House, and in the versions of the bill circulating as late as December 12, Medicare was prohibited from either increasing or decreasing the rates of reimbursement for drugs. This section blocked an effort by the Justice Department, the HHS Office of the Inspector General and Medicare to save the taxpayer hundreds of millions of dollars a year in overpayments. CBO scored the blockage as costing about \$200 million. To offset the cost, the original bill, as passed by the House, also blocked drug companies from increasing their charges to Medicare.

Sometime between December 12th and last evening, someone in the Speaker's office or the Senate Majority Leader's office dropped the word "increase"—thus allowing the drug companies and doctors who profiteer from huge mark-ups on drugs to continue to rip-off patients and taxpayers. The bill before us now only blocks the cuts in reimbursement that had been recommended by the Department of Justice.

What a travesty. Senator McCAIN is right: it is way way past time for campaign finance reform.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
DEIDRA HAIR**HON. ROB PORTMAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a distinguished friend, Judge Deidra Hair, who will step down from her service on the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court on December 31, 2000.

In 1995, the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court was founded as Ohio's first drug court. Judge Hair, who helped to establish the drug court, has tirelessly handled about 1,500 cases each year. Her court has become a model across Ohio, and since 1995, ten additional courts in Ohio have been crafted in its likeness.

The goal of the drug court is to rehabilitate substance abusers and keep them out of court and out of prison. Those arrested on drug abuse charges or those who commit a non-violent felony under the influence of drugs may have their case heard by the drug court. Using strict criteria, the court may accept applicants who do not have a violent criminal background and who have committed a low-

level felony that does not require prison time. If accepted, they must plead guilty and enter drug rehabilitation. The goal is to break the cycle of addiction, so the court selects those who are most likely to be helped.

I have been privileged to observe the drug court and to attend an inspiring graduation ceremony for participants who have successfully completed this program. Through that, I've seen firsthand the good work that drug rehabilitation can do.

Judge Hair has literally helped to turn hundreds of lives around in the Cincinnati community, and she will be dearly missed when she steps down from the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court. All of us in the Cincinnati area wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

U.S. SUPREME COURT PREVENTED JUDICIAL INTERVENTION IN THE ELECTION

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court was consistent with common sense and the need to bring finality to a process which, in my judgment, should never have started. By that, I mean the judicial involvement in the election decision.

Before the onset of technology, in the distant past when paper ballots were used in elections, the standards for a valid vote were clear and universally observed. To vote, you placed an "X" in the box by the candidate's name. If you used a check mark or other mark or placed your "X" outside of the box, your vote for that office was invalid and, in the absence of fraud, was not counted.

Voting machines were meant to speed the process of voting and counting the votes cast. But they also have standards. If you do not punch the card in the manner specified, indicating your intended vote, the machine will not count it. If you can't understand the instructions or make a mistake as you vote, you can ask for help or a new ballot. The machine is impartial. It counts all properly cast votes. It does not count those not properly cast, nor should it. Unless there is a challenge to the workings of the machine in counting the vote, or other irregularity or fraud alleged, the count of the voting machine should be the certified or final count in the election.

The judicial challenges in Florida by the Gore campaign were based principally upon the cards that the machine did not count. The Gore contention was not that the machines did not count correctly, but that votes not properly cast by the voter should be counted by hand—somehow by having county election officials divine the voters' intentions. It is fascinating that the standards to do this were never established in two decisions by the Florida Supreme Court. Telling county election officials simply to use their best judgment was clearly unconstitutional, as the U.S. Supreme Court just ruled, since it violates the equal protection clause. It is also plainly an open invitation to manipulation of the results and fraud.

Fortunately, this episode will result in introducing new technologies for voting designed to foreclose any attempt to go outside the ma-

chine result in future elections. Once again, perhaps, technology will save us from ourselves. But let's leave this difficult process with several clear understandings. First, votes have to meet some minimum standard and voters have to take the responsibility for their own actions. More than two hundred years ago our new country placed its future on the judgment of individual people, not dictators or kings. But with rights come responsibilities. One is to meet minimum standard of preparation and execution to cast a valid vote.

Second, we should have learned that the judiciary, in the absence of alleged fraud, should not intervene in the political process. For most of our history this has been an unstated part of the separation of powers. The first decision of the Florida Supreme Court should have upheld the Secretary of State's certification. Unfortunately, their desire to intervene in the absence of alleged fraud necessitated not one but two trips to the U.S. Supreme Court. It is instructive that the court in Washington did not itself intervene but prevented the Florida court from doing so.

Finally, it is a testament to the founders of this great Republic that all of us are sufficiently imbued with the rule of law that we sat patiently through this long process and believed that it would be resolved as fairly as is humanly possible within that rule. We did not take to the streets, take the law into our own hands, or threaten to overthrow our system. It is not perfect, and we are not perfect, but we know it is the best system that humankind has ever devised.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF BARBARA B. ASWAD

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor one of our country's great scholar-educators, Dr. Barbara B. Aswad of Wayne State University. Dr. Aswad is retiring from Wayne State after 30 years as a professor of Middle Eastern Cultural Anthropology. Her research has focused on peasant culture, women and family studies, and urban anthropology.

Professor Aswad has conducted field studies in Arab villages and Turkish towns in the Middle East as well as in Arab-American communities here in the United States. She is a Fulbright Scholar and has published three books and 32 scholarly articles and chapters in books on Middle Eastern social organization. In 1991 she was elected President of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, the professional association for professors of Middle Eastern disciplines. Dr. Aswad was also a recipient of the prestigious Alumni Faculty Service Award for her service to Wayne State.

In addition to her many contributions to academic research and lengthy service in professional organizations, Dr. Aswad must be recognized for her dedication to her students, her department, and the Arab-American Community. She is widely respected by her peers not only as a fine educator, but as a wonderful person as well.

While Wayne State University may be losing a faculty member, ACCESS and other organi-

zations that Dr. Aswad is so dedicated to will still have a strong voice in our community. Please join me in wishing Dr. Barbara Aswad all the best in her retirement from Wayne State University.

AFRICA AND THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you an outstanding speech by Ambassador Richard T. McCormack titled: The Challenges and Opportunities in Africa. In this speech, Ambassador McCormack's analysis and insight into the the problems and predicaments facing Africa are astute. I am hopeful that Ambassador McCormack's voice on Africa will be heard by both the next Congress and the next Administration.

PRESENTATION TO THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICA

Every year my work for American companies, investment firms, and think tanks results in a tremendous amount of global travel. I have learned that there is simply no substitute for seeing local circumstances with your own eyes and talking face-to-face with leaders who are struggling to cope with their problems.

Last May I visited China and met with top Chinese leaders to discuss concerns about WTO issues. In June, I visited Bulgaria and the Czech Republic to consult with elected leaders and central bankers concerning economic opportunities and dilemmas. Earlier that year I discussed with central bankers in Europe problems involving the Euro and potential vulnerabilities in the international derivative markets. And I have continued to monitor Japan's ongoing banking and growth problems with close contacts in Japan.

But our chairman was aware of another extensive trip I took this summer to Africa at the request of friends. He suggested that I share with you tonight some of the observations and conclusions from this consultation with Presidents, central bankers, key officials from the African development bank, leaders at the Organization of African Unity, aspiring political leaders, and hundreds of ordinary citizens.

One of the reasons that I agreed to make this trip was my long standing interest in Africa beginning with my Ph.D. dissertation about Kenya many decades ago. I took this trip not because Africa is strategically important to the United States, but rather because there are hundreds of millions of people often in desperate circumstances in that part of the world. These people need our understanding and assistance if they are not to undergo catastrophe on a scale that has not been seen since the plagues and wars of Europe during the Middle Ages.

Furthermore, I knew that Africa has produced a number of leaders who have the right policy instincts and who care about their people, but who need support in implementing their visions.

So what I am going to do in the next few minutes is offer some snap shots of what I saw and heard on this trip to give you some sense of what is happening in parts of Africa today. Then I plan to list some suggestions that could help deal with some of the regional problems.