

Irene Collins was a fiery, dedicated, and very determined lady, who never stopped giving of herself to her community, be it helping troubled teenagers or supporting numerous civic activities and community causes. This special lady is survived by her four siblings; six children; seventeen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. May all who knew her and are terribly saddened by the loss of Irene take comfort in the kindness of her enduring works, which constitute the finest and truest tribute to her.

COMMENDING WHITKO HIGH
SCHOOL ART STUDENTS

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the artistic achievements of 15 students at Whitko High School in South Whitley, Indiana. Whitko High School was one of 18 schools in the United States that recently participated in the 34th World School Children's Art Exhibition in the Republic of China, Taipei. The purpose of the exhibition is to promote mutual understanding and friendship among the younger generation of the world.

It is a tremendous honor for Whitko High School students to be recognized for their artistic abilities on an international level, especially considering nearly 40 countries were represented at the exhibition.

I'd now like to recognize by name each of the fifteen Whitko students who received the international award medals: Hannah Brennenman, Mark Harness, Jessica Cripe, Kristine Rotach, Rebecca Morford, Kayla Green, Adam Porter, Tasia Boggs, Angie Roberts, Lisa Wilkinson, Katie Menzie, Jana Rowland, Dana Sellers, Emily Crist, and Hillary Lacy. Each of these students has demonstrated outstanding artistic skill and talent by being recognized in the World School Children's Art Exhibition, and I applaud them for their fine work.

I also commend Whitko High School's art teacher Walter C. Malicki for his dedication and enthusiasm for developing the artistic abilities of Whitko students. Over the past several years, Whitko High School students have received 32 national and 95 international awards. These honors are due, in large part, to the leadership of Mr. Malicki and his encouragement of each student's artistic abilities.

Once again, I extend my congratulations to the Whitko High School art students for their achievements in the 34th World School Children's Art Exhibition. Keep up the good work.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF HEATHER TAYLOR-MIESLE

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Heather Taylor-Miesle, a dedicated and passionate young woman who has worked in my office as a Legislative Assistant handling

environmental and transportation issues for nearly three years.

Heather was instrumental in shepherding into law a bill that is important to my community and close to my heart—the San Gabriel Valley Watershed Act (Public Law 108–65). Signed into law on July 1, 2003, the bill implements a study that will investigate how to preserve green, open and recreational space in the San Gabriel Valley Watershed in Los Angeles County. This law will go a long way towards ensuring environmental justice for the community I represent—one that is often the victim of environmental blight, rather than the beneficiary of environmental good fortune.

Heather is a proud environmental advocate who constantly pushes to ensure that the health and well-being of people remains at the top of the environmental agenda. She has worked with the local cities I represent to focus on cleaning up polluted Superfund sites and assessing the health risks of dust emitted by local gravel mining pits.

As Heather leaves the office to pursue a new professional opportunity, I wish her, her husband Don, and son Isaiah the best of luck. Her warm personality and friendly demeanor will be greatly missed.

“CHAVEZ’S DISRESPECT FOR
DEMOCRACY”

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, last week I released a statement expressing my disappointment with the use by Venezuela's National Electoral Council (CNE) of hyper-technical points and controversial procedural rulings to repress what appears to be the clear will of a sufficient number of Venezuelan citizens to move the country to a constitutional referendum on President Chavez.

The Organization of American States and the Carter Center observed first hand the democratic spirit shown by Venezuelans during the signature collection process, and they have publicly stated that they saw no significant problems with the collection of signatures.

Both organizations have also said they disagree with the Chavez-dominated electoral board's decision to set aside 876,000 signatures unless citizens come forward to validate them because the large numbers involved here, and the short time period allowed in which to appeal these signatures, could frustrate the will of the Venezuelan people to have a referendum on their president.

Because the decision of the CNE seems to me likely to obstruct the constitutional referendum process, I am submitting into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a recent editorial from The Washington Post entitled “Coups by Technicality” which provides specific details on the decision.

I think it is also important that President Chavez understand that if the will of the Venezuelan people is disregarded, the international community will appropriately blame him, as the country's leader, for contributing, through his rhetoric and actions, to such a profoundly anti-democratic outcome.

[From the Washington Post, March 5, 2004]

COUP BY TECHNICALITY

LATE LAST YEAR 3,448,747 of Venezuela's 24 million citizens turned out in just four days to sign petitions calling for a recall referendum on President Hugo Chavez. This extraordinary civic exercise, monitored by observers from the Organization of American States and the Carter Center, offered a democratic solution to years of political conflict in that important oil-producing nation—trouble that threatened to push Venezuela into dictatorship or civil war. Now Mr. Chavez, whose crackpot populism and authoritarian methods provoked the crisis, blatantly seeks to stop the vote, in violation of his commitment to both the OAS and his own constitution. His actions have already prompted a new wave of unrest across the country, including demonstrations in which at least seven people have been killed. Unless he can be restrained, Mr. Chavez may complete his destruction of one of Latin America's most enduring democracies.

Though the constitution, drawn up under Mr. Chavez's own administration, requires 20 percent of all voters to back a referendum, opposition groups collected 1 million signatures more than should have been needed for the recall vote. These signatures were rigorously audited by a nonpartisan civic group before being forwarded to the electoral commission. Yet, after delaying its response for weeks, the commission, dominated by Mr. Chavez's supporters, rejected 1.6 million of them, or nearly half the total. To do so, it invented requirements that didn't previously exist. Most notably, it threw out 876,000 signatures, each accompanied by a thumbprint, because someone other than the voter had entered registration details on the petition.

Mr. Chavez's functionaries subsequently announced that they would give about a million of those stricken from the list a chance to restore their names—but only if they appear in a limited number of registration centers during one two-day period. In practice, that poses a next-to-impossible logistical challenge to the opposition, even if there were no harassment from Mr. Chavez's police and civilian goon squads. But attempts by the foreign mediators to reverse this Kafkaesque coup have so far been unsuccessful.

Mr. Chavez, who has built a strong alliance with Cuba's Fidel Castro and imported thousands of Cuban personnel, appears eager for a domestic and international confrontation. Last weekend he called President Bush an “illegitimate” president, referred to him with a vulgar epithet and threatened to cut off oil supplies to the United States. Opposition leaders say that more than 300 people have been arrested in recent days, and that some have been tortured. Given the Bush administration's weak position in the region, hope for a peaceful or democratic solution rests mostly with Venezuela's Latin American neighbors, starting with Brazil. If Mr. Chavez continues to deny his people a democratic vote, leaders from those nations must be prepared to invoke the Democracy Charter of the OAS and threaten him with the isolation reserved for autocrats.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE JOHN
MICHAEL “MIKE” SEGER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of John Michael “Mike” Seger.

Mike was born on May 16, 1957 in Fort Lee, Virginia and later grew up in central Iowa. Mike was the eldest of eight children born into a family with a rich military history. Although unable to continue in the tradition of his grandfather, who served in the Pacific front during World War II, and his father, who served in the Army, due to an accident that left him blind in one eye, Mike grew up with a strong sense of responsibility and a keen intellect.

After graduating from Lakeview High School, Mike attended Briar Cliff College in Iowa for two years before moving to Vermont in 1978. There he met his wife of 24 years, Jane, across the parking lot of the Midas Muffler in Burlington where he worked. Together they started a family with the birth of daughter, Laura, in 1981 and then with the three month premature birth of their triplets, John Richard, Jennifer and Amanda in 1982. Sadly, Amanda passed away nine days later due to a ruptured heart valve.

While a bookkeeper for Midas Mike's love of and involvement in the automotive industry began. He later followed that love to St. Paul, Minnesota where he began working for Lehman's Garage, Inc. Through the years Mike advanced to Chief Financial Officer and served on numerous automotive industry committees, such as NACE, NABC and ICAR. On December 3, 2003, Mike received the first ever "Q" Award from the National Auto Body Council in recognition of the "individual who quietly persist in doing the right thing for the Collision Repair Industry."

After being diagnosed with Stage Four Colon Cancer in June of 2003, Mike was blessed with the help of the many friends he had acquired during his journey. He was also recently reunited with the son, Travis Tentinger, he had given up for adoption in 1978 and discovered that he was a grandfather of three adorable children. Although Mike's battle with his cancer ended on February 4, 2004, this reunion and the constant support of his friends and family made the last months of Mike's life as full as possible.

Mike Seger was the type of man who is the backbone of community life in our country: quiet, dependable, hardworking. I urge the House to join me in mourning the passage of Mike Seger and extending our condolences to his family and friends.

MEDICAL DEVICES TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the House is to be commended for swift action this week on S. 1881, The Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act. This bill removes the barriers that would have prevented the program from functioning as intended. I am particularly pleased about the provisions concerning third party inspections, which were included in the bill.

The training for the third party inspection program is complete and with passage of S. 1881, the program will finally get underway. S. 1881 also rightly includes an 18-month delay in the implementation of the labeling provisions

in section 301 of MDUFMA. During this time, questions concerning the requisite scope of the labeling requirement can be resolved. The agency, industry and the Congress have an interest in reaching a solution that permits the identification of the manufacturer of some categories of products by the end user, yet maintains flexibility for the many other products produced by FDA regulated industries. I am certain all interested parties will continue to work toward that balanced solution. And I look forward to finalizing the labeling provisions in a manner, which meets the concerns of industry, consumers and the FDA.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FOOD CONSUMPTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 339) to prevent frivolous lawsuits against the manufacturers, distributors, or sellers of food or non-alcoholic beverage products that comply with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements:

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Chairman, the proponents of H.R. 339, the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, argue that those who legally manufacture or sell food should be protected from lawsuits which claim the consumption of their product caused weight gain, obesity and/or weight related health conditions. However, the bill applies to manufacturers and sellers of food, as defined by Section 201(f) of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, including various nutritional and weight loss supplements, like Ephedra, which are in effect marketed as drugs.

Congress should deal separately with statutes regarding food purveyors and those lawsuits relating to the manufacture or marketing of nutritional supplements which are marketed as if they are drugs—some of which have the same benefits and risks of drugs.

The amendment offered by the Gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) sought to clarify the bill. But the proponents of the bill rejected this amendment. As a result, the bill is confusing in its scope and I voted against it for that reason.

I hope the bill is improved in the Senate to apply only to those who sell "food" as that term is normally used. Products marketed as drugs should be dealt with separately.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PORTER J. GOSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening I had to depart early for a previously scheduled meeting. As a result, I was not able to be present for rollcall votes 52, 53, and 54. Had I been present, I would have voted "no," on rollcall votes 52 and 53. I would have voted "yea," on rollcall vote 54. I request that this

statement appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD. Thank you.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF HENRY JO VON TUNGELN

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to remember and honor an outstanding citizen, Henry Jo Von Tungeln from Calumet, Oklahoma, who passed away on February 28th.

Henry Jo was born on May 13, 1931 southwest of El Reno, Oklahoma. He was a fourth generation farmer and rancher in Canadian County. He was known throughout his community and the State for his commitment to community service and to the agriculture industry.

Henry Jo was a tireless champion of agriculture, which was exemplified through his dedication to numerous agriculture organizations. He was active in the Oklahoma Farm Bureau, where he served as Vice President of The Oklahoma Farm Bureau State Board of Directors. He also served as the Canadian County Farm Bureau President for 45 years. He served 3 terms as Chairman of the Oklahoma Wheat Commission and was appointed by three Governors. He also served as Secretary, Vice Chairman and Chairman of the U.S. Wheat Associates. He served on the Dean's Advisory Committee for the Oklahoma State University Division of Agriculture. In 2000, Henry Jo received the OSU Master Agronomist award. He was elected to the Oklahoma Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2002. Henry Jo served on the Oklahoma Beef Council Board of Directors. He received the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Service Award. Henry Jo served on the International Trade Commission. He was elected Progressive Farmer Man of the Year in 2001. He also received the Agriculture Ambassador Award from Redlands Community College.

Perhaps Henry Jo was best known for opening his home to many of us for discussions about the things that would benefit his community and the agriculture industry, so that future generations could enjoy the same way of life that he so enjoyed. He welcomed many to his dinner table, including international groups who were visiting Oklahoma to learn more about our agricultural products. He was an amazing ambassador for our State.

Mr. Speaker, I join today with Henry Jo's family, friends, and community to honor his life and his commitment to his family, his community, and to the advancement of agriculture. He was an outstanding man and will truly be missed by all who knew him.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO GARY L. BRYENTON FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE IN THE STATE OF OHIO

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to