

of his retirement and his dedication to public service.

Mr. Lepsch has made a lifetime commitment to his community and Nation. As a young man, he served our Nation in the army during the Vietnam War. He has spent over 30 years as a member of the Attica Fire Department, serving as Chief, Rescue Squad Captain, EMT, and representing the department on various county and regional boards. He has served the residents of the Village of Attica as a Village Trustee for 10 years, most recently as Deputy Mayor. Mr. Lepsch has also been active in his parish church, serving as a parish board member and parish school volunteer accountant.

Colleagues, friends, and family alike hail Mr. Lepsch as someone who has exemplified genuine concern and dedication to his family and his neighbors and constituents.

It is with a great pride and gratitude that I rise to thank and honor Mr. Lepsch for his many years of commitment and loyalty to the citizens of Attica and Wyoming County.

HONORING GEORGETTE “TOOTSIE” LASKE ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Ms. DELAUBRO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the many family, friends, and community members who have gathered to pay tribute to an outstanding member of the Branford community and a dear friend of mine, Georgette “Tootsie” Laske. After twenty-seven years of dedicated service to the Town of Branford, Tootsie has retired from municipal service. Though she will no longer be at Town Hall, I have no doubt that Tootsie will continue to be a fixture in the Branford community.

A life-long resident of Branford, Tootsie graduated from Branford High School where she was an active and skilled athlete. Playing basketball, field hockey, volleyball, and gymnastics, Tootsie was recognized in 1999 for her accomplishments with induction into the Branford Sports Hall of Fame. After high school, Tootsie began working for Security Insurance Company and Nationwide Insurance. However, in 1978, Tootsie was hired by then Town Clerk Peter Abondi as Branford’s Assistant Town Clerk—a position which she held until her election as Town Clerk in 1992. In her many years of service at Town Hall, Tootsie has made residents and non-residents alike feel welcome with her complimentary Tootsie Roll candies. Her kind heart and special way with people made her a popular figure at Town Hall and there is no doubt that her presence will be missed.

Tootsie’s dedication to her community extended far beyond her work at Town Hall. Our communities would not be the same without those individuals who so willingly volunteer their time and energy on behalf of others. Throughout her lifetime, Tootsie has been this kind of community member—always willing to help in any way that she could. Whether it was as a volunteer for the Special Olympics World Games Connecticut in 1995, as a long-time member of the Italian-American Women’s

Auxiliary of Branford, or her work with a multitude of local civic organizations, Tootsie’s unwavering efforts have touched the lives of many. I have no doubt that, though she will be enjoying her retirement, Tootsie will continue to find ways in which she can enrich the community as well as the lives of others.

I am also glad to have this opportunity to extend my personal thanks and sincere appreciation to Tootsie for her many years of support and friendship. Tootsie is an extraordinary woman and I consider myself privileged to call her my friend.

For her countless hours of service, both professionally and personally, to the Town of Branford, I am proud to rise today to join her husband, James; her four children, Kathleen, Nancy, Thomas, and James; her eight grandchildren, Jenna, Bridget, Kelly, Scott, Mikayla, Patrick, Allison, and Kirsten; family, friends, colleagues, and community members in extending my sincere congratulations to Georgette “Tootsie” Laske as she celebrates her retirement. Her generosity, compassion, and good heart have left an indelible mark on the Branford community and a legacy that will inspire generations to come. My very best wishes for many more years of health and happiness.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SAN JOSE’S REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and honor Catholic Charities of San Jose’s 25th anniversary of its refugee resettlement programs.

Less than 1 percent of the refugees in camps are accepted by Western countries for resettlement. Refugees who have already suffered unthinkable crimes and injustices are often forced to wait in camps for as long as 10 years before being interviewed for consideration. The very lucky few who are accepted for immigration to the United States often arrive with little to no money, few, if any, family and only the hope and dream of a better life.

To ease this very difficult transition, Catholic Charities meets these refugees at the airport and begins the resettlement process immediately. They and their team of committed volunteers provide financial support for housing, food, clothing and other necessities, medical care, case management and independent living skills training such as budgeting skills, housing assistance and food preparation.

In their 25 years of dedication and hard work, over 20,000 refugees have been assisted in their quest to build a better life for themselves and their future generations. Catholic Charities of San Jose provides these valuable services at no cost to the immigrant.

This program is one of many that Catholic Charities provides in its overall vision of transforming lives. This wonderful organization strives to empower meaningful, quality living through economic, familial and emotional stability. Catholic Charities serves people of all beliefs, cultures, ethnicities and ages and serves a diverse population from various eth-

nic backgrounds and provides services in 17 languages.

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to have a warm, welcoming and nurturing organization in my district that appreciates and honors the diversity that makes America, and specifically San Jose, California, a desirable place to live, work and raise a family.

TRIBUTE TO THE GARY FRONTIERS SERVICE CLUB

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and reflect on his life and work, we are reminded of the challenges that democracy poses to us and the delicate nature of liberty. Dr. King’s life and, unfortunately, his untimely death remind us that we must continually fight to secure and protect our freedoms. Dr. King, in his courage to act, his willingness to meet challenges, and his ability to achieve, embodied all that is good and true in the battle for liberty.

The spirit of Dr. King lives on in the citizens of communities throughout our Nation. It lives on in the people whose actions reflect the spirit of resolve and achievement that will help move our country into the future. In particular, several distinguished individuals from Indiana’s First Congressional District will be recognized during the 27th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast on Monday, January 16, 2006, at the Genesis Center in Gary, Indiana. The Gary Frontiers Service Club, founded in 1952, sponsors this annual memorial breakfast.

This year the Gary Frontiers Club will pay tribute to five local individuals who, for decades, have unselfishly contributed to improving the human condition of others in the City of Gary. Those individuals who will be recognized as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Marchers at this year’s breakfast include: Reverend Norman L. Hariston Sr., who is retired and a member of St. John Baptist Church; Dr. Alfonso D. Holliday II, a semi-retired physician who served Gary residents and is now a consultant; Roosevelt Haywood Jr., activist and former Gary City Councilman; Willie Kuykendall, a 1960’s voting activist; and Cherrie B. White, a retired activist, will receive the 2006 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major Award.

The late Mrs. Rosa Louise Parks will become the only person to receive a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Honorary Drum Major Award for her single courageous act of dignified defiance on December 1, 1955, which set in motion the Modern Civil Rights Movement.

Though very different in nature, the achievement of all these individuals reflect many of the same attributes that Dr. King possessed as well as the values he advocated. Like Dr. King, these individuals saw challenges and rose to the occasion. Each one of the honored guests’ greatness has been found in their willingness to serve with “a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.” They set laudable goals, and they worked hard to achieve them.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending the Gary Frontiers Service Club:

President Floyd Donaldson, Breakfast Chairman Oliver Gilliam, Breakfast Co-Chairman Clorius L. Lay, Master of Ceremonies Alfred Hammond, Melvin Ward, and all other members of the service club for their initiative, determination, and dedication to making Northwest Indiana a better place for all who live and work there.

SALUTING THE TENNESSEE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 168TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute an outstanding group of men and women—the Tennessee Army National Guard's 168th Military Police Battalion of Lebanon, TN. On Sunday, February 5, the 168th will receive the Valorous Unit Award at a special presentation at the Armory in Lebanon.

The Valorous Unit Award is one of the Nation's most prestigious military awards. It is presented to units of the Armed Forces of the United States for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing force. To receive this award, a unit must have performed with marked distinction under difficult and hazardous conditions in accomplishing its mission so as to set it apart from, and above, other units participating in the same conflict. Its equivalent in individual awards is the Silver Star.

I know all Tennesseans, and all Americans, join with me in thanking the 168th for their bravery, their commitment and their selfless service while in Iraq.

The 168th received its award for performance of duties from May 20, 2003 through January 31, 2004. While they performed many duties, some of their key accomplishments during their service were to establish law and order operations in all of east Baghdad, establish Iraqi police stations, train Iraqi police officers and establish an Iraqi police academy. The battalion coordinated numerous offensive operations and patrols within its area of operations under very austere conditions. They were responsible for confiscating numerous weapons caches, counterfeit money, and ammunition. And they frequently provided escort and security service to convoys in the region.

During their service, the 168th Battalion and its subordinate units receive numerous Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts, and Army Commendation Medals for Valor. Their service was one that required heroism and courage on a daily basis.

I am honored to serve as the Congressman for Lebanon and privileged to represent these men and women in Washington. We are all blessed to live in the greatest country in the history of the world. And we are particularly blessed that men and women, like the members of Tennessee's 168th Military Police Battalion, willingly put their lives on the line every day so that we may continue to enjoy freedom here at home.

Words cannot adequately thank the members of the 168th for their exceptional service. But I want to take this moment, and this occa-

sion of their Valorous Unit Award presentation, to salute them on behalf of all Americans for their heroic service to our country and to freedom around the world.

HONORING ST. XAVIER UNIVERSITY ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor as a community St. Xavier University and to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. St. Xavier is located in Chicago's Mount Greenwood neighborhood.

When founded in 1846 by the Sisters of Mercy, St. Xavier was a Catholic institution grounded in the tradition of the liberal arts. As one of 18 colleges and universities sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, St. Xavier has evolved into an institution that seeks to provide its students with the meaning of scholarship, the support of the community, and the spirit of moral and ethical sensibility.

Although a Catholic university of approximately 5,700 students, St. Xavier welcomes students of all faiths and religious backgrounds. Because of its rich traditions and commitment to excellence St. Xavier has become one of Chicago's premier collegiate institutions for students studying nursing, business, as well as education.

It is my honor to recognize this school and its many achievements both academically and athletically. In addition, I commend St. Xavier University for fostering the intellectual and cultural growth of the administration, faculty and students who all play a vital role in the success of the university's existence in today's society.

TRIBUTE TO THE TOWN OF GUADALUPE, ARIZONA ON THE 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INCORPORATION

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to the Town of Guadalupe, Arizona, a community in my district which I proudly represent, on the occasion of the 31st Anniversary of its incorporation. Named after the patron saint of Mexico, the Virgin of Guadalupe, this culturally-rich community is home to about 5,500 residents.

Guadalupe was founded by Yaqui Indians around the turn of the century when they fled their traditional homeland along the Yaqui River in Sonora, Mexico to avoid persecution and enslavement by the Mexican government under Porfirio Diaz. When the Yaqui people fled as refugees, many were able to find a home in the Salt River Valley's agricultural economy. One of the villages was in south Tempe, just north of the present Guadalupe site. A missionary Franciscan Friar, Lucius Zittier, petitioned President Woodrow Wilson for 40 acres of land so the Yaqui could permanently settle. The site, undesirable as

uncultivable, is located in the center of the present community, known as "La Cuarenta," or "The 40," as some still call it today.

Guadalupe also became home to many Hispanic families over the years, and it has become a stopping point for Mexican immigrant workers. As the community has grown, it has demonstrated its resilience in the face of difficult economic times, poverty, and racism.

Many young men of Mexican and Yaqui descent answered the call for military service and defended our country. Dozens of Guadalupe veterans' names are on the rolls of those who served, and many paid the ultimate sacrifice.

In the early 1960s, Guadalupe Organization, Inc., was formed and it began to identify and address the community's needs. Many services taken for granted in other communities were not provided in Guadalupe and residents began to get organized. A new voting precinct in Guadalupe was formed, and U.S. Sen. Carl Hayden was instrumental in securing home mail delivery for residents. As the Guadalupe Organization advocated for community betterment and educated residents about civil awareness, many small victories were achieved for the community. The organization prevented a freeway from being built through the center of Guadalupe, opened a dental clinic with volunteer dentists, fought discrimination against Guadalupe students, and most notably, led the charge for incorporation.

Neighboring cities had mostly rebuffed Guadalupe and its residents until property values soared. To stop annexation attempts and preserve their community's rich culture, the Guadalupe Organization began incorporation efforts and the Citizens Committee to Incorporate Guadalupe was formed. It was led by Mr. Andres "Andy" Jimenez, who served as president of the group. Election results of Feb. 4, 1975, which showed an 83 percent voter turnout, approved the plan of incorporation, and the Town of Guadalupe was born.

Since then, the Town of Guadalupe has been a leader in demonstrating concern for its residents and passing progressive policies. The Town Council was the first in Arizona to ban smoking in public places. It declared a paid Cesar Chavez Holiday for Guadalupe town employees. The town has also donated land for construction of educational and recreational entities.

Maricopa County Community Colleges also have established a branch of South Mountain Community College in Guadalupe with its rental fee subsidized for many years by the Guadalupe Organization. Guadalupe had one college graduate in 1960 and one in 1967. Now graduates at all levels, from high school to Ph.D., call Guadalupe their home.

As you can see, Guadalupe is a community rich with the traditions of three cultures, deeply devoted to the welfare of its residents, and the prosperity of its community. As the former director of the Guadalupe Organization, I feel a special bond to this community and take great pride in its progress. This bond is felt by many, as children follow in their parents' footsteps, opting to make a home in Guadalupe as they begin to make a life of their own. Ironically, the current Mayor of Guadalupe is Ms. Bernadette Jimenez, daughter of Andy Jimenez, who led the Citizens Committee to Incorporate Guadalupe.

In honor of the success of this community and its residents, I ask my colleagues to