

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF AMERICAN VETERANS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, On Monday, Americans throughout our great Nation will pause to honor those men and women who nobly sacrificed their lives to protect the safety and liberty of their fellow citizens.

Originally designated as "Decoration Day" to honor Veterans of the Civil War, and first observed on May 30, 1868, or modern Memorial Day now recognizes those one-million, three hundred and twelve-thousand, eight-hundred and ten heroes who died in defense of our Country in one or more of her conflicts: the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Persian Gulf War.

To the extent that we now enjoy the many rights inherent in a democracy, as well as those freedoms and benefits that we as a self-governing people bestow upon ourselves and our posterity, we owe great thanks to those defenders of democracy who died in war, so that we might live in peace.

We should also take time on this Memorial Day to honor all those Americans who have ever served in our Armed Forces, and to those great Americans who continue to volunteer to defend our Nation to this day. Without their continued commitment, courage and contributions, we would not enjoy the opportunity to be here, in this great land, reveling in the freedom that their noble deeds have allowed us to celebrate.

We should also take time today to reaffirm our commitment to our soldiers and our veterans: all men and women who voluntarily serve their Nation in the Armed Forces have earned the greatest respect, courtesy, and care that we can provide, and we as a Congress should never hesitate to deliver those benefits to our Veterans.

As we welcome this new Memorial Day in America, in peace and democracy, we solemnly acknowledge that the sacrifices of our Veterans have not been in vain, and will never be forgotten.

A TRIBUTE TO ROBBINS AIR FORCE TANKERS

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, today, I recognize the 99th Air Refueling Squadron from Warner Robbins, Georgia. They were recently named as the military's top tanker group for the third consecutive year.

The "Ramrods," part of the 19th Air Refueling group, are the only unit in the Air Force's

50 year history to win the General Carl A. Spatz Trophy for three consecutive years. Since 1975, this trophy has recognized the best air refueling squadron within the Air Force.

This refueling group has worked hard to earn this prestigious, national award. They were one of the most needed tanker groups in 2000. The "Ramrods" flew air refueling missions on every major deployment last year. Along with these deployment missions they had to carry out their normal exercises and long term troop commitments to areas such as the middle east.

The Warner Robbins 99th squadron was called upon to fly top-ranking Air Force and civilian officials around the globe, and they provided refueling support to military units in the Middle East after last fall's horrible terrorist attack on the USS *Cole*. The National Defense University selected the squadron to represent the Air Force on four high visibility missions around the world.

It is easy to see that these missions are very important in the military strength that this nation enjoys. This group is to be congratulated for their hard work, skill, and accomplishments in the Air Force.

TRIBUTE TO THE PARISH OF ST. ELIZABETH SETON

HON. JAMES H. MALONEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on May 29th, 2001, a celebration will occur in my congressional district that is most noteworthy, and that I wish to bring to the attention of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives. On this very special day, the Parish of St. Elizabeth Seton in the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut will celebrate its 25th Anniversary.

With the population of Roman Catholic families growing in the 1970's, it was clear that there was a need for a new parish in the Ridgebury section of Ridgefield. Father Francis Medynski was appointed by Bishop Walter Curtis to re-configure the then existing parish of St. Mary's. After nearly two years of planning and consultation, Fr. Medynski's task was completed and he was named Pastor of the new St. Elizabeth Seton parish in April, 1976.

The new church had to make due with precious, few resources, calling on parishioners for every type of service. For example, everyone pitched in for a daylong cleaning effort of the temporary rectory/parish center on May 18, 1976.

In the beginning, the church met at the Ridgebury Elementary School, but it was clear from the start that the construction of a permanent church home was necessary. Efforts began immediately. Committees were established to hire architects and contractors, fund-

raising events were organized and parish programs were set. And, at last, on September 20, 1977, the church's official groundbreaking took place. Construction was steady, and a little over a year later, on December 23, 1978, the first Mass in the new sanctuary was celebrated. The formal dedication occurred on May 29, 1979.

Over the past 25 years, the church has continued to grow. The 371 original families in the parish have grown to approximately 1,000. The Religious Education program has expanded to the point of needing to build a new Parish Center that was dedicated in October, 1988. The Center also houses the church administrative offices and includes several meeting rooms for parish use.

In 1996, Fr. Medynski retired, and Father Joseph Prince then came to lead the church, which he has done with dedication and distinction.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting to honor all the parishioners and church leadership alike who have contributed a guiding hand in the creation and growth of the Parish of St. Elizabeth Seton. Today, we celebrate their commitment to their faith, a commitment measured not only words but in their inspiring deeds. On behalf of the Congress of the United States, I extend our congratulations to St. Elizabeth Seton Parish and wish all God's blessings in the years ahead.

IN HONOR OF ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN MONTH

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I am proud to honor the diverse Asian Pacific American community I represent in San Francisco, which includes people whose heritage spans the globe—including Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai and Hmong.

The Asian Pacific American population is growing at rapid rates nationally and this trend has been particularly significant in the Eighth Congressional District of California. The Asian Pacific American population in San Francisco has increased by 5.3% during the 1990's. The District I am honored to represent now has the fourth highest Asian Pacific American population of any U.S. congressional district.

While we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we must redouble our commitment to fighting discrimination. Recent studies have documented a troubling increase in negative attitudes toward and hostile acts against Asian Pacific Americans by portions of the American public. There are legitimate concerns about the governmental policies of some Asian countries. These concerns, however, do not and should not reflect on Asian Pacific Americans.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The district I represent, with its vibrant and diverse Asian Pacific American community, is a national treasure. We are all enriched by the contributions of the Asian Pacific American community, which shares responsibility for the success and achievements of our country, deepening our lives and strengthening our neighborhoods with its strong family values, proud work ethic and achievements in a wide variety of professions. We need to continue to recognize the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans through education, curriculum and other forms of public awareness.

San Francisco became a magnificent cosmopolitan success story because of its diversity. As we celebrate Asian Pacific Islanders Month, let us renew our commitment to overcoming misperceptions of Asian Pacific American people and culture, so that the inspiring and fascinating culture that I experience everyday in my congressional district can be known and celebrated by all.

PETER INDALL KNOWS HIS
GEOGRAPHY

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate an outstanding student from my state of New Mexico, Peter Indall. Peter is a fourteen-year-old eighth-grade student from St. Michael's High School in Santa Fe who recently represented New Mexico in the 2001 National Geographic Bee. This is not, however, his first time to participate in the National Geographic Bee—Peter represented New Mexico in the 2000 event.

Peter is a geography enthusiast; he believes "geography is not just about memorizing information—it is learning about other cultures and their history." Peter's parents, Jon and Mary Indall, credit their son's fifth-grade teacher, Connie Zimpleman at E.J. Martinez Elementary School, for inciting his son's passion to study geography. I know that his fifth grade teacher, as well as the rest of his instructors and fellow New Mexico citizens, are extremely proud of his accomplishments and are honored to have such a distinguished young man represent their state.

I have always placed an emphasis on education, and I am so pleased that Peter is excelling in his studies. His achievements have brought much pride to his family, school and community. I wish Peter and his family the best as this extraordinary young man continues to shine and stand out.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KATIE
BENGHAUSER

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Katie Benghauser on her 11 years of volunteer service to Mount Hope Elementary School in Lansing, Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, we are quick sometimes to condemn the acts of aggression, and not so

quick sometimes to celebrate the acts of kindness that happen in America. Katie Benghauser has shown this type of kindness by volunteering at Mount Hope Elementary School to make a difference in the lives of her children and the entire community. Katie has assisted in grant writing projects, event planning, and book fairs. There was no project too small for Katie to help with.

This act of kindness must not go without recognition. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Katie Benghauser for reminding us that community service is an important part of American life.

TRIBUTE TO ADAM T.
POPIELARCHEK, LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS POLICE OFFICER

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a fallen member of the congressional community whose sudden passing reminds us how precious and fragile life is. On Monday, May 14, 2001, Officer Adam T. Popielarchek, a 17-year veteran of the Library of Congress Police, lost his life in a traffic accident near his home in Mechanicsville, Maryland. Officer Popielarchek's death saddens not only his own family, but also his fellow Library Police officers and numerous other employees of the Library, where he had embarked upon a second career after retiring as a lieutenant from the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department in 1983.

Millions of people visit the Capitol complex each year, and hundreds of thousands of them visit America's national treasure, the Library of Congress, whose buildings also grace Capitol Hill directly across the street. Although most Library visitors, and perhaps some employees, may never have known Adam Popielarchek's name, they and indeed we all, owe him a debt of gratitude. It was Mr. Popielarchek's job to help assure the safety and security of Library visitors, staff and collections, and he did it superbly every day. His colleagues have amply demonstrated since his death that they held Adam Popielarchek in the highest esteem, both personally and professionally, and that he is sorely missed.

Officer Popielarchek is also sorely missed by his widow, Maryellen, and by his sons, Thomas and Adam W.; his daughters, Tina and Tammy; his mother, Angelene; five brothers; two sisters; and by the many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and countless friends he leaves behind across the Washington, D.C., area, in Southern Maryland, in Pennsylvania, where he was born 60 years ago, and elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, in this time of sorrow for the Popielarchek family and the entire congressional community, let us pause and reflect on the life of a valued and wonderful man, Adam T. Popielarchek, who toiled among us here, gave us his best and left us far too soon.

DON LEEBERN: A WINNER IN BOTH
ARENAS

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2001

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Donald M. Leebern, Jr. a man whom, either knowingly or unknowingly, has touched and blessed the lives of many people in the state of Georgia. He is known by those closest to him as modest, personable and self-deprecating; however, "on field" or in the business world, he is a proven winner who works to succeed.

Don attended the University of Georgia where he played football, and started on both offense and defense. He played on the Bulldog's 1959 SEC Championship team that went on to win the Orange Bowl.

Earlier this year, "Big" Don, as friends affectionately call him, was inducted into the Chattahoochee Valley Sports Hall of Fame.

Pat Dye, a teammate of Leebern's at UGA and also former Head football coach at Auburn University, had this to say of Leebern, "it didn't make any difference, practice or playing. He was always full speed. He absolutely would not lose. He'd find a way to win." Pat Dye was absolutely correct.

Standing 6 feet 3 inches tall, Leebern was picked by the Dallas Texans in the first ever American Football League draft. As he was getting ready to debut in the AFL, his father passed away. Instead of pursuing what would have been a career of fame and fortune in professional football, Don decided to return home to Columbus and take over the family business, Georgia Crown Distributing Company.

It is not surprising what happened to the business. Georgia Crown Distributing Company has grown into one of the top 500 private companies in America. He built the small struggling wholesale beverage distributor into a thriving and diversified regional business, making him one of the most influential people in Georgia. He served on the Georgia Athletic Board and is a member of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, which he chaired in 1994 and 1995. Leebern has been able to use his influence to better his community by, among other things, getting state funding for a basketball arena and physical education building at Columbus State—the Lumpkin Center.

The University of Georgia's Butts-Mehre Heritage Hall is where future Georgia football legends practice. It is also where Georgia's football history is housed, from Frank Sinkwich and Herschel Walker's Heisman Trophies, to photos of legendary Coach Wally Butts and jerseys of former Bulldog quarterback Fran Tarkenton. But there is only one name that anyone will see over the locker room at the Butts-Mehre Heritage Hall, specifically they will see, "The Donald Leebern, Jr. Memorial Locker Room." Certainly, it's a fitting reminder of all the good things Don has done for Georgia and the impact he's still having on future generations.

Don Leebern has certainly made a significant contribution to the state of Georgia and his life has certainly been a story of success. Congratulations, Don for a life of service. I applaud you for all you have done and wish you many more years of success in the arena.