

Again, I rise today to celebrate Aggie Smith's 100th birthday and recognize her many accomplishments. I hope my colleagues will join me in wishing her many happy years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO VIOLA VAN DORIN

#### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Viola Van Dorin, who served in the armed forces as a nurse during the Second World War.

Viola Van Dorin, as well as her late husband, Forrest Van Dorin, both valued their patriotic obligation to enlist in our nation's military shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After her exemplary service in the Army Nurse Corps, Viola devoted herself to preserving the memory of World War II by donating more than 240 items to the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing. She currently lives in Jackson, Michigan.

Violet began her career as a nurse, graduating from the Sparrow Hospital School of Nursing in 1935. She worked at the Michigan State College Hospital, and then moved on to private practice with Dr. Kenneth Hodges and Dr. Kenneth Johnson. She excelled as both an office receptionist and an assistant to the physicians. Vi had the opportunity to even star in a film during the prewar period, a documentary called *The Case History of Lucy X*, which was the first to educate the public and medical professionals on the contagious disease tuberculosis.

In 1942, Vi was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps and assigned to Torney General Hospital in Palm Springs, California. There she met her future husband, then a dashing young Sergeant in the Army. They married on June 7, 1943, and their marriage lasted until Forrest's death in 2003.

In 1944, Vi was assigned to the 82nd General Hospital unit and transported to Wales where the unit helped rehabilitate wounded soldiers. Before the end of the War, Vi was promoted to First Lieutenant and received several citations: the American Theater Ribbon, three Overseas Service Bars and a Victory Medal. She and her husband were reunited in 1946, and they settled down in the Lansing area. She and Forrest had a son, Ken Van Dorin, as well as three grandchildren: Rebecca Louise, Natalie Ann and Robert Kenneth.

Violet's service in both the military and the medical field has demonstrated her commitment to serving our nation, caring for others, and preserving historical treasures. She should also be commended for her tireless devotion to preserving the memory of World War II and honoring the sacrifices of our veterans. Across Michigan's counties and communities, her legacy will be realized long into the future. I am pleased to know her remarkable story, and to share it with my Congressional colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Violet Van Dorin, a citizen and a veteran truly deserving of our respect and admiration.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, during rollcall vote No. 55 on sustaining the ruling of the chair with regard to the point of order against the DeLauro amendment to H.R. 4939, I was on a leave of absence due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID MITCHELL

#### HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor David Mitchell of Pt. Reyes Station, California, who recently retired after 30 years as the editor and publisher of the *Point Reyes Light*. The Light has covered community activities, misdeeds, and controversies in the rural small towns of West Marin since 1975.

Dave earned a degree in journalism at Stanford University and worked at various small papers before buying the Light with his former wife Cathy. After the couple split up in 1981, Dave sold the paper and worked for the *San Francisco Examiner* for several years before getting the paper back due to payment default.

Described as everything from "intelligent, scrappy, and folksy" to "controversial, opinionated, and hard-headed," Dave always presented the news in a lively, personal manner and encouraged his readers to participate through letters and columns. He considered himself a muckraker and determinedly pursued deceit and corruption where he saw it. In 1979 he and Cathy won a Pulitzer Prize for their expose of the Synanon cult.

West Marin has changed during Dave's tenure, and the Light chronicled issues such as politics, immigration (even sending reporters to the Azores, Italy, and Jalisco, Mexico, where many were from), relations between Point Reyes National Seashore and the community, and the struggles of ranchers to remain viable as the towns became more gentrified. The paper was always challenged financially as Dave used an inheritance to subsidize it, and he sometimes suffered from severe burn-out as he worked long hours to keep both the finances and the news activities in line. After achieving financial stability, he sold the paper in November, 2005, to Robert Plotkin who made a commitment to maintain its community focus.

Mr. Speaker, David Mitchell has provided a vital service to West Marin as well as setting high standards for community newspapers. I know he will continue as a fixture on the local scene and maintain his passion for the issues he championed.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF ALPHALONIA P. "PEACHES" GWYN

#### HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Alphalonia P. "Peaches" Gwyn of Winston Salem, North Carolina.

We rely on a great number of people, in addition to the members of our staff, to do our jobs as members of Congress. The people we work with twice a week to help us get to and from our districts become part of the extended network of support that helps us fulfill our duties.

One of those people was Peaches Gwyn. A dedicated employee of US Airways, Peaches always had a smile and a friendly voice at US Airways' Capitol Desk. Peaches was tireless, making sure that members of Congress were able to get back to their districts and serve their constituents. She handled herself with grace and aplomb on the phone with staff members under pressure to get their bosses on the first flight possible.

I have heard of the help she offered through my schedulers over the years who were sorry to learn that she recently succumbed to cancer. Her coworkers told us that Peaches fought cancer every step of the way, never giving up. She wanted to keep busy and go back to work, but eventually lost her battle.

My thoughts and prayers are with those at US Airways who loved her and learned from her. May the Gwyn and Perkins families be comforted by peaceful memories and may they find strength in Peaches' spirit which lives on through everyone she touched.

#### RECOGNITION OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

#### HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of Greek Independence Day, which was celebrated this past Saturday. In doing so, I reaffirm the historic and strategic ties between the United States of America and Greece, and acknowledge the heritage that all of Western civilization draws from both ancient and modern sources in Greece.

On March 25, 1821, the people of Greece declared independence from their Ottoman occupiers and reclaimed the mantle of democracy that they originated in ancient Athens. Since then, they have been a true and steady friend of the United States, working together to promote our common ideals, common goals, and in recognition of our mutual admiration. We are partners in seeking peace and prosperity in the Balkans and southeastern Mediterranean, as well as throughout the world. In celebrating Greek Independence Day this year, we recognize the contributions of ancient Greece to the establishment of democracy and culture, and the continuing importance of modern Greece in national affairs.

Additionally, we affirm the innumerable contributions that Greek Americans have made to

the United States. Their independence and creativity have been an essential component of the American success story, adding immeasurably to our economic strength. Greek American cultural values have enriched our communities and added to the diversity we cherish as Americans. I hope that you will join me in saluting Greece and Greek Americans in this 185th anniversary of Greek Independence Day.

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TRIBUTE TO BEA WATSON

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**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today in tribute to a most distinguished member of the Fontana community and my dear friend, Bea Watson.

In recognition of Bea's outstanding achievements and contributions to our community, I am pleased to share with you a few of her numerous recognitions, including the honor of over twenty-two prestigious awards. These include two esteemed Congressional Awards, the Fontana PTA Council Award, the Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Volunteer Award, the California Parks and Recreation Award, the Community Spirit Award, and the title of California Legislature Woman of the Year. Bea is held in high esteem by all who have been touched by her tireless devotion to others, and deserves every accolade we may present her in thanks for her service.

I am endlessly grateful for Bea's involvement on behalf of the citizens of her community. As a member of the California League of Cities, the Fontana Unified School District, the Fontana Chamber of Commerce, the Fontana Women's Club, the Fontana Teen Center, and the Fontana Historical Society, Bea has profoundly influenced the impacts of these organizations and has directed efforts to improve the community. As City Clerk of Fontana, Bea has proudly represented the city, serving as the keeper of the City Seal and of the official city documents.

Bea's commendable dedication to the City of Fontana has nurtured a sense of pride among her fellow citizens. Her efforts have touched the lives of her neighbors and her exceptional impact upon our community will create a lasting legacy for generations to come. Bea's enduring commitment, enthusiasm, and concern for others' wellbeing have advanced women's rights, education, the arts, and the spirit of the Fontana community. As a volunteer, public servant, and friend to her community, Bea has proven herself as an exemplary American. Bea continues to serve as an inspiration to us all.

I thank Bea for dedicating her life to serving on the behalf of the Fontana community. I am honored to consider Bea my friend and I truly appreciate all she has given to our community and our country.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, March 25th, the people of Greece celebrated the 185th anniversary of their independence from the Ottoman Empire.

As the brilliant Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote in the preface to *Hellas* in 1821, "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece." Nowhere is this more true than in America, a country crafted to embody the vision and ideals of the ancient Greeks, and home to more than three million citizens of Greek descent.

The building in which we now stand, along with many prominent structures in our Nation's Capital, draws heavily on the architecture of ancient Greece, and is a fitting tribute to the civilization that provided the model for our own democratic experiment. America's founders were deeply inspired by the heroic individualism of Homer's epic poetry, the search for truth embodied by Socrates, and the passion for justice that guided Greek political theory.

The American Revolution was driven by the Greek idea that the authority to govern derives directly from the people, and this successful assertion of autonomy in turn inspired Greece to declare its independence on March 25, 1821, after nearly 400 years of rule by the Ottomans. Weeks later, the Messinian Congress sent a letter to then Secretary of State John Quincy Adams asking for moral support, asserting: "Your virtues, Americans, are close to ours, although a broad sea separates us." In response, stirring speeches by President James Monroe and Daniel Webster led the Congress to send funds and supplies to aid the Greeks and motivated many Americans to fight alongside the Greeks in their struggle for freedom.

Today, history, mutual respect, and shared values continue to strengthen the alliance between Greece and the United States. After fighting side-by-side in every major war of the 20th century, we are now united in the war against terror that poses a threat to liberty and justice everywhere. Together we have stood up to the forces of oppression in conflicts from World War II to the Persian Gulf, we have joined as strategic partners in NATO, and are working to build peace, stability, and democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Unfortunately, not all Greeks are celebrating their independence this week. In one of the most militarized regions in the world, members of the Greek Cypriot community continue to live under conditions of oppression, harassment, and deprivation imposed by some 35,000 Turkish soldiers. I am disturbed that Turkey continues to defy the international community and the U.N. resolutions with its policies towards Cyprus.

If a solution to Cyprus can be finalized it would reshape the eastern Mediterranean and could lead to an improvement in relations between Greece and Turkey. I am saddened by the persistence of tensions between these two neighbors, both of which are strong friends of the United States and vital partners in NATO and the war on terror. I hope that a negotiated agreement will soon be reached, so that

Greeks everywhere can realize the inherently human desire for freedom.

I also support the reunification of the remains of one of the most magnificent and best-known monuments in the world: the Parthenon. I welcome the announcement last month that the British and Greek governments have engaged the Director General of UNESCO to lead a cooperative approach to resolving the issue of the Parthenon Marbles. I congratulate both parties for the shift in focus from contentious restitution to cooperative reunification and look forward to the opening of the New Acropolis Museum, where all the Sculptures will be displayed as close to their original position as possible.

The United States' kinship with the Greek people was reflected in the enthusiasm with which America embraced modern Greece's fight for independence 179 years ago. Similarly, the American ideal of freedom has drawn generations of Greek men and women to America's shores. Today we celebrate and give thanks for the contributions Greek Americans and their devotion to family, faith, community, and country that has enriched our Nation.

Through decades of challenge and change, the shared admiration, cooperation, and friendship between Greece and the United States has endured and deepened, and together we have proved the fundamental truth of the Greek proverb, "The passion for freedom never dies." Today we reaffirm that sentiment and our commitment to promoting liberty, democracy, and justice in America, in Greece, and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great joy and admiration that I wish the people of Greece a happy Independence Day and continued freedom and prosperity.

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185 YEARS OF GREEK  
INDEPENDENCE

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**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 185th anniversary of Greek Independence. I would also like to make a special honor of Congressman BILIRAKIS, who is celebrating his last Greek Independence Day as a Member of the House of Representatives. I commend him for his service not only to our country but his indefatigable support of Hellenic issues. I know he will be missed not only by his constituents in Florida, his colleagues here and by all Hellenic Americans.

March 25th is a date that will live in the hearts and minds of Greeks all around the world. After close to 400 years of Ottoman rule, on March 25, 1821, the people of Greece rose up against the Turks and won their independence.

The Greeks have a history dating back almost 4,000 years. Greece is the cradle of democracy and its great philosophers were an invaluable inspiration for our founding fathers. In ancient Athens they found a model for the new democracy that our forefathers used to establish our democracy in America.

We are joined by blood, culture, and a profound commitment to shared values. Greek ideals of democracy and freedom inspired our