

*Remarks for the American Heart Association
Heart Walk 2001 Kick-Off Event
Wednesday, May 23, 2001*

Thank you. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to be involved with the Heart Walk again as the Honorary Chair. It was a special event for me last year and I look forward to another great time this year.

You know, I participated in the Heart Walk last year and had a wonderful time. I remember seeing Sister Dorothea there – not to speak to, but I just saw the back of her head as she set the pace for the rest of us. Her energy is amazing – **no heart problem there!**

This walk is just one small part of the tremendous work done by the American Heart Association and its affiliate here in Mississippi.

But, it is one of the most visible and, because of its high profile, it is a strong reminder of the strides that have been made in the fight against heart disease and the work that remains to be done.

You know the statistics we're up against. The number one killer in America today is coronary heart disease. The number three killer is stroke. The work that needs to be done is tremendous, but progress is being made – progress that can be easily seen.

On the day of this year's Heart Walk, take a moment to look around the crowd and count the red caps. These caps are worn by the survivors of heart attacks, strokes or heart surgery. They are the ones who spur us on, who remind us of why we take part in this event.

They are people like young Daniel Easley, who you'll hear more about shortly. I've met Daniel; he's come to see me over at the Governor's Mansion and played in the fountain there.

Daniel will be wearing a red cap at this year's walk. I know we all want to be there to support him and all the others wearing the red caps.

Benjamin Franklin once wrote in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, “The noblest question in the world is, ‘What good may I do in it?’” We can ask that noble question today and know the answer lies in our support and participation of this year’s Heart Walk.

Thank you again for the opportunity to take part as Honorary Chair this year, and I look forward to seeing you all at the Heart Walk.