

the brutal rule of the communists in Eastern Europe only further desecrated the final resting places of millions of Jews. HFPJC is trying to right the wrongs of the preceding decades by working with communities throughout Europe to preserve the graves of their ancestors.

In my work with HFPJC on preservation of cemeteries in Slovakia, I have learned about the Marcelova Jewish Cemetery Project and the role the RWA Slovakia company played in enabling the cemetery's preservation. I would like to share this important story of generosity and interfaith understanding with the House.

The Marcelova Jewish cemetery site, after the Holocaust, became a deserted wasteland and passed from community to municipal to private ownership. RWA corporation owned the Marcelova Jewish cemetery lot for at least the past decade. As a burial ground, the Marcelova cemetery is sacred to people of the Jewish faith. HFPJC, acting on behalf of some highly concerned Marcelova descendants, attempted to secure the return and appropriate preservation of the cemetery before it is accidentally desecrated through construction or development.

After individual meetings between both the Marcelova mayor and several managing officers of RWA, in which all displayed exceptional courtesy, consideration, and understanding of the humanitarian significance of the issue, RWA agreed to allow the fencing and preservation of the cemetery site, adjoining their office complex. I have seen photographs of the restoration of the cemetery and would like to offer my highest commendation to RWA Slovakia for their work with HFPJC to preserve the Marcelova Jewish cemetery.

Madam Speaker, this is a generous and humane gesture on the part of RWA Slovakia, and is worthy of public recognition. Therefore, with this statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of the House of Representatives of the United States, I officially commend the RWA Corporation of Slovakia for its preservation of the Marcelova Jewish cemetery.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, November 6, 2007, I could not be present for rollcall votes 500 to 508, due to a previous commitment to a distinguished constituent of mine.

Had I been present, I would have cast the following votes: "yes" on rollcall vote 500, 501, 504, 505, 507, 508 and "nay" on rollcall vote 502, 503, 506.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL VALLEY CHEESE

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Pearl Valley Cheese in Fresno, Ohio is celebrating 80 years of business since 1928; and

Whereas, Pearl Valley Cheese has developed a fund raising program for local 4-H, FFA, church and nonprofit community groups; and

Whereas, Pearl Valley Cheese has won a number of coveted awards, including a silver medal at the World Cheese Competition for their smoked Swiss and a number of awards at the Ohio State Fair: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend Pearl Valley Cheese for their unwavering commitment, dedication and contributions to their community and country in recognition of their 80 years.

HONORING DOCTOR RALPH MESSO

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. FOSSELLA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a constituent who has faithfully served the people of Staten Island for many years, Dr. Ralph Messo.

Born on Staten Island in 1961, Dr. Messo was inspired by the compassion and caring nature of the physicians he encountered as a young boy. After graduating from Wagner College, Dr. Messo pursued and was awarded a degree in Osteopathic Medicine from the University of New England in 1989. Dr. Messo was drawn to osteopathic medicine and its holistic approach to treatment—care that extended beyond the patient to his or her entire family.

After medical school, Dr. Messo returned to New York to care for the residents of Staten Island. Over the years, he has earned the respect and gratitude of my constituents across the Island through his generous spirit, his caring nature and unyielding commitment to health care in the borough. Dr. Messo's gentle demeanor and reassuring tone provide comfort to all his patients—the new mothers and fathers struggling to navigate the sometimes choppy waters of parenthood . . . and seniors who may need extra reassurance and a sympathetic ear.

He is currently the president of the Richmond County Medical Society, serves as councilor to the American College of Physicians, is an attending faculty member at both of Staten Island's medical centers, and sits on the Medical Advisory Board of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. He served as the assistant director of the Internal Medicine/Pediatric residency program at Staten Island University Hospital from 1993–2007 and was recently appointed Adjunct Clinical professor at Tourocom, a new medical school in Harlem, New York. In addition, Dr. Messo has been given The Consumer's Research Council of America's "Top Physician" award, the Peter Barbero Humanitarian Award, and was named "America's Top Pediatrician" in 2007 and 2008.

Dr. Messo continues to give back to his profession, lending his years of experience to young medical students and residents—the physicians of tomorrow who work alongside him, share in his knowledge and learn that caring for a patient is as much about listening as it is about treating.

For his decades of service to the Staten Island community, I ask that my colleagues join

with me in honoring Dr. Ralph Messo and thanking him for his dedication to health care.

CONGRATULATING JAKE DEITCHLER FOR MAKING THE 2008 U.S. OLYMPIC WRESTLING TEAM

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate Jake Deitchler of Anoka County, Minnesota for qualifying for the 2008 U.S. Olympic Wrestling team. Jake is a three-time State champion from Anoka High School and will be attending the University of Minnesota in the fall.

Jake's path to joining the Olympic team was certainly not an easy one. Competing in the 2008 Olympic Team Trials in the Greco-Roman style, Jake defeated a two-time World Bronze medalist in the semifinals and was then victorious in a hard fought final to earn a spot on the team. Just 18 years old, only two other high school wrestlers have ever qualified for the U.S. Olympics, and even more remarkably, not one wrestler his age has qualified since 1976.

Jake's success in the Olympic Trials carries on Minnesota's proud tradition of Greco-Roman wrestling. Since 1968, at least one man has made the U.S. Olympic Wrestling team from the North Star state. Jake will be one of 16 wrestlers representing the United States in the Beijing Games taking place in China in August.

Congratulations, Jake, and America looks forward to you bringing home the gold. We are all proud of your tremendous accomplishment and our Nation wishes you and your teammates the best of luck in Beijing.

H.R. 6307, SUPPORTING THE "FOSTERING CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS ACT"

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, the House of Representatives recently passed H.R. 6307, the Fostering Connections to Success Act, sponsored by Representatives JIM McDERMOTT and JERRY WELLER. This bill is a strong first step in reforming the foster care system, and it includes provisions supporting kinship caregivers that I have championed for years. Specifically, the bill includes the 3 core elements of my bill, H.R. 2188, the Kinship Caregiver Support Act, which I introduced with Representative TIM JOHNSON: (1) it allows states to use Federal funds to support family caregivers raising relatives in the foster care system; (2) it provides funding to establish kinship navigator programs; and (3) it requires notification of relatives when a child enters the foster care system.

These provisions are critical to supporting our children and youth. Nationwide, almost 19 percent of kinship care providers live in poverty, and 30 percent to 40 percent of children

in foster care have chronic medical problems. Subsidized guardianship, like the Federal adoption assistance program, provides needed support to these kinship caregivers to afford appropriate care for these vulnerable children.

Further, kinship navigator programs serve as critical supports to the millions of grandparent caregivers who preventively took on the care of their grandchildren to keep them out of the foster care system. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately 2.1 million children living with grandparents or other relatives with no parent present; however, only about 145,000 children in the foster care system live with kinship caregivers. This means that just under 2 million children are being cared for outside of the system and do not have access to subsidized guardianship payments. We must promote kinship navigator programs to help these caregivers understand and access supports to support our youngest citizens.

Research clearly shows that kinship foster care families are safer, more stable placements that are more likely to keep children connected with their siblings and communities than non-relative placements. Further, these placements are cost effective. In Illinois, cost studies found a projected savings of approximately \$48 million over 10 years compared to a matched control group that did not have this option. For these reasons, it is imperative that we promote kinship caregiving within the foster care system, and required notification to relatives is an important step to this end.

The issue of grandparents raising grandchildren is very significant for Illinois and for Chicago specifically. My Congressional District has the highest percentage of children living with kinship caregivers in the U.S., with two other Chicago districts following closely behind. The legislation promises critical financial support to family members raising relatives in foster care. We have more to do, but I applaud the House of Representatives for passing this bill that will do so much for so many.

**COMMENDING THE FIREFIGHTERS
FROM CALIFORNIA AND
THROUGHOUT THE UNITED
STATES FOR THEIR COURAGEOUS
ACTIONS AND SACRIFICES
IN FIGHTING THE CALIFORNIA
WILDFIRES**

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the brave firefighters from across California and around the country who have courageously risked their lives to halt the spread of wildfires that continue to devastate California. The dedication and determination of our Nation's first responders and firefighters have helped dramatically contain the nearly 1,800 wildfires that have burned over 829,000 acres, or 1,300 square miles, across California.

These fires have been the most intense and widespread in California's history, and thousands of brave men and women have honored the call to protect our state from these fires. More than 150 firefighters from Sonoma Coun-

ty, in my Congressional District have responded to the fires, and firefighters from Santa Rosa served more than 22 days each, totaling 4,000 hours of their time in June. More than 80 Marin firefighters and other support personnel have been dispatched to fight fires throughout Northern California. In addition to the unrivaled contributions of the California's firefighters, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger called up 2,400 National Guard troops join the fire crews. Furthermore, firefighters from 41 states, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have all offered their support, resources, and manpower during this crisis.

The bravery of these committed first responders and the tremendous sacrifices they made to help fight California's fires have not gone unnoticed. Our firefighters deserve the highest commendation for putting themselves in the line of danger. That's why I am proud to support H. Res. 1322, a resolution honoring the firefighters from California and throughout the United States for their heroism and sacrifices in fighting the California wildfires. These brave men and women deserve no less.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, July 16, 2008, I missed the rollcall vote No. 507, had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote No. 507: "nay" (On Passage of H.R. 415 to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Taunton River in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System).

A TRIBUTE TO POLK ROBISON

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time to remember Polk Robison, a lifelong supporter of District 19's Texas Tech University. Mr. Robison passed away June 27, 2008, at the age of 96.

Polk Robison was best known for his service to Texas Tech Athletics, where he was a champion basketball player, coach, and athletic director. Mr. Robison's devotion to his alma mater helped push Texas Tech Athletics into the Southwest and Big 12 Conferences and into the national spotlight.

Born in Springfield, Tennessee, Mr. Robison and his family moved to Texas when he was 14. He graduated from Lubbock High School and then from Texas Tech in 1934, earning not only a degree in journalism, but also three consecutive Border Conference basketball championships as a center.

Mr. Robison's love of sports led to an early career in coaching football at Burk Burnett High School, which soon turned to working for General Motors in Houston. His passion for athletics and Texas Tech brought him back to the

university in 1941 as an assistant football and basketball coach. The following year, Mr. Robison moved into the head basketball coach position and remained there for 18 seasons, accumulating a record of 249–196, three Border Conference titles, and a Southwest Conference championship—ranking him second in all-time victories of any Texas Tech coach.

His talents extended beyond the basketball program. Mr. Robison served a short stint as the university's tennis coach, leading the team to a Southwest Conference championship.

He made a gradual change into a ten-year career as Texas Tech's athletic director and retired in 1977 while serving as the athletics administrator for finance and development. He continued to attend Red Raider basketball games until he was 95.

Mr. Robison's devotion overflowed to the community. He served the Lubbock Rotary Club for 40 years, and the Westminster Presbyterian Church named its park in honor of Mr. Robison, a church elder, and his wife, Stephanie.

His student jersey number—appropriately, the number one—hangs retired in the university's United Spirit Arena. Former head basketball coach Bob Knight permanently designated a Polk Robison chair next to the team's bench at every home game, bearing the name of this university legend.

Mr. Robison cared deeply for his family: his wife, the late Stephanie Corley Robison and his three children, Bill, Kay, and Anne. He also made a lasting impression on his players for his professionalism, caring nature, and motivation. He enjoyed seeing them not only grow as athletes, but grow into men.

Those from District 19, including myself, will miss Mr. Robison's enthusiasm for life, dedication to improvement, and tenacity in making Texas Tech a respected and outstanding institution.

**TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS
INTERNATIONAL**

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 40th anniversary of an organization that has profoundly enriched the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities and society as a whole through sports competition. Special Olympics International has promoted the benefits of sports competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities since 1968, when Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded the Special Olympics and convened its first International Games in Chicago.

Two years later, in 1971, Special Olympics Missouri opened its doors and started programs for Missourians with intellectual disabilities. For more than 36 years, Special Olympics Missouri has been providing sports training and competitions for athletes ages 8 and up.

The first Missouri Summer Games were held in 1975, that same year Missouri Special Olympics sent its first athletes to International Summer Games. Except for a brief hiatus in Columbia, Missouri—my hometown—the State Summer Games have been held at Fort Leonard Wood.