

HONORING THE COLLINSVILLE,  
ILLINOIS, LIONS CLUB

**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of the Collinsville, Illinois, Lions Club over the past 85 years. When the Collinsville Lions Club was founded in 1923, it was the only service organization in Collinsville. In the 1920s and 1930s, Collinsville was transitioning from a mining district to a mixed commercial-residential area. The Lions Club helped ensure a smooth transition then, and for the past 85 years has been an important part of the Collinsville community.

Throughout the years, this service organization has aided students in Southern Illinois interested in healthcare by providing yearly scholarships. Additionally, the Lions Club has been active in assisting the blind and visually impaired. In the past, they have provided glasses, cataract surgery, and sight-assistance dogs. Most notably, the Lions Club outfitted a reading room in the Collinsville Public Library with reading and hearing equipment, as well as hearing aids and reading glasses.

I would like to congratulate and thank the Collinsville, Illinois, Lions Club for 85 years of successful service and wish them the best of luck in the future.

MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS FOR  
PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS ACT  
OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 24, 2008*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. The 14th Congressional District of New York, which I represent, is home to 18 hospitals—perhaps more than any other district in the nation. Of course, along with hospitals come physicians who regularly report to me about the crisis of healthcare in this country. I am grateful that H.R. 6331 helps America's doctors while also significantly helping Medicare beneficiaries and hope that the other body will act swiftly on this much needed legislation.

H.R. 6331 eliminates the pending 10.6 percent cuts in the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) to physicians for the remainder of 2008 and provides a 1.1 percent update in payments for 2009. I have thousands of doctors in my district who tell me that the uncertainty of Medicare payments makes it increasingly difficult to plan for expenses. Unfortunately, we are seeing that for many doctors, the response to the uncertainty is to stop taking new patients, or even more dire, end their participation with the Medicare program. This is catastrophic for patient access and care. This bill is a positive first step toward eliminating that uncertainty and allowing time for Congress to develop reforms to the current system.

I am proud that this bill strengthens Medicare for those beneficiaries who are in great-

est need and ensures access to good quality care while remaining fiscally responsible. I thank Chairmen DINGELL and RANGEL for this important bill and urge my colleagues to support America's seniors by voting in favor of H.R. 6331.

CARIBBEAN LEADERS SHOW INITIATIVE IN PROPOSALS AT  
CARICOM CONFERENCE

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGLE**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. RANGLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD a New York Carib News article entitled: "Caribbean Countries Stress Investment Opportunities." The article recognizes Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana for their precisely drawn out proposals presented by their heads of government during the New York CARICOM Conference to the leaders of the New York financial community.

The New York CARICOM Conference held from the 19th through the 21st of June 2008 will continue to produce results because of the hard work that Caribbean leaders did in preparation for the meetings. Their proposals are a declaration of their willingness to follow through in this initiative to more clearly define the role of the small economies of the Caribbean in the world economy. I believe that their efforts are only the beginning in the aim to build mutually beneficial relationships between the U.S. and the Caribbean and a clear message that the Caribbean is ready to do whatever it takes to increase their potential for economic growth.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL TIMOTHY E.  
HIGGENS

**HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Colonel Timothy E. Higgs of North Attleboro, Massachusetts on his retirement from military service on July 7, 2008 and to recognize his exemplary 35 years of service to his country. Over his career, Col. Higgs has distinguished himself through his exceptional service and leadership skills while successfully completing a range of assignments.

Col. Higgs was educated at the United States Military Academy at West Point in New York, where he received his B.S. in Engineering. He later went on to earn his M.A. in Counseling from Ball State University in Indiana. Throughout this military career, he has maintained his civilian occupation as a Quality Assurance Engineer.

Col. Higgs began his distinguished military career on June 1, 1973. He served for five years on active duty and then went on to serve the balance of his career in the Army Reserves. He has completed the United States Army Ranger School, the United States Army Airborne School and the United States Army Infantry School. Col. Higgs has held

numerous training, operations and command assignments, and his dedication and outstanding credentials culminated with his most recent assignment to an integral homeland security mission.

From July 2004 until July 2008, Col. Higgs served as the Chief Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer for New England. In this position, he was the primary leader among a team of senior officers from the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard representing the six New England states. Over the last four years, Col. Higgs led the team's deployment in multiple exercises and real life events. The skillful leadership and the many contributions made by Col. Higgs have undoubtedly strengthened homeland defense.

Throughout his military career, Col. Higgs has been supported by his loving wife, Evelyn, and his two sons, Ryan and Eric. Now, as he begins his retirement from military service, he plans to spend more time enjoying his favorite hobby of mountain biking.

Madam Speaker, in this time of international conflict, we must take the time to recognize the courageous sacrifices and innumerable contributions of men and women like Col. Higgs who have dedicated their lives to serving our country. Their commitment reflects the best examples of love of country and we are infinitely grateful for all they do. I humbly ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Col. Timothy E. Higgs on his retirement from military service.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STEPHEN DARIUS  
AND STANLEY GIRENAS TRANS-ATLANTIC FLIGHT

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor two aviation pioneers, Stephen Darius and Stanley Girenas, on the 75th Anniversary of their historic trans-Atlantic flight that began at Municipal Airport—since renamed Midway Airport—which is located in Illinois' Third Congressional District on Chicago's Southwest Side.

Inspired by witnessing Charles A. Lindbergh's historic flight from New York to Paris, Stephen Darius returned home to Chicago after serving his country in World War I determined to fly non-stop across the Atlantic. In Chicago he met Stanley Girenas, a former Army airplane mechanic. Sharing a common Lithuanian heritage and military background, Darius proposed a first ever non-stop flight from New York to Kaunas, Lithuania. Girenas liked the idea and agreed to be Darius' copilot.

Securing adequate funding for their flight was especially difficult during the Great Depression. The two men pooled their savings and purchased a used six passenger airplane that required extensive repairs and modifications. Representatives of Chicago's Lithuanian community came to the aid of Darius and Girenas and formed a Flight Sponsors Committee in order to raise the necessary funds. The Committee raised approximately \$4,200

to support the flight, a monumental sum in 1932.

Darius and Girenas embarked on the first leg of their journey from Chicago to New York on May 7th, 1933, on their newly christened airplane, the LITUANICA. After various weather and organizational delays, the two men took off from New York bound for Lithuania on July 15th, carrying a large bag of letters destined for friends and family in Kaunas. Sadly, their plane was lost over the town of Soldin, Germany, 70 miles northeast of Berlin due to heavy storms, and they never reached Lithuania.

It is my great privilege to recognize Stephen Darius and Stanley Girenas for their historic trans-Atlantic flight and their contributions to early aviation, to the American Lithuanian community, to Chicago—which has the largest Lithuanian community outside of Lithuania, and to the United States and Lithuania.

NEW YORK CARIB NEWS  
RECOGNIZES BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD a June 24, 2008 article about Adolfo Carrion in the New York Carib News. Mr. Carrion is the Borough President of the Bronx and has served in that capacity since 2001.

In his seven years as President, Mr. Carrion has aided in bringing down unemployment and speeding up housing development in the borough. Most notable is Mr. Carrion's fresh approach to the economic mindset of those in the notoriously depressed neighborhoods of the South Bronx; he wants to "shift people's thinking about how they're going to succeed in the New York economy . . . from social intervention to economic growth and opportunity." Mr. Carrion's vision for a new way of facilitating economic growth through changing the way that people think is indicative of the innovation and economic will that Caribbean Americans contribute to the continued growth of the New York economy.

Mr. Carrion's next goal is to become the City Comptroller. He believes that the position will further help him elevate the economic standards in the borough as an integral part of the economic revival of the city as a whole. His success is yet another testament to the tenacious spirit and strong will of the millions of Caribbean immigrants that are so much a part of New York City and America.

HONORING EMMA ABERNATHY

**HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN**

OF TENNESSEE  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, this June, the Fort Campbell community honored the life and service of a trusted and treasured teacher, the late Emma Green Evans Abernathy.

A dedicated teacher for over 40 years, Emma touched countless lives, especially dur-

ing her time teaching at Marshall Elementary on Fort Campbell. She provided much wisdom, encouragement, and counsel to military children and their parents by drawing upon her own experience as a military spouse.

After earning a degree in Elementary Education from Morris College in South Carolina, Emma later studied at South Carolina State College and Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Emma actively served as a member of Soldier's Chapel on Fort Campbell, where she taught Sunday school, sang in the choir, and served as the Sunday School Superintendent. In addition, Emma contributed her time to such civic groups as the Order of the Eastern Star, the NAACP, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Along with Emma's husband, James Abernathy, her children and grandchildren, the entire Fort Campbell and Clarksville community celebrates the life of this remarkable woman.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in reflecting on the outstanding example of balancing family, business and community service that Emma set. Many Tennesseans are better for having known her.

TRIBUTE TO RECIPIENTS OF CONGRESSIONAL AWARD GOLD MEDAL

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, July 9, 2008*

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, last month I was honored to participate in a ceremony honoring four local Kansas residents for their contributions to local communities and commitment to personal development. Honorees received the 2008 Congressional Award Gold Medal during a reception on Capitol Hill.

I was proud to help celebrate the achievements of these outstanding young men and women and honor them with this distinguished award. Their dedication to helping others and self-improvement is not only inspiring, but it reminds us that changing the world starts with each of us.

Sydney Ayers, one of today's recipients and a resident of Leawood, spoke during the June 19th ceremony, providing reflections on her achievement and the importance of community service.

Earning the Congressional Award Gold Medal requires a significant commitment, in both time and energy. Each participant must spend two years or more completing at least 400 hours of community service, 200 hours of both personal development and physical fitness activities and a 4-night Expedition or Exploration. The Congressional Award Gold Medal is the pinnacle of these achievements.

The 2008 Kansas 3rd District recipients are: Sydney Ayers, Leawood, worked with children and the elderly, volunteering at several locations across the United States and Mexico. She performed in plays, worked as the backstage manager for several productions and took ballroom dance lessons, in addition to playing high school tennis, USTA tennis and managing the boys' high school team. She also planned and completed a 5-day adventure in the Alaskan wilderness.

Benjamin Connell, Lenexa, volunteered at Lakeview Village Nursing Home and the Boys

and Girls Club, mentoring young children, facilitating anti-drug/alcohol lessons and tutoring. He also worked in the career development office at Kansas State University, learning how to teach and counsel students. Ben focused on exercising and participating in intramural sports and backpacked at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

Christopher Connell, Lenexa, raised funds for charitable causes, mentored young children and helped the elderly with a variety of tasks in addition to working as a waiter at an assisted living facility. Cross Country running and lifting weights improved his 5K running time. Chris also spent six nights in the wilderness at Double H Ranch, which is associated with Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

Nicholas Connell, Lenexa, shared his musical talent by preparing a repertoire of music, including Peter and the Wolf, on the oboe and holding public performances in several different venues. Nick's creative talents also include writing, for which he won a 1st place prize for a piece of short fiction. He pushed himself physically by running on a treadmill and consistently exercising on an elliptical machine, in addition to hiking over 60 miles at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

I am pleased to include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles from the Kansas City Star highlighting this award and the outstanding young Kansans who received it.

[From the Kansas City Star, June 28, 2008]

LENEXA BROTHERS WIN CONGRESSIONAL AWARD GOLD MEDAL  
(By Alexia Lang)

Hard work and dedication earned three Lenexa brothers the 2008 Congressional Award Gold Medal.

Benjamin, Christopher and Nicholas Connell traveled to Capitol Hill for the award ceremony recently; they were representing three out of four Kansas residents to receive the award. Sydney Ayers, 17, of Leawood, was the fourth recipient.

Congressman Dennis Moore participated in the ceremony, citing their achievements as inspiring.

"Their dedication to helping others and to self-improvement is not only inspiring, but it reminds us that changing the world starts with each of us," Moore said.

In order to qualify for the medal, applicants must spend two or more years completing at least 400 hours of community service, 200 hours of personal development, 200 hours of physical fitness activities and a four-night expedition or exploration.

Nicholas Connell, 22, said his mother found out about the award and he decided to pursue it in 1999.

"It so happened that a lot of the requirements for the Congressional Award coincided with things I was already doing for Scouting, or with school activities, etc.," he said.

Nicholas prepared and performed music on the oboe for several public performances, including charity concerts at local schools and assisted living centers.

He also was able to gather and send school supplies to children in need in Mexico.

To satisfy his four-night expedition or exploration requirement, Nicholas hiked over 60 miles at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

Benjamin Connell, 24, also began the program in 1999. He said he was attracted to the structure and direction for setting goals the program would bring to his life.

"It also provided accountability in attaining my goals because my advisors tracked my progress," he added.

Benjamin spent most of his community service time at Lakeview Village Retirement