

service, as he is named this years Parma Democrat Volunteer of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR JUDITH
HANLON

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pastor Judith Hanlon of the Hadwen Park Church, a United Church of Christ Open and Affirming parish, located in Worcester, Massachusetts. She will be formally ordained on Sunday, September 14, 2008.

Pastor Judith Hanlon has distinguished herself as a passionate champion for equal rights by fighting for social justice in the Worcester community and abroad. Raised in Indiana along with six siblings, she was greatly influenced by her upbringing in the Pentecostal church in which her father was a minister. She has two daughters and raised them as a single mother, a noteworthy inspiration to her parishioners. Her deep faith is complemented by her amazing talent and love of music. For 25 years, Pastor Hanlon directed and accompanied singing groups at the Salem Covenant Church in Worcester, Massachusetts. Playing the piano at age 5 and writing music by the age of 9, her musical talent helps to promote her faith and desire for justice. She has produced two CDs of social justice Christian music. After retiring at the age of 45 from her marketing representative career at Verizon—formerly ATT, Pastor Hanlon then pursued her second calling as a pastor.

Serving as the pastor of the Hadwen Park Church since 2000, she quickly and easily gained the love of her community by welcoming all persons with her witty and devoted personality, her positive attitude, and celebratory style. Pastor Judy is courageous in her work for social justice, articulate, inspiring, and often very funny with her messages of love, faith, and overcoming challenges to find the positive side of life. And she is respectful of all people—even in times of disagreement. She is extremely well known for her commitment to and celebration of diversity. Gracelift is her signature e-mail name; it appropriately depicts Pastor Judy and her work.

Under her leadership, Hadwen Park Church proudly moved to become an Open and Affirming parish to show and tell the world that “all are welcome” at HPC—people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation, ages, family make up and physical mobility challenges. She led the way to cast—wide open—the welcoming doors. As a result, the church membership has more than doubled, to the point where the former little white church at the corner of Knox and Clover Streets in Worcester could not accommodate the growing stream of Sunday attendees or committee meetings and events. As such she inspired and believed that the mighty little congregation could achieve a million-dollar capital campaign and expansion project. She was right; the project was successfully completed within a short, and miraculous, 2-year time frame. With the ongoing work of the church, it looks like another expansion is needed for meeting rooms and child care needs, the growing food

pantry and more. Staying current with outreach and news, through technology, is important to Pastor Judy; a Web site was created at her suggestion and “A Place of Grace” e-mails are disseminated to hundreds of parishioners and colleagues weekly to promote the important work of the church.

Further, the church family has been active in the fight against HIV/AIDS; provided assistance to Hurricane Katrina and Rita victims through the Hope Shall Bloom Project; organized and inspired youth to do service work in South America and in their community; doubled its food pantry to be able to serve the hungry; and provided assistance to countless people in need from the congregation and in the Greater Worcester area. Pastor Hanlon has also been a tireless advocate for the rights of the GLBT community in her parish, the community and the State. Pastor Judy has been a leader in the effort to promote equal marriage and helped spearhead the “Equal Marriage: The Freedom to Marry Coalition in Massachusetts” initiative. Recently, several immigrants, fleeing from abuse in their country of Jamaica because of their sexual orientation, turned to a safe and welcoming haven with Pastor Judy and Hadwen Park church. As a result, she now helps to lead local efforts to promote human rights for GLBT people in Jamaica. For her work on these issues she was awarded the Safe Homes “People of Courage Award” in 2006.

Madam Speaker, I commend this amazing, grace-filled, and inspiring leader of faith for her dedication to making the Worcester area and our world a better place, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in offering her congratulations on her ordination.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SONGS
OF LIFE INTERNATIONAL CHO-
RAL FESTIVAL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Bulgaria is an ally of the United States, and this Congress has recognized the Bulgarian people for preserving and continuing their tradition of ethnic and religious tolerance. Most recently, the House of Representatives passed House Resolution 1383, which recognized the 100th anniversary of the independence of Bulgaria.

Through a grassroots movement organized by Kalin and Sharon Tchonev of Lexington, South Carolina, the American-Bulgarian partnership continues to strengthen. Kalin and Sharon have founded the Songs of Life International Choral Festival to be held this November 21st through December 1st. The festival will include performances in Plovdiv and Sofia, Bulgaria, as well as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Israel. It marks the 65th anniversary of the historic rescue of Bulgaria's Jews during the Holocaust and serves as an opportunity to connect citizens from these nations on cultural, educational, and spiritual levels. Songs of Life will bring together choirs, musicians, educators, and students from around the world.

Just as our sister-city relationships serve to advance friendships and understanding among

Americans and Bulgarians, the organizers of this festival hope and believe that it will have as positive an impact on an international level. Not only are the United States and Bulgaria allies, but we share common values and a belief in freedom. The Songs of Life International Choir Festival is a platform to share these values with the rest of the world.

I wish to commend Kalin and Sharon Tchonev for their hard work in strengthening the partnership between the United States and Bulgaria.

IN HONOR OF THE EL HASA
TEMPLE #28

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the El Hasa Temple #28 Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, A.E.A.O.N.M.S., on the occasion of their one-hundredth anniversary. The members of El Hasa Temple #28 celebrate this grand anniversary with their 46th annual Potentate Ball. I also rise in honor of El Hasa's current Illustrious Potentate, Andrew D. White, and in recognition of his outstanding leadership and dedication to the community.

El Hasa Temple #28 A.E.A.O.N.M.S. was founded on November 19, 1908, when it obtained its Charter from the Imperial Council. The Charter was delivered to Charles E. Gordon, who became El Hasa's first Illustrious Potentate. On the occasion of El Hasa's one-hundredth anniversary, I also rise in honor of H.H. Franklin, the 25th Illustrious Potentate, F.D. Armstead, the 50th Illustrious Potentate, and LaVon McCall, the 75th Illustrious Potentate. El Hasa is part of an international fraternity built on the values of fellowship, philanthropy and community. During Christmas each year, members of El Hasa Temple #28 distribute Christmas baskets to the economically disadvantaged in the Greater Cleveland Area.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of El Hasa Temple #28, as they celebrate their one-hundredth anniversary during their annual Potentate Ball, and in recognition of the outstanding community work its members contribute to the Greater Cleveland Area.

RECOGNIZING NEAL SUNDEEN,
JOHN ALDECOA AND PAUL
GRIFFEN, AMERICAN LEGION DE-
PARTMENT OF ARIZONA, ADVOCACY FOR THE G.I. BILL

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Neal Sundeen, Mr. John Aldecoa and Mr. Paul Griffen, three individuals from my district whose leadership roles in The American Legion was instrumental in building broad bi-partisan support for the new 21st Century G.I. Bill of Rights. These three men deserve the admiration of their state and nation for their efforts to improve the lives of

Veterans. I commend them for their tireless service and sacrifice to this country.

This year, with the passage of the G.I. Bill, 1.5 million post-9/11 military veterans will have access to a college education. This legislation will help fulfill the obligation America has to those with honorable wartime service. As a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee and the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations I regard this as the most important piece of veteran's legislation in a generation.

I commend Mr. Sundeen, Mr. Aldecoa and Mr. Griffen for their selfless dedication to the advancement of this legislation. These gentlemen have worked in the State of Arizona, as well in Washington, to make their elected officials fully aware of the importance of this bill.

The grassroots efforts of these three men will help this new generation of returning servicemembers make a more successful transition back to civilian life. This will not only benefit those veterans, it will also provide a tremendous boost to our nation's economy and productivity. The new G.I. Bill keeps our promise to provide better educational opportunities to the men and women who have valiantly protected this country and its liberties.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing these gentlemen for their efforts and their continued dedication to America's veterans.

MR. BRUCE LEETZ AND NORTH
COAST DISTRIBUTING

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I stand before you today to recognize one of Northwest Indiana's exemplary companies. For nearly seventy years, North Coast Distributing has been a leader in the Northwest Indiana business sector, and while the company has seen much success, it is what they have done to give back to the community that makes them so vital to Northwest Indiana. For the third straight year, North Coast, in conjunction with Ivy Tech Community College of Northwest Indiana, will be providing the community with their "Fall Innovators Cafe" in an effort to share their expertise in operating a successful organization with regional and community leaders. This special event will take place on Thursday, September 25, 2008.

A local, family-owned beer wholesaler since 1939, North Coast Distributing, formerly Valpo Beverages, Incorporated, has become one of the premier distributors in the Midwest. The success they have seen, under the leadership of President and Chief Executive Officer Bruce Leetz, is in large part due to the core values of North Coast: Passion for business, Respect for each other and surroundings, Integrity to demonstrate the highest ethical and moral standards, Commitment to achieve goals, and in Excelling in everything they do. This commitment to excellence has led to many accolades at the local, state, and national levels for North Coast, who in 2007 became the first distributor to win both the Miller and Coors top distributor awards. While the many awards they have received are outstanding enough,

North Coast's commitment to corporate responsibility and to their community are the most impressive.

Led by Bruce Leetz, North Coast Distributing has always been committed to promoting responsible consumption and in giving back to the community, as is evidenced by their participation in the upcoming innovative session. A graduate of Valparaiso High School and Ball State University, Bruce has been employed with North Coast for over 45 years. In 1970, Bruce took over as President of the company, and his accomplishments, as well as the success of North Coast, have been astonishing. A true expert and legend in the industry, Bruce has served in many capacities, including: membership on the National Beer Wholesalers Association's Executive Board, as President of the Indiana Beverage Alliance for ten years, and as Chairman of both the Miller and Coors Distributor Councils. Like his company, Bruce has always been an active participant in his community as well, having served on the boards of the Northwest Indiana Forum, the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce, and the Northwest Indiana Entrepreneurship Academy. He is also a past president of the Porter County United Way and the Valparaiso Rotary Club, and he is a Ruling Elder at the First Presbyterian Church in Valparaiso.

For his service to his community and his commitment his industry, both economically and socially, Bruce has received many accolades throughout the years. To name a few of these, in 2004, Bruce was recognized as a Miller Legend, a lifetime achievement award that is the Miller Brewing Company's highest honor. Also, in 2005, then Governor Frank O'Bannon presented him with the Sagamore of the Wabash award, one of the highest honors awarded by the Governor of the State of Indiana.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Bruce Leetz and North Coast Distributing on their success throughout the years and honoring them on their commitment to the people of Northwest Indiana. Bruce and the entire team at North Coast Distributing are to be commended for their dedication to improving Northwest Indiana.

HONORING THE LIFE AND MEM-
ORY OF MRS. BARBARA
COLBECK

HON. THADDEUS G. MCCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. MCCOTTER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the extraordinary life of Barbara Colbeck upon her passing at the age of 64.

For almost 50 years Barbara dedicated her life to liturgical music and her community. Born and raised in Detroit, Barbara attended Saint Lawrence Grade School and Holy Redeemer High School. There, she would meet and fall in love with her high school sweetheart William. They married, and spent 40 wonderful years together. A resident of Livonia, Barbara began to play piano and organ at St. Lawrence when she was in 7th grade. For 49 years she played at Detroit area Churches. She played liturgical music at St. Simon, St. Jude, was First Organist at St.

Colette, and finally served as Music Minister at St. Edith.

On August 17, 2008, Barbara passed away. A beloved mother, grandmother, daughter, and sister, she is survived by her husband William, sons Patrick and Christopher, daughter Cheryln Sellepack, and grandchildren Michael, John, Carolann, and Julianna. Known by her friends and family for her generosity, her strength, and her smile, Barbara faced cancer with dignity and courage, never losing her faith or friendship for all. St. Edith Church was graced by her music and her smile for 23 years. Barbara Colbeck's music will live on in the memory of those who knew her.

Madam Speaker, Barbara Colbeck is remembered as a musician, cantor, teacher, mentor, and friend. Today, as we bid her farewell, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning her passing and honoring her lifetime of contribution to our community.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN L. LANZA
OF THE BUFFALO POLICE DE-
PARTMENT

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to honor the accomplishments of Officer Stephen L. Lanza of the Buffalo Police Department. He is truly one of Buffalo's finest, a loving son, an outstanding dad, a great brother, a wonderful neighbor and a loyal friend and a dedicated police officer.

Throughout Lanza's service as a Police Officer, he exemplified the term "public servant." After being appointed to the Buffalo Police Department in 1985, Lanza spent the next twenty-three years of his life dedicated to the people and city he was sworn to protect. For twelve of those years Steve served as a delegate to the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and unselfishly volunteered as a delegate to several committees, including the Political Action Committee where he interviewed political candidates assessing who was most committed to public safety and making Western New York a better community.

Our community owes Officer Lanza a debt of gratitude for his tireless dedication to making South Buffalo a finer and safer place to live. He is currently a member of the International Police Association, Region 1, the 901 Social Service Organization West Seneca Chapter, and President of the Italian American Police Association. Lanza also contributes to the Federation of Italian American Societies and as a religious education instructor at Queen of Heaven Roman Catholic Church. He is also an avid political activist and volunteer.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for this opportunity to honor Officer Lanza for his dedicated service career on the Buffalo Police Department. I ask my colleagues to please join me in wishing Officer Stephen L. Lanza and his family continued good health and happiness in the years to come.