

In his capacity as visionary and servant of Charlotte County, the Reverend Dr. Brooks has made his church part of the Emergency Shelter National Board Program by providing food and shelter to residents in times of disaster. He has worked tirelessly to create non-profit organizations that help children and families, promote educational opportunities for his congregation, and serves as a member of the National Baptist Convention of America in addition to being Florida's representative for the Board of Evangelism.

Dr. Brooks is the proud husband of Karen and the father of three daughters Tonya, Carla and Kayla.

I am proud to recognize Dr. Brooks for his great service to both Charlotte County and the First Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. Our community is truly blessed to have Dr. Brooks as a resident. I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Brooks for his service to our community and our country.

HONORING MR. ED SIEGMANN

**HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of New York's first congressional district to mourn the passing of a beloved constituent and treasure of the Long Island community, Mr. Ed Siegmann.

Born in Ridgewood Queens, New York in 1919, Ed was an exemplary citizen who served honorably in the U.S. Army during World War II. Upon his return, Ed became a tireless advocate for the interests of seniors on Long Island, perhaps most effectively as the President of the Suffolk County United East End Senior's Council.

Frustrated by the lack of media coverage concerning health care and other challenges faced by seniors in Suffolk County, New York, Ed approached publishers with an idea to write about them himself. As a result, Ed's column in the Suffolk Life newspaper, "The Upper Half," was born in 2000. The following year, Ed had the distinction of being the only Long Island resident to be awarded the prestigious Beneficiary Services Certificate of Merit.

Ed's tireless work to promote economic and social justice for the elderly and disabled were boundless. He was the founder and vice president of Southold TaxPac; president of the Southold-Mattituck Senior Citizens Club; a member of Seniors Against Discrimination; and a member of Southold's Senior Housing Taskforce. He worked in these organizations to improve the lives of seniors by working to reduce taxes, and to promote affordable health care and moderately priced senior housing.

Indeed, Ed was a local hero who was a shining example of a concerned and active citizen who was among our community's most effective champions for the rights of the elderly. It is entirely appropriate that he is honored by the naming of the Ed Siegmann Community Room at the Southold Town Human Resources Center.

Madam Speaker, it was truly an honor to work with Ed and to call him a friend. On behalf of a grateful community, I thank Ed

Siegmann for his many enduring contributions to eastern Long Island, where he will always be missed but whose memory will be forever cherished.

HONORING THE 111TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION ASSOCIATION

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 111th anniversary of the Washington Birthday Celebration Association (WBCA) in Laredo, Texas.

The Washington Birthday Celebration is a nearly month-long event held in Laredo, Texas. It is the largest celebration of its kind in the United States that honors the birthday of George Washington, the first President of the United States. The festival receives over 400,000 attendees, and consists of various celebrations including the Society of Martha Washington Colonial Pageant & Ball, Princess Pocahontas Pageant and Ball, parades, a carnival, an air show, and live concerts.

The WBCA was founded in 1898 by the patriotic Improved Order of the Red Men, Local Chapter Yaqui Tribe No. 59, whose members included prominent Laredoans of both Mexican and American ancestry. The first celebration was a great success, and its popularity grew when the Washington Birthday Celebration Association of Laredo, Inc., received its state charter in 1923. In the following year, in 1924, the Celebration featured its first Colonial Pageant, which showcased thirteen young women from Laredo, representing the thirteen original colonies. The International Bridge Ceremony is the welcoming ceremony between officials and dignitaries from Mexico and United States as a sign of international good will between the two nations.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the 111th anniversary of the Washington Birthday Celebration Association in Laredo, Texas.

HONORING MEMBERS OF EASTERN CONNECTICUT

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the heroic efforts of four members of eastern Connecticut's community: Robert Butler, John Roberts, and Shelly and Greg Erb. These individuals' selfless and quick, smart actions saved the lives of two kayakers from the frigid waters of the Noank River. On Friday, February 7, 2008, Robert Butler and John Roberts will be presented with a Meritorious Public Service Award by Rear Admiral Timothy Sullivan and Captain Dan Ronan. Shelly and Greg Erb will be presented with a Certificate of Merit.

On January 30, 2008, Shelly Erb was driving to her home in Noank, Connecticut, when

she spotted a stranded kayaker on the bank of the Noank River. Once home, she immediately notified her husband, Greg Erb who called 911 and the Noank Village Boatyard. Shelly and Greg's quick, decisive actions to notify both emergency responders and the Noank Village Boatyard would ultimately prove to save both kayakers' lives.

Employees of the Noank Village Boatyard, Robert Butler and John Roberts received the call from Mr. Erb. The waters were near freezing, and understanding that prolonged exposure posed serious life-threatening risks, the men immediately launched a boat to find the kayakers. Soon after, Robert and John were able to locate the kayakers, one of whom remained in the water, nearly unconscious. Robert and John rescued the kayaker from the water and helped both to a waiting ambulance. Both kayakers survived.

The events that unfolded on January 30 could have very possibly ended in tragedy. Instead, our community witnessed the very best of its neighbors. I ask my colleagues to join with me and my constituents in recognizing and saluting the heroic efforts of Robert Butler, John Roberts, and Shelly and Greg Erb.

HONORING FORT DAVIS, TEXAS ON BEING LISTED IN THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION'S 2008 DOZEN DISTINCT DESTINATIONS

**HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise here today to recognize the designation of Fort Davis, Texas, as one of the locations listed in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2008 Dozen Distinct Destinations. Making it only the fourth locality ever in Texas to receive this distinction.

For the past eight years, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has produced an annual list of twelve communities throughout the United States that provide visitors with unique experiences that bring to life the richness and diversity of America's cultural and historical heritage. This year, the organization has recognized Fort Davis, Texas, one of the many historic communities in my congressional district, as a place of distinction because of its exceptional character and history.

From 1854 to 1891, troops stationed at the post protected emigrants, freighters, mail coaches, and travelers on the San Antonio-El Paso Road. Because Fort Davis is one of the best remaining examples of a frontier military post in the American Southwest, this community serves as a vivid reminder of the significant role played by the military in the settlement and development of the western frontier.

Through great effort and a true devotion, the residents of Fort Davis have worked hard to preserve its historic, cultural, and scenic uniqueness. Aside from undertaking important restoration projects, members of the community preserve Fort Davis' culture through reenactments of life during the 19th century on the western frontier. In so preserving its character and by protecting its serene landscape, visitors from all over can enjoy and learn about the history of Fort Davis in a truly realistic and dynamic environment that is sure to make an indelible impression.

I thank the National Trust for Historic Preservation for honoring Fort Davis this year, and I further extend my gratitude and congratulations to the community of Fort Davis for its dedication to preserving its historic fabric and spirit.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 31, H. Res. 943, remembering the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986. I was absent due to inclement weather grounding flights from Wisconsin.

Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye".

#### RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF PAUL J. ABBATE

#### HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the life and service of Paul J. Abbate, former Guam Superior Court Presiding Judge. Judge Abbate passed away on Saturday, February 2, 2008 in Pomfret, Maryland at the age of 88.

Judge Abbate served our Nation as a Commander in the U.S. Navy's Judge Advocate General Corps for over 20 years. Upon his retirement from the Navy, he accepted an appointment by Governor of Guam Manuel F.L. Guerrero to be the Attorney General of Guam. With the retirement of Presiding Judge Joaquin C. Perez in 1969, Governor Guerrero appointed Paul Abbate to serve as a Judge for the Superior Court of Guam, where he served for 19 years, 13 of which were as the Presiding Judge. As Presiding Judge, he initiated plans for the construction of the new Guam Judicial Center, the complex that today houses the Superior Court and Supreme Courts of Guam. Judge Abbate was noted for his well-reasoned rulings, but also for his fairness and impartiality in the court. Following his retirement from Guam's judicial system, he served as Director of Governor Joseph Washington Liaison Office in Washington, DC.

Judge Abbate's service to Guam was evident in more than just the courtroom. He committed his life to the Catholic Church as a deacon for the Archdiocese of Hagåtña and in his church in the mainland. He assisted in the major renovations and improvements to the Dulce Nombre de María Cathedral Basilica in Guam's capital of Hagåtña and helped in the preparations for the visit of Pope John Paul II on March 1, 1981.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I extend our sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to his son Michael S. Abbate and his wife Cindy, his daughter Maria T. Rossi and her husband, John, his six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Judge Abbate will always be remembered by the people of Guam as a dedicated member of the legal commu-

nity and a devoted member of the Guam's Catholic community.

#### IN RESPONSE TO ATTACKS ON THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE 9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

#### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss an unwarranted and downright hostile attack on my constituents and the people of Berkeley, CA by Republicans on the floor of the House earlier today. I'm here tonight, Mr. Speaker, to set the record straight and to respond to their false claims and distortions.

Madam Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me how some people will go to any length to score political points. That is what happened here on the House floor earlier today when several Republican members said they wanted to strip the people of Berkeley, CA of much-needed Federal funding.

Let us be clear: punishing the people of Berkeley for political gain is unfair and simply plain wrong. This is nothing more than grandstanding and posturing on behalf of Republicans who want to make a political point for their own benefit.

I want to begin by talking about the primary target of the Republican campaign against the people of Berkeley, and in this case, the children of Berkeley. Republicans claimed that one earmark was for the creation of organic school lunches in the Berkeley School District. This characterization of a school lunch initiative developed by the Chez Panisse Foundation is dishonest.

This school lunch initiative aims to revolutionize school lunch by treating lunch as an important part of the day, as well as integrating lessons about wellness, sustainability and nutrition into the academic curriculum.

The funding will aid in the development of a program that would treat lunch as an academic subject for all public school students in the district, from kindergarten through high school. These funds will support a comprehensive approach to improved health and health education in the public schools that will empower students with a sense of responsibility for themselves and their health. It's about nutrition for our children.

Next I want to talk about their efforts to attack the University of California and the memory of a great leader in this body, former Congressman Bob Matsui. This funding will be used for UC Berkeley's Institute of Government Studies for the creation of the Matsui Center for Politics and Public Service.

The Matsui Center will develop a curriculum that will encourage students to think about politics and public service not as separate activities, but as a continuum of civic engagement. As a great public university, Berkeley has a special obligation to train the next generation of leaders, as well as to help them develop the political and policy skills that will enable them to participate constructively in public life. The program will also have educational components in Sacramento and Washington, DC—capitol cities which were touchstones for Congressman Bob Matsui's long public service career. It's about education.

Now allow me to turn my attention to an item that the Republicans did not want to tell you about—funding for the disabled and the Ed Roberts Campus. This funding will be used for the construction of the Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART Station in Berkeley. The Ed Roberts Campus is the vision of eight disability organizations in California which have joined forces to create a multi-tenant facility. The facility will serve as an intermodal transit center, as well as a transportation information and travel-training center for seniors and people with disabilities.

It will provide services in a fully accessible, technologically-advanced environment located at BART's Ashby stop. The campus will serve approximately 2,000 disabled people per week, most of whom will arrive by public transportation.

The Ed Roberts Campus is an innovative approach to transit oriented development and will be the first disability service center at a major fully-accessible transit hub. As a result, people throughout the region will have access to programs that will enable them to obtain needed health care education, job training and other services in order to achieve their life and work goals. It's about providing quality services for the disabled!

Finally, I want to mention another item that the Republican supporters of this measure will not mention—that their bill would intentionally undermine the safety and security of the people of Berkeley by denying critical funding for Berkeley public safety agencies' interoperability.

This particular funding will be used to update Berkeley's public safety computer dispatch and communications system to ensure systems interoperability. It will support critical inter-jurisdictional communications and coordination needs. This funding will help to enhance Berkeley's ability to maintain a secure and interoperable computer and communications system and maximize sustainable use after a natural or human made disaster. It's about public safety!

Madam Speaker, the statements by Republicans on the floor of the House earlier today were nothing but a shameful attack on my constituents in order to score perceived political points. It is just plain wrong and it is a real shame that it is happening on the floor of this House.

I have said it before and I will say it again, I will fight to defend the constituents of my district and their right to receive Federal funds.

#### ON THE LIFE OF VI STOIA

#### HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, today I would like to offer a special remembrance for a unique individual, Vi Stoia. Viorel G. "Vi" Stoia was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota in 1924. He lived there all of his life, save for when he attended the University of Minnesota earning his degree in business administration, and when he served in the United States Navy from 1942 to 1946 as a Chief Petty Officer. Vi married Donna Marie Maurseth in 1949 and they made their home in Aberdeen, raising their five children—Marsha, Nancy, Greg, James and Thomas.