

CONGRATULATIONS TO REBEKAH
NASTAV

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to congratulate 15-year-old Rebekah Nastav of Amoret, Missouri. Miss Nastav's design for a new stamp won the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest on April 20, 2006.

Miss Nastav's acrylic painting of a redhead duck, entitled "Morning Swim," will be featured on the 2006–2007 Junior Duck Stamp. More than 34,000 Junior Duck Stamp designs were submitted from all 50 states. Miss Nastav's stamp will be made available by the Fish and Wildlife Service for \$5.00 to the general public on June 1, 2006. Proceeds from the Junior Duck Stamp sales will be used to support environmental education efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in congratulating Miss Rebekah Nastav and in wishing her luck in all her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING BRUCE FITCH

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Bruce Fitch of Frisco, Colorado, who recently retired from his post as Executive Director of Outward Bound Wilderness. As a friend and former Executive Director of Outward Bound, I am honored to have the opportunity to congratulate Bruce on his contributions to Outward Bound and to wish him well on his future endeavors.

Bruce Fitch began his stellar career at Outward Bound with a simple love of the outdoors and a desire to provide young people with a strong outdoor education. These passions led him first to a position as a river instructor for the Colorado Outward Bound School, then to a variety of administrative positions within the organization. Bruce's leadership skills and devotion to outdoor education became obvious, and he climbed the ranks until he landed at the top of the organization as Executive Director, COBS. His responsible and forward-thinking stewardship as separate Outward Bound entities merged to become Outward Bound Wilderness provided a visionary path for the organization, and ensured that young people would continue to have the opportunity to participate in Outward Bound's life-changing programs.

With the same devotion to outdoor education that Bruce showed as a young instructor and administrator for Outward Bound, he has accepted a position as the Executive Director of the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Program. I have no doubt that he will provide this organization with the same leadership and vision that he contributed to Outward Bound over the years, and I look forward to seeing what the BOEP accomplishes with Bruce at the helm.

As Bruce and his family begin this new chapter in their lives, I hope my colleagues will

join me in congratulating him on his continuing service to the outdoor education community and to those that it serves.

THE HARLEM CONGREGATIONS
FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT,
INC. AND THE NEW YORK STATE
ASSEMBLY CITATION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, again I rise to offer yet another much deserved tribute to the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) and to also enter into the RECORD the wording directly from a New York State Assembly Citation proudly bestowed upon the HCCI in recognition of the HCCI's exemplary contributions to the citizens of Harlem.

The HCCI, founded in 1986, is a diverse inter-faith consortium of more than 90 congregations established to revitalize the Central Harlem community. Needless to say, the HCCI continues to make a substantial impact in Harlem. To sing the praises of this dynamic organization I will reiterate some of the initiatives they have successfully launched and maintained over the last twenty years. The HCCI is responsible for developing low and moderate income housing, creating supportive health and human services facilities and programs, providing commercial development opportunities for local businesses, expanding cultural programs, and providing assistance to families and individuals living with disabilities by providing housing and support facilities.

On April 27, 2006 during the HCCI's 20th anniversary gala dinner celebration held at the Rockefeller Center's Rainbow Room in New York City, HCCI honored the Bank of New York with their "Community Development Award" recognizing the bank's support of HCCI's comprehensive community development initiatives in Harlem, in particular, the bank's operating support for the organization and mortgage financing to HCCI clients. The Bank of New York offers affordable mortgage loan products for first time homebuyers, homeowners seeking refinancing, home renovation, reverse mortgages and also provides construction loans to both not-for-profit and for-profit housing developers. The bank, through its program support, has been instrumental in contributing to the remarkable revitalization initiatives in Harlem.

As Lloyd Brown, executive vice president of the Bank of New York stated during the award acceptance speech . . . "We congratulate HCCI on its 20th year of community service in Harlem . . . (HCCI) is an organization that is successful in building affordable housing, creating commercial and job opportunities and providing health and social services to the people of Harlem." I join Mr. Brown to add my heartfelt congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I would like to acknowledge and enter into the RECORD the wording from the prestigious citation bestowed upon the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. by the New York State Assembly.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY CITATION

Whereas, Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI) was founded in

1986 as a consortium of 16 Harlem Churches, whose first president was the late Bishop Preston R. Washington, Sr. and today has a membership of over 90 Churches, Mosques and a Synagogue;

Whereas, HCCI began as a grassroots planning and organizing initiative, that has raised millions of dollars through ecclesiastical, entrepreneurial, and educational partnerships throughout the years. HCCI's interminable drive to improve the quality of life of all Harlemites, and dedication to community service is evidenced in the reversal of urban blight and deterioration concurrently, block by block;

Whereas, quality affordable housing has been the centerpiece of HCCI's services to the community from the beginning and to date has over 2,000 units of truly affordable housing built through innovative cross sector collaborations including elected officials, housing departments and banking institutions;

Whereas, HCCI has enhanced the livelihoods of many through adult education programs, welfare to work training literacy, trades and construction and computer technology and programming with proven success in job readiness and placement;

Whereas, HCCI has taken the leadership in addressing health issues affecting the community, most notably is the pilot program Community Organizations and Congregations for Health that offers technical assistance to faith based institutions to start non-profits that sustain HIV/AIDS prevention services;

Whereas, a Great State is only as great as those persons who give exemplary service to their community, whether through participation in voluntary programs, through unique personal achievement in their professional or other endeavors or simply through a lifetime of good citizenry; and

Whereas, such services, which is truly the lifeblood of the community and state, so often goes unrecognized and unrewarded; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that as a duly elected Member of the State Assembly of New York, I recognize that in Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement we have outstanding citizens, ones who are worthy of the esteem of both the Community and the great State of New York.

RECOGNIZING THE SESQUICENTEN-
NIAL OF THE CITY OF MON-
MOUTH, OR

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city and citizens of Monmouth, Oregon, as they prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the city's foundation. Monmouth is a city that understands the meaning of words like history, tradition, and most of all, community.

Since its incorporation in 1856 by members of what became the First Christian Church, the people of Monmouth have held firm to the values that make it an outstanding example of the All-American city. The city is home to Western Oregon University which was founded in the same year and is the oldest public university in Oregon, as well as Campbell Hall, the oldest building in the state's public higher education system. The campus of Western Oregon University is also home to one of the tallest Christmas trees in the U.S., a giant Sequoia planted by the students in 1879 that has

been nominated for inclusion in Oregon's Heritage Tree Program.

Monmouth is home to the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training which provides training facilities for both local and state law enforcement officers along with the Oregon Military Academy. The partnerships forged between the town and these institutions shows the dedication of the citizens to not just a safe community, but safe communities across Oregon and the nation.

Beautiful parks in Monmouth are large enough for city-wide festivals such as the annual Western Days Fourth of July celebration—which draw 10,000 visitors annually for the largest and longest patriotic festival in Oregon, yet intimate enough for families to gather and enjoy a day of recreation. Family-friendly activities are available year-round, from active sports programs to dance recitals to high school plays where the whole town comes out to show their support.

And so tomorrow, on this town's 150th birthday, I join the residents of Monmouth, Oregon, in celebrating the wonderful community that they have created.

APRIL 18, 2006 LETTER TO
PRESIDENT BUSH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, On April 18, 2006, I sent the following letter to President Bush regarding the United States' use of Iranian anti-government insurgent groups in fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Last week I wrote to you regarding reports that U.S. troops are conducting military operations in Iran.

There are also reports, however, that the U.S. is fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran among insurgent groups and Iranian ethnic minority groups, some of whom are operating from Iraq.

The Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PEJAK) is one such group. PEJAK is based in the Kurdish region of Iraq, a few miles from the Iranian border, and has staged attacks across the border in Iran since 2004 on behalf of Iranian Kurdish interests, according to an April 3, 2006 article in the Washington Times. PEJAK claimed to kill twenty-four Iranian soldiers in three raids against army bases in March. Iran's official news agency also reported that three Republican Guard soldiers were killed in a gun battle near the Iraqi border in late March. Iran has denounced PEJAK as a terrorist group and has accused the U.S. of funding PEJAK. According to an April 15, 2006 article in the Economist, Iranians and Turks both believe that the U.S. is supporting PEJAK. It is hard to believe that PEJAK is operating successfully from Iraq without U.S. knowledge, support and coordination.

The Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian anti-government group which has been listed as a "terrorist group" by the State Department since 1997, is another anti-government group that has received U.S. support. An article by Jim Lobe published on Antiwar.com on February 11, 2005 claims that Pentagon civilians and Vice President Cheney's office

are among those in the U.S. government who support the MEK. His article further describes how according to Philip Giraldi, a former CIA official and a source in an article about this subject in the American Conservative magazine, U.S. Special Forces have been directing members of the MEK in carrying out reconnaissance and intelligence collection in Iran from bases in Afghanistan and Balochistan, Pakistan since the summer of 2004.

Seymour Hersh's April 10, 2006 article in the New Yorker also confirms that the U.S. troops are establishing contact with anti-government ethnic-minority groups in Iran. According to a government consultant with close ties to civilians in the Pentagon, American combat troops now operating in Iran are "working with minority groups in Iran, including the Azeris, in the north, the Baluchis, in the southeast, and the Kurds, in the northeast." The consultant further says, "The troops are studying the terrain and giving away walking-around money to ethnic tribes, and recruiting scouts from local tribes and shepherds."

U.S. support for insurgent activity in Iran is not tolerable. You have claimed numerous times that the object of the so-called "War on Terror" is to target lawless insurgent groups.

Previously I asked you to immediately report to Congress on the extent of U.S. military operations currently in Iran. Now, in light of the evidence described above, I urge you to report to Congress on U.S. support for military operations in Iran by anti-Iranian insurgent groups.

It is a great breach of public trust to set this country on another path of war while keeping the Congress and the American people in the dark. I am demanding that you respond.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,

Ranking Democrat, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations.

14TH ANNUAL "STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE" FEEDS HUNGRY, RAISES PUBLIC AWARENESS OF PROBLEM

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of the 14th annual letter carriers food drive, "A Family Affair", which will occur on May 13th 2006. This is the Nation's largest one-day food drive. Last year the food drive raised 750,000 lbs of food and the letter carriers have set an even bigger goal this year. For the 14th year, they would like to raise 1,000,000 lbs of food. 60 percent of the food raised goes to children.

The "Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive" was organized in 1993 by postal employees, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers and rural carriers to collect food to raise public awareness and combat hunger. Since its inception, over 658 million pounds of food has been collected in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America and delivered to food banks by letter carriers and other Postal Service employees. Their commitment to feeding America's hungry is as unceasing as their

other commitments extolled in the Postal Service's unofficial motto: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." In this case, postal service employees have included feeding America's hungry in their "appointed rounds". God bless them for it.

Working in partnership with Campbell Soup Company and America's Second Harvest, as well as local offices of the United Way and the AFL-CIO, the Postal Service's commitment to fighting hunger is admirable.

IN HONOR OF ROBERT JAMES
WIDMER, SR.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who can only be described as truly American, Robert James Widmer, Sr. who passed away on Monday, May 1, 2006, in Newark, Ohio, under the care of hospice.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., 84, of Granville, Ohio, retired in 1985 after 38 years in sales and management with Lederle Laboratories. Born July 9, 1921, in Toledo, Ohio, to the late Elsie Hollice Pace Rubin and Girard Winfield Widmer, Mr. Widmer attended Toledo University, Columbia University and graduated from Haverford College.

During World War II, Mr. Widmer served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1946, and achieved the rank of Captain. He was assigned to the 454th Bombardment Group stationed in Italy and was shot down on his 13th mission on April 13, 1944, over Budapest and became a POW in Stalag Luft III. For his dedication and bravery, Mr. Widmer received the following medals for service to his country: two purple hearts with two clusters, Presidential Unit Citation for 454th Bombardment Group, Prisoner of War Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and the European African Middle East Campaign Medal with four battle stars.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., was a member of the Atlantis Country Club and Atlantis Golf Club, a founder and member of the 454th Bombardment Group, member of the Caterpillar Club, VFW, American Legion, Disabled American Officers, Former Prisoners of War at Stalag Luft III, Ex-Prisoners of War, Licking County SCORE, and a member and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church (USA).

This all-American man is survived by his loving wife Janet Clark Widmer; his daughters, Deborah A. Lewicki, Judith N. Widmer, and Nancy J. Freeman; his son, Robert J. Widmer, Jr. of Argyle, Texas in the 26th Congressional District; and five grandchildren, Aaron and David Lewicki, and Jay, Jocelyn and Jimmy Widmer.

Today, we honor Robert James Widmer, Sr., for his commitment to the safety of his country, his passion for life and the love of his family. He will always be remembered for his kindness and generosity to others. May he continue to serve as a role model for others in the future.