

1998. Under his exemplary leadership, the City boasted a record low tax rate and had a \$9 million surplus. In addition to fulfilling his civic duties, Mr. Gereffi devoted his efforts towards charitable works as well. Among his proudest accomplishments was helping to open the Alzheimer's Day Care Center in Lauderdale Lakes.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before you today in memory of a model citizen from South Florida. Mr. Gereffi devoted his energies to his family, friends, constituents and community at large. His greatest joy was in helping his fellow man and improving the quality of life for all in his city. He is survived by his daughters, a brother, four grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO OTHELL BALLAGE

#### HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with solemn heart that I rise before you today to pay tribute to the memory of a remarkable citizen from my district. Othell Ballage of Pueblo, Colorado was a leader in his community and a friend to many. Sadly, he recently passed away at the age of 74. As his family and friends mourn his passing, I would like to remember Othell for his kind heart and generous spirit.

Othell was transferred to Pueblo by the U.S. Army and stationed at the Chemical Depot over thirty years ago. Having seen much of the world during his time in the Army, Othell decided Pueblo would be a good place to call home upon retiring from the service in 1975. It was then that Othell chose to realign his sights from national service to a more regional focus. After his days in the Army, accomplishing what would be considered a lifetime of achievements for most, Othell began to leave his mark on Pueblo. For the next twenty years, Othell pursued his goals in both higher education and public service. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Maryland in 1982 and went on to earn a Master's degree in management from Pacific Western University in 1996. Othell also worked as a counselor for the Colorado Job Training Program and served on numerous boards, including those of the NAACP and the Pueblo Human Rights Commission, as well as the Governor's Task Force on Drunk Driving.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Pueblo and its citizens have lost a truly outstanding citizen and friend. Even more impressive than his numerous contributions to the community was Othell's role as a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Othell was a remarkable citizen and he will certainly be missed. I am honored to pay tribute to his life here today.

#### HONORING OF UHHS BEDFORD MEDICAL CENTER

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of UHHS Bedford Medical Center on the occasion of its 75th anniversary of service to the community. Originally no more than four beds on the second floor of a private home in Bedford, the hospital has grown through the years to keep pace with an expanding population and the demand for high quality accessible medical care.

UHHS Bedford Medical Center originally opened as the Bedford Municipal Hospital on November 29, 1928. The community strongly supported this hospital through passing 5 levies between 1943 and 1952. By 1956, the hospital was known as Bedford Community Hospital and boasted many new and modern departments and amenities. In 1962, the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations accredited the hospital for the first time. The hospital continued to grow, adding a new wing and surgical facilities. In 1979, the name was changed to The Community Hospital of Bedford. It continued to expand and, by 1984, the hospital achieved its current capacity of 110 beds.

On November 30, 1993, the University Hospital Health System purchased the hospital, ushering in an era of rapid growth and innovation, adding a state of the art Outpatient Surgery Center and the Bretschneider Women's Unit offering enhanced obstetrics and gynecological services. Bedford Medical Center is continuing to grow: in 2001, adjoining land was purchased to augment Bedford Medical Center's current facilities.

Bedford Medical Center represents a model of collaboration and success evidenced by the relationships established between the Board of Trustees, the physicians and staff. Growth has been a key word in the hospital's history. A key to the hospital's growth is an unparalleled staff that focuses on keeping patients and the staff satisfied, well cared for, healthy and happy.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Bedford Medical Center on its Diamond Anniversary of serving over 260,000 residents in Southeast Cuyahoga and Northern Portage and Summit Counties. In tribute to the hospital's rich tradition of commitment to the community, let us celebrate these last 75 years with motto—Generations of Caring. I hope that the Bedford Medical Center will continue to serve and care for its community for at least another 75 years.

#### A TRIBUTE TO TOM MOHR—SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

#### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to a dedicated and distinguished public servant, San Mateo Union High School District Super-

intendent Tom Mohr, who recently announced his retirement. During a remarkable 43-year career in public education as a teacher, counselor, principal, district level administrator, and Superintendent in my district, Mr. Mohr has demonstrated a continuous and unwavering commitment to providing the best education possible for San Mateo County's youth.

After an exceptional career in the Jefferson School District in Daly City, he joined the San Mateo Union High School District in 1985 as an Assistant Superintendent, and was promoted to Superintendent in 1996. During a time of tremendous challenges in the field of education, Superintendent Mohr has never failed in his determination to provide a superior education for our students, while building first class institutions, and supporting a first-class professional staff.

The San Mateo Union High School District serves 8,300 students from six communities in my congressional district. It maintains seven high schools—Aragon, Burlingame, Capuchino, Hillsdale, Mills, Peninsula, and San Mateo. Five of the district schools have been recognized as National Blue Ribbon, or California Distinguished Schools.

Superintendent Mohr has been a strong leader in the district. His excellent communication skills have kept the community, staff, and students informed and involved, and have effectively reduced tensions between groups. His boundless energy has enabled him to excel in the many roles and demands placed on the Superintendency. Recently, under Mr. Mohr's outstanding leadership, the community passed a \$137.5 million bond issue to modernize six of the district's schools.

His erudition and experience have led to his appointment to numerous community and professional task forces and advisory boards, which include the U.S. Naval Academy undergraduate selection committee, plus nearly 30 different school accreditation teams, the majority of which he has chaired. He has worked tirelessly to establish high academic standards, encouraging all students from diverse backgrounds to pursue excellence in all of their endeavors. He initiated an exemplary safety program for the students that was endorsed by law enforcement agencies, and built strong school-community partnerships that serve the needs of citizens of all ages.

Superintendent Mohr was honored in 1999 by the Mid-Peninsula Boys & Girls Club as its Citizen of the Year. In 2001 he was named Superintendent of the Year by the San Francisco and San Mateo County region of the Association of California School Administrators, and he is the City of San Mateo's Citizen of the Year for 2003. Upon his retirement in January 2004, Mr. Mohr plans to spend more time with his grandchildren and possibly to pursue advanced university studies. Such is his personal commitment to the value of education.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Mohr's presence will be greatly missed in the boardroom and classrooms of the San Mateo Union High School District. His courage, intellect, integrity, and level of professionalism testify to the endless capabilities of this man and to the impact he will surely leave on the district. His legacy lives in the standards of excellence he has modeled for those who follow and in his unwavering commitment to the district's goals and programs. Mr. Mohr's efforts to better the education of San Mateo County's youth will serve as an inspiration to all of us. I urge my

colleagues to join me in wishing him enjoyment in his new pursuits during his well-earned retirement!

# HONORING THE FLORIDA MARLINS

## HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Florida Marlins on winning the 2003 National League Pennant. On October 15th, they dismantled the Chicago Cubs in Game 7 of the National League Championship Series, completing a thrilled comeback in a series they once trailed three games to one. Even when down to their last few outs, the Marlins came together and rallied back to earn the right to play on baseball's highest stage; the World Series.

It should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that at the beginning of the season the Florida Marlins were not expected to be a factor in the postseason. Underestimated, overlooked, and ignored, the Marlins proceeded through the dog days of summer and down the stretch with courage and grit, and finishing the season with the best record in Major League Baseball since May.

Led by 72-year-old manager Jack McKeon, who took over the team in May when it held a losing record, the Marlins have relied on their tenacious young pitching and powerful, fast-paced offense. Josh Beckett, 23, and Dontrelle Willis, 21, have battled with hitters all season and continue to dominate. The offense has been consistent all season with the speed of Juan Pierre, the power of Ivan "Pudge" Rodriguez, the youth and enthusiasm of Miguel Cabrera, and the experience of baseball veterans Mike Lowell and Jeff Conine. This group of young players and journeymen has come together and created a powerful unit to be reckoned with in the World Series.

An expansion team in 1993, the Marlins won their first pennant in 1997, beating the perennial power, the Atlanta Braves. They went on to the World Series where they defeated the Cleveland Indians in seven games. This year the Marlins were once again the wild card team and are creating the same sort of magic as they did in 1997. It is my hope that the Marlins will continue their winning tradition next week against the New York Yankees.

Mr. Speaker, It is an honor for a team to represent their league in the World series. I am thrilled at the success of the Florida Marlins and I know that they will do their best to bring a second World Series title to South Florida.

# PAYING TRIBUTE TO ERSILIA CRUZ

## HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen

from my district. Ersilia Cruz of Pueblo, Colorado led the charge to revitalize her neighborhood after it had begun to deteriorate before her eyes. Her efforts have helped resuscitate the community and transform the area into a better place to live. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ersilia for her hard work and congratulate her on her success.

Having lived in the neighborhood for more than fifty years, Ersilia has seen a great deal of change take place in her community, much of which has occurred over the course of the past nine years. Old run-down homes have been scrapped and replaced with new ones, the local school has reopened and a community center has been erected, all due to the hard work of citizens like Ersilia committed to revitalizing their community.

In addition to Ersilia's role in the revitalization of her community, she is also the mother of eight. She is a dedicated servant with numerous community action organizations and serves as a member of the local PTA, president of the neighborhood association, and a member of the Community Development Block Grant committee. For her efforts, Ersilia was recently awarded the 2003 NeighborWorks Dorothy Richardson Award, one of only ten people throughout the U.S. to receive this recognition.

Thanks to Ersilia's determination to revive her neighborhood, the Hyde Park community is again a family friendly region. Not only did she receive a national award, the city of Pueblo also acknowledged her dedication by naming one of the streets in her community Cruz Circle in her honor. It is my pleasure to recount Ersilia's efforts here today, and I would also like to thank her for her tireless work. I wish her all the best.

# HONORING OF ARLENE A. RAK

## HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Arlene Rak, upon her retirement as president of the UHHS Bedford Medical Center. Ms. Rak retired on August 31, 2003, after a long and successful career in health care administration.

Arlene Rak brought to the University Hospitals Health System a wealth of experience and a hands-on background in delivering health care. Her career began in nursing, but she quickly moved to administrative roles in both the non-profit and for profit sectors. She has worked in hospital administration as well as with organizations such as the Voluntary Hospitals of America and Johnson & Johnson. She also worked as an independent consultant for many years, and developed new business ventures, alternate delivery systems and helped others to focus on strategic networking.

In 1985, Ms. Rak was recruited from her private consulting practice to develop the Integrated Health Systems management center at University Hospitals. In 1992, UH persuaded Ms. Rak to return to their fold, first as a strategy consultant, then as a director of elder care and home care. Since February 2, 1996, Ms.

Rak has served as the President of the Bedford Medical Center. In this role, she has worked tirelessly to make the hospital a wonderful resource to the community it serves, and a key part of University Hospital's health care system.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing Arlene Rak for her many years of service to the Bedford Medical Center and to University Hospitals. We wish her many blessings of peace, health and happiness throughout her retirement.

# KEEPING WOMEN HEALTHY— BREAST CANCER SCREENING AND AWARENESS DAY

## HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 17, 2003*

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, this month the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) Campaign celebrates nineteen years of educating women about breast cancer, especially the importance of detecting the disease in its earliest stages through screening mammography. Since its inception, the number of women obtaining mammograms has more than doubled.

Today, October 17, 2003, is National Mammography Day. Mammograms are one of the most important prevention tools for breast cancer with the ability to find a cancerous growth an average of 1.7 years before a woman can feel the lump. Any breast cancer survivor can tell you that even days can make a difference.

Unfortunately, women who have limited access to care are less likely to receive mammograms. This is why I am proud to be participating, along with the Alamo Breast Cancer Foundation (ABCF), Atascosa County Ministerial Alliance, Atascosa Health Center, Atascosa Interagency Council, Greater Pleasanton Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and South Texas Regional Medical Center in Jourdan, as an honorary sponsor of "Keeping Women Healthy," a breast cancer screening and awareness day in my district tomorrow, October 18, 2003.

I am proud of the efforts of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District and the ABCF to purchase a mammography van to take their message to our neighborhoods. Recently, their dreams were realized as the Avon Foundation awarded them a \$569,000 grant, which will allow them to purchase and operate a van throughout the greater San Antonio area. They are great advocates and work tirelessly to ensure that women in the San Antonio area have access to critical prevention and treatment services.

The fight against breast cancer is a long and hard one. In my home state of Texas, an estimated 13,700 cases of breast cancer will be detected in 2003. If breast cancer is detected early, however, a woman's chance of survival is improved by 95 percent. Nevertheless, together we have shown that we can make a difference. We must continue the fight against cancer. We only celebrate breast cancer prevention for one month, but by getting our voices heard and our message across, we can give millions a whole lifetime to celebrate.