

In 1999, Wesley graduated from Greeley West High School and soon after attended Aims Community College as well as the University of Northern Colorado. After the tragedy of September 11, 2001 Wesley signed up for the University of Northern Colorado Reserve Officer Training Corp.

Wesley joined the Army and was sent over to Iraq in October of 2003. While in Iraq, he served as a 21 Bravo Combat Engineer. His mission was to clear an area for vehicles and troops by using high explosives.

While Wesley was in Balad, which is about 30 miles north of Baghdad, a bomb exploded and a suicide bomber rammed into his HMMWV vehicle, knocking Wesley off of the gun position on top. He was taken to the hospital for treatment of torn muscles and ligaments in his neck and shoulder.

Since then, Wesley has spent the past several months at Fort Carson with his wife, Jennifer, who is pregnant with their first child. He is currently working as a recruiter, but wants to make the Army his career so he plans on re-enlisting.

Wesley comes from a military family. His grandfather served in World War II and his uncle died while serving in Vietnam.

I am proud to honor Wesley for his courage and sacrifice on behalf of all Americans. Wesley's courage has helped to protect our democracy and keep our homeland safe. I urge all of my fellow colleagues to applaud Wesley for his service to our great Nation.

MISSION FIRST, PEOPLE ALWAYS

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave men and women in our armed forces who are serving courageously in Iraq, Afghanistan, and throughout the world. Our Nation owes these brave troops a debt of gratitude for the sacrifices they have endured to make this world a safer place.

I particularly want to salute our reservists, who have transformed from a supporting role to become a critical part of the backbone of our military. More than 40% of our troops now deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan draw from the Reserve Component. Many of them have served multiple tours, been called up with less than five days' notice, and had their deployments extended well beyond the promised "12 months boots on the ground."

Now the Defense Department has announced that it will activate 5,600 members of the Individual Ready Reserve, a pool of former soldiers that have completed their active or reserve duty but still have time left on their contracts. And the next troop rotation for Iraq and Afghanistan will only increase the burden on the Reserve Component, who will soon make up 43% of our deployed troops beginning in February of 2005.

Tonight, I would like to highlight the harrowing story of the 94th Military Police Company, the longest activated reserve unit to date. Roughly one-third of the 94th's members live in Massachusetts, and I have had the opportunity to speak with many of their family members in recent months.

The 94th Military Police Company first deployed to Iraq in April of 2003 after fulfilling a

mission in Bosnia. The unit has seen its deployment extended twice—first by six months, then by four more. On Easter weekend of this year, members of the 94th loaded onto a bus in Kuwait to finally come home. Just as they were about to depart, they were turned back by their commanders and told they would have to serve another 120 days because there simply wasn't enough trained MPs to replace them. Now, just a few weeks before they are expected to return home for good, they have been sent out on another convoy mission.

While we are indebted to their service, the story of the 94th MP Company shows that this country can't continue to place the burden of war squarely on the back of our Reserve Component. If we ask these men and women to put themselves in harm's way in Iraq for extended periods of time, we must ensure that they are given the same fair treatment as their active duty counterparts. If we do not, we will face a serious recruitment and retention crisis.

What we need is a committed strategy to restructure our weary and overstretched Army.

First and foremost, we must expand the active duty endstrength of our military. I applaud my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee on both sides of the aisle for recognizing this need. We have authorized an increase of 30,000 soldiers and 9,000 marines over three years as part of this year's defense authorization bill. I am disappointed that the Pentagon has chosen to overstretch our current forces instead of expanding our pool of manpower.

Second, I am concerned that the occupational specialties most in demand—such as military police, intelligence analysts and engineers—are highly concentrated in the Reserve Component. Instead of calling up the Individual Ready Reserve, we need to ensure that we have an adequate pool of specialists within the active-duty force. This requires an aggressive recruitment and training program backed by incentives to attract people with the right skills.

Third, we need to lay out a transparent, equitable rotation schedule for our reservists that allows members and their families to predict when they will be activated. This administration has treated Guard and Reserve families with arrogance and a lack of respect. They have notified members of the Army Reserves and National Guard just days before deploying them to Iraq, broken promises that they would only serve for twelve months boots on the ground, and issued sweeping stop-loss orders to prevent members from retiring when they have fulfilled their service.

The Administration's policies aren't pro-family or pro-military. Our troops and their families deserve better. If we don't treat our Reserve Component with the respect they deserve, our military's readiness will suffer. That has consequences for all of us.

As our troops say, "Mission first, people always." Our reservists are fighting on the front lines of the battlefield to protect our security, freedom, and democracy. We need to stand up for them and provide them with the respect they deserve.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MEMBERS AND STAFF OF INDOOR RECREATION OF ORLEANS COUNTY

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the accomplishments of a very special group of volunteers who hail from Vermont's Northeast Kingdom—the tri-county area of Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties. I rise to honor the dedicated men and women who have formed and are building Indoor Recreation of Orleans County, more generally known as IROC.

Dr. Robert E. Smith, a resident of Newport, chairs the IROC Board of Directors. Dr. Smith and the IROC Board are supported by a 50-member President's Advisory Council, a group of community leaders whose guidance has been invaluable all along the way.

James G. Davis directs IROC's day-by-day operations for the Board of Directors. Mr. Davis is a native Vermonter whose vision for the organization has been inspirational.

IROC's three-fold mission addresses key regional issues: To improve the quality of life and develop healthy lifestyles for Northeast Kingdom area residents—especially youth—through educational and recreational activities; to develop community-centered facilities and programs that foster a safe environment and inclusive programs to all participants; and, to deliver its services and programs at the lowest cost possible.

IROC will have five distinct facility emphases: (1) an aquatic center; (2) a multi-purpose recreation arena; (3) a fitness center; (4) a community room, and (5) an educational/technology center. Within each of these areas, multiple activities have been identified for further development.

The Aquatic Center (Main Level) will focus not only on general swimming but also on competitive swimming, rehabilitation, and other types of water activities. North Country Hospital and Health Center, Inc. has committed to using the Aquatic Center on a regular basis for those patients whose rehabilitation program would benefit from hydrotherapy.

The Multi-purpose Recreation Arena (Main Level) has been designed specifically to allow for flexibility in activities. The floor plan for this area includes three regulation-size high school basketball courts that can be converted (almost instantaneously) to accommodate indoor soccer, in-line skating, lacrosse, volleyball, tennis and badminton. The multi-purpose area includes seating for 500 spectators and will serve the anticipated demand for general recreation as well as league and tournament play. A walking track will surround the multi-purpose floor area. The design of the multi-purpose area will allow for specialty shows (home, garden, auto, for example) and concerts.

A 2,100 sq. ft. Fitness Center will offer cardiovascular training and exercise, aerobics instruction, fitness training, muscle toning, and body building activities to interested individuals on a membership basis. North Country Hospital and Health Center, Inc. has also committed to using the Fitness Center on a regular

basis for its rehabilitation and wellness programs.

IROC's Mezzanine Level will contain a 4,200 square foot multi-purpose Lloyd Selby Community Room designed to accommodate meetings, dances, special events, educational programs and seminars, and other community-based activities.

The Mezzanine Level will also house an Educational/Technology Center equipped with state-of-the-art computers and other multimedia materials. Designed for such educational purposes as after-school tutoring, computer training, employment and training seminars, and other related activities, the programs in the Technology Center will focus on youth.

In addition, the Mezzanine Level will contain a Meeting Room that will be made available, as needed and as a public service, to area non-profit organizations in need of meeting space.

To date, the IROC Board of Directors has been able to secure and purchase a ten-acre parcel of land in Derby, Vermont, erect a 54,000 square foot steel building on the site, and initiate the interior build-out of the facility. All of this has been made possible through the generosity of local northeastern Vermonters, whose cash and in-kind contributions to date total over \$2.5 million, a remarkable achievement, given the region's poor economy.

As you all know, Vermont is a beautiful state, and the Northeast Kingdom represents one of its loveliest regions. All of the natural beauty in the area provides a wonderful place to live and a special place to spend a vacation. After our many summer visitors leave, however, and before the snow arrives, our year-round residents settle into their fall and winter routines. Off-season unemployment rebounds, and local residents look for activities to occupy the long cold nights and short days.

There is an international ice youth hockey program—Border Minor Hockey—and there is, of course, the usual array of school-based sports programs. But those programs reach only a small percentage of the population. Youth, working adults, and the community beyond school age are largely left out of the picture. The residents of the Northeast Kingdom have recognized this need; they have organized themselves; and they are supporting IROC to respond to the region's needs.

When the facility is opened later this year, IROC will deliver indoor recreation, educational opportunities, rehabilitation services, and many related community activities to the citizens of Vermont. When IROC is fully operational, over 30 full-time equivalent jobs will have been created in a region that is sorely in need of increased employment opportunities.

This has not happened overnight. In fact, it has taken nearly 16 years for IROC to get where it is today. I am pleased to report, however, that as we stand here today, the process that began in 1988 is nearly complete.

Funds are still being raised to finish the interior as originally designed, and program grant proposals are being written to fund the educational and community activities that will take place in the building. I am proud to say that my office has been able to secure almost \$340,000 in federal funding to support IROC through the Economic Development Initiative at the Department of Housing & Urban Development and the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice.

Mr. Speaker, IROC is an organization that is having an immensely positive effect on this area of Vermont. Once this community center is built, it should serve as a national model for building indoor community recreation centers throughout Vermont and the rest of the country. To accomplish that goal, I have introduced H.R. 1022, the Urban and Rural Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Act. H.R. 1022 would provide \$100 million in federal funding for the construction of community centers in rural and urban areas to reduce obesity and prevent disease and currently has over 20 co-sponsors.

The residents of this most rural area of the state have shown true Vermont spirit by supporting this project through their financial and in-kind investments and through their extraordinary volunteer activities. The Vermont National Guard contributed over a week of in-kind labor (valued at \$200,000) to help with building construction. Local businesses have provided materials and labor as gifts. The community raised over \$226,000 in a three-week period in response to a challenge grant made in 2003 by a former area resident. And these are only a few examples of how the community has participated in building IROC!

The final fund raising efforts for the Aquatic Center and rehabilitation area are going forward. The facility will open in the fall, and memberships will soon be available. Built on a sound business model, IROC will be self-supporting, and this exemplary organization represents just one more example of the "we can grow our own" spirit of the hardy residents of Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties.

Mr. Speaker, Esteemed Colleagues, please join me as I commend and recognize the members of the Board of Directors, staff, and other citizens of Vermont who have made this project possible.

2004-2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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IN MEMORY OF GARY SAGE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gary Sage, who recently passed away. His contributions to both the City of Carmel as

well as the international music community made him a truly commendable figure that will be greatly missed.

Born in Carmel, California, Gary was born into a musical family. His father, A. Lee Sage, and his mother, Emma Joanne Sage, played important roles in the founding of the Monterey Jazz Festival. The lineage of Gary's family can be traced back to Sir David of Wales, an ancient King who was purportedly the uncle of King Arthur. Gary is survived by his former wife Katherine Cameron Sage and his son Elijah Merlin David Sage who is continuing the musical legacy that his father left behind.

Gary proved his own musical genius as early as age fourteen, and is considered to be one of the best stride jazz pianists of the past few decades. He is also known as the pre-eminent piano restorer both in Carmel, and in the worldwide musical community.

Gary was approached throughout his life by such notable piano companies as Steinway and Sons for his expertise in piano restoration. He was of the few craftsmen who knew the intricacies of piano building and made the restoration and construction of pianos into an art form.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Gary Sage for the indelible impression he left in the music world. I join his community, friends and family in honoring Gary, and have no doubt that his contributions as a musician and as a craftsman will live on for future generations.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member unavoidably was off the Hill and missed the final series of votes on H.R. 4766, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2005. If this Member had been present, he would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 366, the Baca amendment—"no"; rollcall No. 367, the Tancredo amendment—"aye"; rollcall No. 368, the Chabot amendment—"no"; rollcall No. 369, the Kaptur amendment—"yes"; and rollcall No. 370, final passage on H.R. 4766—"aye."

HONORING PETER J. HANLON

HON. CHARLES H. TAYLOR

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday evening, July 3, 2004, Peter J. Hanlon died at the age of 98. A resident of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Hanlon was supervisor of North Carolina's national forests for 10 years before retiring from the U.S. Forest Service in 1970 after 36 years of distinguished service.

Hanlon's career with the Forest Service began in the 1930s on the Allegheny National Forest. His career was then briefly interrupted by service in the region's CCC camps. Prior to dissolution of these camps Hanlon was superintendent of CCC Camp Thornwood in Pocahontas County, WV. As World War II began,